

# Faculty, staff donate gifts to CPS

## Student groups, sponsors host Giving Tree

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Because of the work of Education and Training and Child Guidance students and their sponsors and the generosity of faculty and staff members, 137 children in the Custody of Child Protective Services (CPS) will have a Merry Christmas.

For this annual philanthropy project, students invite teachers to attend a breakfast, where they choose an ornament containing the name and age of a child in CPS care. A holiday gift wish list is included on the back of each ornament.

“[The Giving Tree] is to provide gifts to kids in Child Protective Services, and this might be the only gift they get for Christmas,” Clay said. “We work with the Rainbow Room at CPS, and they send me all the information I need.”

For The Giving Tree project, Child Protective Services sends the school the list of a child’s name and age and a list of the items that the child would like. The ages of the children vary. The teachers contribute by purchasing gifts from the wish lists.

“We give the teachers breakfast as a way to say thank you for participating, and then they pick an ornament or two or more,” Clay said. “The teachers don’t have to do this. They’re doing this out of the kindness of their hearts.”

“I participate every year, along with my students,” journalism adviser Christine Keyser-Fanick said. “This year our 8-year-old boy wanted puzzles, and our 2-year-



**Picking off ornaments**, English IV and IV AP teacher Chrissie Drysdale picks out an ornament to buy a present for a child at The Children Shelter. The teachers were given breakfast for their contribution. *Photo by Daniella Flores*

old girl had a baby doll on her wish list. Shopping for these children is fun, and it makes us feel good to make a difference in the lives of others.”

A reflection of the generosity of faculty and staff members, ornaments from The Giving Tree were gone by 8:30 a.m. the day of the breakfast, and the sponsors requested more so that interested persons could participate.

CPS provides services to children and families in need of safety and support.

The goal of the organization is to place children into homes and to help youth in foster care make the transition to adulthood.

“I’m fortunate enough that I grew up having presents under the tree every year. I want to give back to the kids who do not have that or who may have a broken home,” Clay said. “Giving to children in need and putting a smile on their faces is what it means to me. It may be the only smile that they get.”

# Groups join forces to feed hungry

## Letters to Santa to generate funds for ‘Make a Wish’

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FCCLA and StuCo held a drive to collect clothing and accessories for The Children’s Shelter in November.

The drive was held from Nov. 9 to Nov. 20, and donations included socks, hair accessories, brushes, holiday dresses for girls, long-sleeve formal shirts, shoes and pajamas.

### Safe Haven

Since the Children’s Shelter opened, it has provided a safe haven for children who are victims of abuse, neglect and abandonment in the San Antonio and Bexar County areas.

“This drive is just to give back to the community,” FCCLA teacher Brandi Clay said. “We all have children, and we also want to do things for the senior citizens.”

At the end of the drive, StuCo counted two big boxes of clothes and six big bags of clothing and toys for the Children’s Shelter.

“I decided to work with this shelter because my mom has a friend who works there,” StuCo Community Committee chairman Azalea Gomez said.

Gomez said that her mother’s friend has described the great need that exists at the Children’s Shelter, which convinced her that Stevens could help.

### Canned Food Drive

With eight organizations wanting to help the community, NHS, Fashion Club, FCCLA, JROTC, AVID, StuCo, and



**Making Children Smile**, FCCLA and Stuco reached out to students on campus for the clothing, toys and accessories drive. Students donated long sleeve formal shirts and black pants for boys, shoes, pajamas, hair accessories and toys to the Children’s Shelter. *Photo Courtesy of Azalea Gomez*

Journalism joined forces in December to collect food for the San Antonio Food Bank.

The drive started Nov. 30 and ends today. Every participating organization will have a box either outside or inside the classroom for students to donate food. The cans will be donated to San Antonio Food Bank for Christmas.

NHS last year collected and donated 5,003 cans to the food bank to help feed the city’s hungry.

“We try to reach out and help our community any way we can,” NHS committee chairman Ricardo Mena said.

“Any canned food item is accepted, except ramen. We had a problem last year with the soup.”

### Letters to Santa

Next week, students will write letters to Santa during advisory, and the letters will then be delivered to a mailbox at Macy’s department store.

For every letter to Santa submitted, Macy’s will donate \$1 to the Make a Wish Foundation.

The Letters to Santa Campaign is sponsored by StuCo and coordinated through Gomez’s committee.

## Falcon Updates

### Band

24 members from band advanced to district auditions.

The following students made the Freshman Region Band: Katilina Ashby, sixth chair, flute; Demetrius Branch, first chair, and Chase Youngs, ninth chair, clarinet; Matthew Narvaez, first chair, alto saxophone; Jonathan Bueso Paz, fourth chair, and Isaiah Martinez 10th chair, trumpet; David Rodarte, fourth chair, trombone; and Jacob Valdez, second chair, percussion.

Students selected for All-Region Honor Band and Area Auditions include: Sydney Koscinski, first chair, piccolo; Sarah Macias, first chair, oboe; Robby Andrade, third chair, bassoon; Seth Champion, first chair, Euphonium; Alejandro Palacios, first chair, tuba; and Dana Dominguez, third chair, and Luke Tilbury, fourth chair, percussion.

The following students were selected for All-Region Concert Band: Olivia Agee, seventh chair, and Sascha Cousin, eighth chair, flute; Danielle Torres, first chair, bass clarinet; Kenneth Ricon, third chair, tenor saxophone; Cory Trabue, first chair, and Jonah Michal, third chair, trombone.

Sydney Koscinski, Sarah Macias, Robby Andrade, Dana Dominguez, and Luke Tilbury made the All-Region Orchestra.

Ruben Andrade made Region Orchestra.

### Journalism Awards

The Columbia Scholastic Press association named the campus newspaper, The Talon, a Gold Medalist recipient for the 2014-2015 school year.

The yearbook, Tradition, received a Gold Medalist certificate, for the 2015 yearbook, “Evolution.” The yearbooks received All-Columbian Honors in both Verbal and Visual.

### UIL Academic Results

Andrew Rodriguez placed first in Ready Writing.

Elijah Adames placed seventh and Allie Goulding placed ninth in News Writing.

Andrew Cadena placed second, Elijah Adames placed third, and Allie Goulding placed 10th in Feature Writing.

Alejandro Herrera placed eighth in Current Issues and Events

Allie Goulding placed second in Headline Writing

Syerra Harris placed third, Allie Goulding placed fifth, and Jacob DeHoyos placed 10th in Editorial Writing.

*Compiled by Emilee Lopez*