

# SRU honor society extends charity to less fortunate

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Each year, people all over the world gather together with their friends and families to celebrate the holidays. This holiday season the members of the Lambda Sigma Society decided to extend their holiday cheer to children who are less fortunate.

The Lambda Sigma Society is the sophomore honor society at Slippery Rock University. There are approximately 30 members who are dedicated to promoting leadership, scholarship and service among all college students.

The society participates in one major service project per year and this year, they chose to participate in the Jared Box Project.

A Jared Box is a plastic box filled with toys and games given to children undergoing chemotherapy or other treatments. The project is in memory of a little boy named Jared.

Jared was diagnosed with an incurable brain tumor in 1999, and he passed away from the cancer on Nov. 12, 2000. Throughout his treatment, Jared always shared his toys and optimism with the other children.

The Jared Box Project is a non-profit organization that was started by the children at Our Lady of Victory School of State College, Pa., to honor their classmate and friend Jared.

Jude Butch, president of the Lambda Sigma Society, discovered the Jared Box Project and presented it to the members of Lambda Sigma.

“I told them Jared’s story and what my idea was for the project and they were all with me from the very beginning,” Butch said.

The members of Lambda Sigma went to the House Councils of every residence hall on campus and collected almost \$400 to buy toys for the Jared Boxes. It took almost the entire fall semester to complete, but in early December, the society had made 84 Jared Boxes and personally delivered them to Children’s Hospital in Pittsburgh.

“We got a lot of positive feedback from both the children and the parents; it really touched them,” Butch said.

Dr. Mark Shotwell is the Lambda Sigma Society adviser and felt the project was very beneficial for everyone involved.

“I was very impressed that they got the idea and raised the money all in one semester. They made a lot of progress in a short amount of time,” Shotwell said.

According to Shotwell, the campus contributions helped tremendously in getting the project off the ground.

“I wasn’t sure how collecting money around campus would go over, but everyone was willing to donate and helped to not only raise money, but to also keep the spirit of this child alive,” Shotwell said.

Marcy Yonkey, a member of the Lambda Sigma Society, said she felt the project went better than the group had expected.

“I felt the project was very appropriate since it was the Christmas season, and I really feel it was a gift not only to the children but also to ourselves,” Yonkey said.

The Jared Box Project has expanded to approximately six different states and there have been over 3,000 Jared Boxes produced.

According to Butch, he would not only like to see Lambda Sigma participate in the Jared Box Project again, but he also encourages other groups to get involved.

“I would love to see other organizations follow our lead and get involved in this,” Butch said. “It’s a wonderful program and it was a really great experience.”