

## ***Residence Life & Housing Gives Back During the Holidays***

During the months of November and December, both the Residence Hall Association (RHA) and staff members in the Office of Residence Life & Housing focused on the importance of giving back to the community in two great efforts.

RHA conducted a food drive to provide the Ronald McDonald House (RMH) of Norfolk with much needed supplies during this especially difficult time of year. Collection bins were placed in each of the residence halls from November 10<sup>th</sup> through November 24<sup>th</sup> to collect can goods and dry food supplies. Also participating in the spirit of giving were Ms. Lenora Armstrong, Assistant Professor for Health, Physical Education & Exercise Science and HPE/EXS majors Corey Eaton and Columbus Williams. The Ronald McDonald House was established to be a “Home Away from Home” for families who want to be near their child (age 21 and under) receiving medical treatment at one of the local hospitals. At every house families can enjoy:

- Home-cooked meals
- Private bedrooms
- Playrooms for children

Depending on the house, these services may also be available:

- Special suites for children with suppressed immune systems
- Accredited education programs
- Recreational activities
- Non-clinical support services
- Sibling support services

The Ronald McDonald House was chosen by Mrs. Faith Fitzgerald, Director of Residence Life & Housing, whose family benefited from RMH years ago. “The Ronald McDonald House provides tremendous support to families with a seriously ill or injured child who lives outside the hospital’s local area. Without their support, we would not have been able to stay with our daughter during the time she needed us most. I have never forgotten the helping hand they provided us and how much it was needed and appreciated. As a part of our “Community Awareness & Action” target, we teach our residents about community service and the importance of giving back and RMH is one of several agencies we chose this year. The food drive was a simple gesture to give back to an organization that helps so many families worldwide in such a phenomenal way,” says Mrs. Fitzgerald. Through the generous support of our Spartan residents, RHA was able to take four large boxes filled with goods to the Ronald McDonald House on Monday, November 24<sup>th</sup>. For more information please visit [www.rmhcnorfolk.com](http://www.rmhcnorfolk.com).

On December 15, 2008, staff from the Office of Residence Life & Housing volunteered a combined twelve hours at the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia (FSEVA) on Tidewater Drive, in Norfolk. The Foodbank works to provide solutions to hunger and certain consequences in the community by acquiring and distributing food, clothing and other products to those in crisis. The Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia operates the following programs with the hopes of ending hunger and economic disparity:

- Warehouse Distribution Program
- USDA Commodities
- Fresh Food Initiative
- Kids Café
- Senior Supplement Food Program

- Justine's Clothes Bank and Tasley Thrift Store
- Plant-A-Row for the Hungry Program
- Community Gardens

Staff sorted donated items, checking expiration dates and ensuring quality, and placed the items in the appropriate bins for distribution. Assistant Director for Business Services, Dyanna McMullen, headed the effort and quoted "I received joy and satisfaction from a prior visit to the Foodbank and wanted others to experience the feeling of giving to the less fortunate." The Office of Residence Life & Housing plans to make this a regular bonding activity. For more information on FSEVA, please visit [www.foodbankonline.org](http://www.foodbankonline.org).