

Tots compel students to give

December 14, 2006

Posted: 12/15/06

University of
Mary Hardin-
Baylor
residence
dorms
competed to
give the most
to the area
Toys for Tots
campaign
sponsored by
the Marine
Corps
Reserve.

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By Jennifer Sicking

University of Mary Hardin-Baylor

BELTON—Melissa Ochs returned from a weekend trip to find bags of toys in her dorm room at the [University of Mary Hardin-Baylor](#).

An anonymous donation, helped push Johnson Hall ahead of other campus residence halls in the “dorm wars” competition to collect toys for the area [Toys for Tots](#) campaign by the Marine Corps Reserve.

“The girls were extremely excited,” Ochs, a junior athletic training major from Austin, said of her dormmates.

“When we first announced it, the girls were excited and enthusiastic,” Ochs said. “They wanted to give back to the community, especially when they found out it was going to area children.”

An anonymous donor helped the dorm by giving \$50 to a university officer and telling her to “give it to the dorm she liked the best,” Ochs said. The officer presented it to the residence hall, which used it to buy 54 toys.

In the end, Johnson Hall donated 158 toys, while the second-place dorm contributed 80, said Mary Dickson, president of the Sader Sports Medicine Association, which spearheads the university’s toy drive each year. By the end of the “dorm wars” competition Dec. 4, the association had collected more than 500 toys, with 350 from the six residence halls.

For donating the most toys, the women in Johnson Hall received a pizza and snack study party the night before finals began.

While this is the fourth year for the association to lead the Toys for Tots toy drive, Dickson said, it was the first year for a competition between the dorms.

“In the first meeting of the year, we had a brainstorming session to increase the number of participants on campus,” she said.

“We have a room stuffed full (of toys) waiting to be picked up by the Marines,” she said of the result.

Barbie dolls, puzzles, stuffed animals and toy trucks sit in the room waiting to be wrapped and placed under a tree for children on Christmas.

The project helps children who might not have a Christmas present, but it also provides an opportunity for university students to contribute to others.

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