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## BU decks South Campus in lights for holiday ceremony

By Alyssa Benjamin

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With echoing cheers, warm cider and hot chocolate, the Boston University Residence Hall Association illuminated the trees and shrubs in Audubon Court during its annual South Campus Residence Hall Association winter lighting



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South Campus RHA held a winter lighting event Tuesday to unite residents and benefit holiday charities

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event.

South Campus RHA Secretary Joe Rogers said the South Campus RHA is the only BU group doing tree lighting on campus.

RHA President Alison Reed said she believes the tree lighting ceremony brings South Campus together.

"We have a lot of upperclassmen," the College of Arts and Sciences senior said. "This event is a great way to encourage them to come out."

Students and RHA members socialized outside in the court, while some ventured downstairs to enjoy refreshments in the basement.

This year, BU's Catering on the Charles and Savoy French Bakery on Beacon Street provided the food. The RHA also set up tables with donation bins to collect toys for Toys for Tots and clothes for the Programming Council clothing drive.

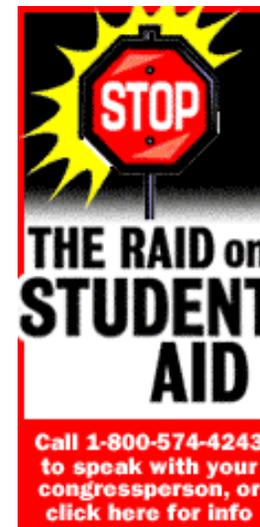
In addition, attendees were encouraged to write a letter to Iraqi soldiers through anysoldier.com, an organization that sends letters of encouragement to soldiers.

As a tribute to the holiday season, the letters are sent in small plastic bottles with mini Christmas trees inside. The charity aspect was new this year and part of an attempt to expand event attendance.

"You associate giving with the holidays so it's a great way to bring the community together," said event organizer Novelette Brown.

The popular hip-hop group, Fusion, performed a dance medley clad in green and red to Missy Elliot while the crowd cheered.

"I had a friend in Fusion perform and he told us about the event," School of Management freshman Regina Romero said. "I am from Texas so it's definitely different



experiencing winter here. I like the season, so I will attend more events like this."

College of Communication junior Kris Seto, a Fusion member, said the event had a festive atmosphere.

"I liked the food, the cookies and the cider - the smells," he said. "It's all very Christmas-like."

COM freshman Eric Hertz said he enjoyed the variety of people at the event.

"It's unique because of the diversity of the people," he said. "I went because it brought a sense of community."

For some first-year students, like Brittany Lyte, the tree lighting was a way to meet new people and support her friends.

"It was my first time attending," the COM freshman said. "It was a great experience. I was able to support my RA, Kris Seto."

Rogers stressed that the event didn't just celebrate Christmas, but the winter holiday season - something that attracted COM freshman Brooke Nathanson.

"I attended because I love the holiday spirit," she said.

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