

Students giving back for holidays

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First-year culinary students at Georgian College, from left, Tiffany Rose, David McGinnis and Joseph Wismayer package freshly cooked vegetables and turkey to be shipped to Collier Street United Church and served to approximately 300 clients of the David Busby Street Centre in downtown Barrie. GEORGIAN COLLEGE/PHOTO

Students and faculty across all academic areas at Georgian College – from community safety to business and management – like to give back to the community.

Fundraisers, bake sales and community events are hosted year round, but the generosity peaks during the holiday season in November and December.

Last week, all Barrie campus culinary students (more than 100 in total) prepared a full Christmas lunch for clients of the David Busby Street Centre.

The chefs-in-training served about 200 pounds of turkey with all the fixings – potatoes, vegetables, gravy and dessert – to up to 300 people at Collier Street Church last Thursday.

“It’s important because it because it makes us appreciate what we have,” says first-year culinary student Maegan DaSilva. “Other people in the country don’t have enough to get food.”

The Georgian College Students’ Association (GCSA) has been focusing its efforts on supporting students in need. They recently ran the 12 Days of Food Locker, offering incentive for people to make non-perishable donations to the

college food bank, which is facing unprecedented demand this year.

The GCSA also recently donated \$25,000 to support youth mental-health services at Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre in Barrie.

In late November, event management students hosted Mocktail MADDness, a competition between Barrie's top restaurants, pubs and caterers to see who could create the best mocktail. The alcohol-free event was attended by people from across the community and proceeds went to Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD).

Community safety and human services students at the Orillia campus also recently hosted the SleepOut Challenge to raise awareness about youth homelessness. Students slept outside in cardboard boxes for 12 hours.

They also collected donations from the community and organized a silent auction, splitting proceeds between the Push for Change campaign and a future youth homeless shelter in Orillia.

These are just some of many ways Georgian students support important causes.

For students, these opportunities aren't just heartwarming, they're also a chance to develop valuable skills.

"The Busby meal is part of our curriculum so it's very beneficial to students," says culinary instructor chef Philip Leach, who was there for the first annual Christmas lunch 11 years ago.

"For students who serve the meal, it's also very gratifying."