

HBCU Students Show Spirit of Giving

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Various holiday projects aid homeless

From staging a theater play to highlight the plight of the homeless to volunteering at shelters and building homes, student organizations from three HBCUs are celebrating the holiday season by helping those in need.

Students at North Carolina Central University began the holiday season on Nov. 22 with a play titled "Going Homeless." The play, which was supported by the Durham Rescue Mission and the Durham Crisis Center in Durham, N.C., is about a well- educated man, Bobo, who falls on hard times and is pushed into a life of homelessness.

A portion of the proceeds went to the charities.

"People try to act as if domestic violence and homelessness don't exist by just sweeping it under the rug, but that's not reality," said Irving Truitt, creator of the play. "By creating this play I hope to bring awareness to a topic of such taboo."

Howard students are also working to shine light on the plight of the homeless.

Howard University's chapter of the National Council for Negro Women partnered with Bethlehem Rebounders fed the homeless in the nation's capital. Bethlehem Rebounders serves food in areas of the city highly populated by the homeless.

"We are on the streets feeding them in their environment and their makeshift homes," said April Harvey, chairwoman of Howard chapter of NCNW. "It's as real as you can get."

Other Howard student organizations such as the John H. Johnson School of Communications student council have also had programs in December geared toward helping the homeless and those less fortunate. The council hosted a potluck banquet and volunteered in a local soup kitchen.

"We are going to continue the legacy of community involvement to future generations of student leaders," said Andrew Jones, a junior legal communications major and president of the John H. Johnson School of Communications Student Council.

Members of the Jackson State University chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists in Miss., teamed up with the local branch of Habitat for Humanity to help build a house for a local family. Since its founding in 1976 by Millard and Linda Fuller, Habitat for Humanity International has built and rehabilitated more than 250,000 houses with families in need.

The chapter helped local resident Liladdreya K. Thompson, 28 and her three children build a home my working two days with the Habitat staff.

"It was a beautiful experience," said Tiffany Edmondson, a broadcast production major and president of the chapter. "Despite the long hours and splinters it was worth the cause...Projects like these create positive energy and allows students to set an example for other students."

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Kenitra Brown at Jackson State, Brittney Moncrease at the Howard University Hilltop and Josh P. Leak at the North Carolina Central University Campus Echo contributed to this article.