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# University of Dayton, Ohio (url: <http://www.udayton.edu/index.php>)



## Christmas off Campus

**12.05.2008 | Service and Giving**

University of Dayton 1979 graduate Brian Lowry learned one of his most important lessons at a college party.

"It was about giving back to others," Lowry said of Christmas on Campus, a holiday tradition at UD serving hundreds of local school children that has become one of the nation's largest single-day community service projects on a college campus.

More than 40 years after it began, the celebration continues to resonate with Lowry and hundreds of UD alumni, who will share that same spirit of giving this month with charities and children in 29 cities across America.

Lowry and his wife Renai — also a UD graduate — sponsored the first-ever Christmas off Campus event in 1990 at Chaminade College Prep School in St. Louis to benefit the St. Patrick Center.

"We were very fortunate to have attended UD and wanted to continue the tradition of the university in St. Louis," Lowry said. "We thought it would be appropriate to continue serving in a way that was in keeping with the Marianist tradition."

The idea quickly caught on, and alumni chapters in Washington, D.C., and Philadelphia started holding their own Christmas off Campus celebrations.

Beginning Dec. 6 through Dec. 20, UD alumni in New York City, Chicago, Boston, San Juan, Puerto Rico, and 25 other cities will serve hundreds of local children and charities and celebrate Christmas in a manner first experienced during their college years.

"These celebrations show the heart and soul of our entire University of Dayton community," UD President Daniel J. Curran said. "The amount of involvement by students and alumni shows our commitment to our mission of community outreach."

Nationally prominent charities such as the Ronald McDonald House, Covenant House, the Boys and Girls Club and St. Vincent de Paul are among the beneficiaries.

"UD's New York Metro alumni club has been coming to Covenant House even before becoming an official part of the chapter's Christmas off Campus. Each year, UD alumni arrive with good cheer and gifts for our young moms and their babies," Bruce J. Henry, Covenant House New York's executive director, said about last year's celebration. "It's a wonderful relationship that has brought great joy to children and their moms."

Ellie Kurtz, director of UD's student union from 1964 to 1994, started Christmas on Campus for a group of students who simply wanted to get together before heading home for the winter break.

Today, UD students "adopt" as many as 1,200 urban school children for a day, who receive gifts, play games and celebrate Christmas a little early. It is traditionally celebrated around Dec. 8 and combined with a Mass celebrating the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

The University of Dayton is Ohio's largest private university and one of the top-10 Catholic universities in the nation. UD emphasizes transformative education and prepares students for leadership and service in their communities in the Marianist tradition.

### 2008 Christmas off Campus Schedule

Chapter	Date	Charity
Atlanta	Dec. 13	Atlanta Children's Shelter
Austin	Dec. 17	Boys & Girls Club

Boston	Dec. 14	Marian Manor
Charlotte	Dec. 13	A Child's Place
Chicago	Dec. 6	Association House of Chicago
Cincinnati	Dec. 11	Project Connect/Faces Without Places
Cleveland	Dec. 13	Providence House
Columbus	Dec. 13	Catholic Charities
Dallas/Fort Worth	Dec. 6	Community Partners of Dallas
Denver	Dec. 6	Mount St. Vincent
Detroit	Dec. 6	Most Holy Trinity Elementary
Fort Wayne	Dec. 6	Urban League
Houston	Dec. 17	M.D. Anderson Cancer Center
Indianapolis	Dec. 6	Providence Cristo Rey High School
Minneapolis/St. Paul	Dec. 20	Salvation Army Toy Shop
Nashville	Dec. 11	Ronald McDonald House
New York/NJ	Dec. 13	Covenant House
Philadelphia	Dec. 7	Sacred Heart Home
Phoenix	Dec. 6	Local school children/Phoenix Zoolights
Pittsburgh	Dec. 6	Marian Manor
Puerto Rico	Dec. 13	Hogar Santa Teresa Jornet
Raleigh/Durham	Dec. 7	Cary Health & Woodland Terrace
Rochester	Dec. 7	Board of Notre Dame Learning Center
San Diego	Dec. 8	St. Vincent de Paul Homeless Center
Seattle	Dec. 13	Holiday Stockings for Homeless Children
St. Louis	Dec. 6	Catholic Community Services
Tampa Bay	Dec. 13	Homeless Emergency Project
Washington/Baltimore	Dec. 6	St. Ann's Infant Home
West Michigan	Dec. 6	Renucci Hospitality House

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