

June 2, 2006

**CMU'S RESIDENCE HALLS DONATE AN ESTIMATED \$10K  
IN CLOTHING, FOOD, OTHER GOODS IN YEAR-END DRIVE**

MOUNT PLEASANT — A campaign that encouraged Central Michigan University students to donate unwanted items instead of throwing them away netted \$10,000 worth of clothing, food, cleaning and school supplies, and other items for local and international charities.

For the second year in a row, Barnes Hall Director Luanne Nelson and Calkins Hall Director Cathy Warner collaborated with the Mount Pleasant Community Church's Community Compassion Network on a campuswide effort to collect usable items that students often discard when they leave campus at the conclusion of the academic year.

Students living in the residence halls were given a detailed list of needed items. Everything from canned food and unopened dry goods to factory-sealed toiletries and full or partly used cleaning supplies and laundry soap was accepted.



*Photo by Robert Barclay, CMU*

Following the conclusion of the drive in May, Nelson said CMU's residence life moving crew hauled six truckloads of items to the church for sorting.

"The quantity and quality of donations was overwhelming," said Nelson. "Everything from brand new outfits with the tags still on to package after package of ramen noodles was collected."

In mid-May, students participating in CMU's annual Leadership Camp, a residence life-sponsored program, sorted many of the donations.

"Without the help of the Leadership Camp volunteers, I am not sure we could have processed the items for distribution so quickly," Nelson said.

Among the ways the items have been or will be distributed:

- In late May, 100 bottles of laundry detergent and numerous cases of food were distributed by Community Compassion Network's monthly mobile food pantry, which in May was sponsored by First Presbyterian Church.

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- Immanuel Lutheran Church's Christmas Outreach program will receive many of the clothing and bedding donations for its December 2006 distribution.
- Several of the donated wool coats will be donated to a homeless shelter in Grand Rapids.
- Kits containing basic home-furnishing necessities were assembled for distribution to individuals who experience home fires or other tragedies.
- Kits containing personal hygiene products were assembled and distributed to several local agencies, including Women's Aid Service Inc. and Central Michigan Pregnancy Services.
- A team of Orphanage Outreach volunteers from CMU and the Mount Pleasant community will take summer clothing and selected food items to Hope of the Child Orphanage in Monte Cristi, Dominican Republic, during trips in June and July.
- CMU School of Health Sciences faculty member Dr. Joseph "Jeff" Inungu and a team of students and faculty will visit Africa during summer 2006. Prior to their trip, donations of clothing and school supplies will be sent to the Republic of Congo to support a new orphanage.
- Clothing items that do not meet the needs of Community Compassion Network's partners will be donated to the Purple Crate thrift shop in Mount Pleasant. The items will be sold at the shop, creating a credit account from which Community Compassion Network will provide vouchers to community members in need of clothing.

"The combined effort of the numerous students that participated will make a difference in our local community and even across the globe," Nelson said. "This outcome certainly contradicts the stereotype of college students and supports the Office of Residence Life's mission to encourage social responsibility."

The contribution to Community Compassion Network marks residence life's second significant philanthropic effort of the 2005-2006 academic year. In late April, residence life staff presented a \$10,000 check to Habitat for Humanity of Isabella County. The funds were raised throughout the year by staff and students in CMU's 20 residence halls.

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