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[FRONT PAGE](#)

[NEWS](#)

[LIFESTYLE](#)

[PERSPECTIVE](#)

[SPORTS](#)

[THE FLIP SIDE](#)

[ARCHIVES](#)

Wednesday Feb. 15, 2006

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- [Student faith in security wavers](#)



College Newspaper Network



NEWS

MSA, College Republican Christmas boxes finally sent

by Karl Lang
February 15, 2006

Two campus groups intended to send items to soldiers overseas for Christmas, but miscommunication led to the boxes being mailed a little later than planned.

The Multicultural Student Alliance and the College Republicans collected items for 17 boxes, filled with entertainment and hygiene items. They were intended for Christmas, but the boxes weren't sent out until mid-January.

"They did not get sent out on time, and I think that was the result of unfortunate communication in several areas, from administration and between the groups involved," senior Kenna Stouwie, MSA co-president, said. "However, I think that our timing was not so far behind that it would ruin everything. We were talking to some soldiers directly and they were like 'you know we get a lot of random stuff from people during Christmas, but then after is when we are the most depressed'."

The College Republican's Jess Leete, secretary of treasury at the time of the project, said communication was an issue.

"There was some miscommunication, not necessarily between the two groups even, but with some other campus resources that we needed to help us get the project off the ground," Leete said. "It wasn't necessarily the fault of any one person or either of the groups in general, it was kind of just the whole process had a few glitches in it."

Staff Adviser Walter Lain, the assistant dean for multicultural and international affairs, said funding wasn't a problem.

"That was not my impression at all," he said. "It was a logistics issue and funding was secondary to those problems."

MSA adviser, and Associate Professor of Sociology, Mark Freyberg said while the groups had hoped to send them by Christmas, they also realized it might not happen.

"Everybody understood from the beginning that getting it out by Christmas was going to be difficult," Freyberg said.

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Both groups considered the program a success even though it wasn't accomplished on time. Leete said while the number of boxes was small, they would still be appreciated.

"I think it was successful, I mean, we obviously weren't going to send out 40 packages," she said. "We had a lot of competition with the Operation Christmas Child project."

Stouwie was also proud of the results despite receiving a number comments on how late the boxes were.

"Overall, I am really pleased with how things went," Stouwie said. "The funny thing was there were a lot of people approaching me weeks after they were sent out going, 'are those boxes sent out?' I don't know how it snowballed into this 'disaster,' when I was like 'they've been [sent] out.'"

Various groups, from churches to residence halls, as well as individual donors collected items for the boxes throughout the Christmas season.

"We tried to be a little more off-the-wall than other packing centers," Stouwie said. "We linked through anysoldier.com, which is something where they request what they want, so we tried to kind of include that in our list of items when we appealed to people."

Many attribute the success the program did have to the cooperation between the two groups.

"Part of the attraction for me was the College Republicans came to visit a MSA meeting and proposed that the two groups work together to get this done," Freyberg said. "This was also intriguing because these were two groups that you wouldn't necessarily have expected to be working together on something like this."

Leete said it ended up working out for all.

"It was a really good joint effort between the MSA and the College Republicans," she said.

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