

Outside the Bubble

Lamson residents invite community to join community service project

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The women's residence hall has begun the first phase of their community service project benefitting Memorial Children's Hospital in South Bend, Indiana. They welcome campus and community involvement. (Photo by @aulamsonhall)

By: Becky St. Clair

For several years, residents of Lamson Hall, a women's residence hall on the Andrews University campus, have participated in community service projects. Typically, each hall would decide on their own project, which ranged in focus from working with local children to collecting money for humanitarian services abroad to putting Christmas packages together for those in need.

“The hall-focused projects weren’t connected,” laments A’Lisa Lashley, associate dean of women. “We wanted to do a long-term, year-long project that everyone could participate in together.”

So the deans decided to have several mini-projects all benefitting the same organization: Memorial Children’s Hospital in South Bend, Indiana, located approximately 45 minutes from the Andrews campus.

Memorial Children’s Hospital serves the needs of children ages newborn to 18 years, whose stays at the hospital can be one-time quick visits, or for extended long-term treatment. The hospital treats everything from fevers and vomiting to blood disorders, cancer and trauma.

The deans have specific goals for each period of two months between now and the end of the school year. While each need can be addressed at any time during the year, the focus will change regularly.

“We realize that these are college students and that they are not only busy, but many are strapped for cash as well,” explains Lashley. “We have selected a range of activities and goals for this project so that everyone can find what it is that appeals to them and participate, or they may choose to participate in each aspect of the project.”

The schedule is as follows:

Through October: Collecting new books and toys, board and card games, craft materials, etc.
November: Card-making booths set up in the dorm for students to make cards for the patients
January & February: Collecting money for the hospital to use as it sees fit
March & April: Student visit to the hospital to read, sing, tell stories, etc.

“One awesome thing about this project is that it’s not just our residents who can participate,” says Lashley. “Anyone on campus or in the community is welcome to participate—we won’t exclude anyone who has an interest in supporting these kids and their families through some of the darkest times of their young lives.”

Plans are in the works to provide transportation for a shopping trip for those who don’t have vehicles on campus, so that they can purchase new items for the children.

“It’s not just about having a community service project because we think we should,” Lashley explains. “We want to help these kids with what they need. We chose something close so we could have the opportunity to visit and see that there’s a world outside the bubble of school, work and family. Other people are out there going through tough things. It changes the students’ hearts and minds, and may even influence career choices as a result.”

Anyone interested in participating should contact Lashley at alisa@andrews.edu or 269-471-6699.

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