Christmas comes to UNCP campus early

By Tiffany Schmidt
Layout Editor

The sounds of crinkling wrapping paper and laughter filled the Honors College suite as 27 Honors College students decorated and wrapped presents for their adopted family on Nov. 18 at 7:30 p.m.

President of the Honors Council Katiuska Laureano said that this was the first year that the Honors Council adopted a family for the holidays, and it is very possible that they will adopt a family next year.

“It would be amazing if we could make this a yearly Christmas tradition and if the future turnout was even larger,” she said.

Assistant Dean of the Honors College Dr. Jennifer Bonds-Raacke said that the family the Honors Council adopted for their Christmas project is from Scotland County. “I worked with a social worker to locate a family that we believed we could help,” she said. “It is a single parent family with three children, two boys and a girl, all under the age of 6.”

Laureano said that three students went shopping for gifts with Dr. Bonds-Raacke on Nov. 8. “We got lots of fun presents, including a Hannah Montana sleeping bag, a Disney princess chair, footballs, Diego toys and recorders for all the kids,” Dr. Bonds-Raacke said.

The Honors Council also bought clothes for the children, including pants and shirts, and a Walmart gift card for the mother. The Honors College started with a $150 budget, but due to generous gifts from Honors College faculty members and staff, they raised $400. “The students quickly became motivated to raise money for this family because of the conversations that were relayed to us through the social worker,” Dr. Bonds-Raacke said.

Dr. Bonds-Raacke said that everyone had a wonderful time wrapping presents, hanging out, eating pizza, decorating the Honors College suite for Christmas and watching TV. “I was actually surprised at how excited the students were to go shopping for the family and wrap gifts,” she said.

“I felt the event was very successful in bringing the honors students together. Everyone seemed to be getting along great and enjoying themselves,” Laureano said.

“Not only were we able to get to know our fellow honors students better, but we were also doing it to bring joy to a family on Christmas,” members of the Honors Council will deliver the gifts to the family who will get their presents by Dec. 13.

Dr. Bonds-Raacke said that before she started working for the Honors College, there was a literacy service project and their goal is to continue to be involved in service projects within the community. “It is a great way for us to work together and give back to others,” Dr. Bonds-Raacke said.

“It feels great to help those that are less fortunate. It is so simple to bring joy to a family, and it might just mean the world to them,” Laureano said.

Honors Council adopts a family for the holidays

Photos by Michele Johnson

The University Center is transformed this year to bring Christmas to the UNCP campus. Various places on campus are showing their holiday pride with reindeer and Christmas trees.

Photos by Tiffany Schmidt

Honors College students Meghan Minor, above, Acra Garrett and Stephanie Valette hang up wrap gifts for the children in the family the Honors Council adopted. The family consists of three children, two boys and one girl, all under the age of 6.

Honors College student Jason Woolf wraps a present at the Honors College present wrapping party on Nov. 18.