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Campus Report June 5, 2008

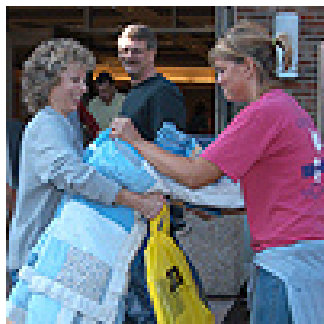
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Campus Report June 5, 2008

06.05.2008 | Campus and Community, Students Moving into a residence hall at college for the first time isn't easy; along with all the actual baggage often comes an emotional burden, too. For years at UD, a veritable army of golf carts and volunteers has eased both.

This year, with a slightly abbreviated move-in schedule that aims to have students ready for assembly by 2 p.m. that day, students organizing the effort are asking for some more help from faculty and staff, said junior pre-physical therapy major LeeAnn Chomanics, a student leadership executive for the new-student orientation program.

Move-in is scheduled from 7 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 16. Some volunteers will drive golf carts from the parking lots to Marycrest Hall with students' belongings. Others can assist with carrying students' belongings into Marianist, Founders, Stuart and Marycrest halls.

Counseling Center director Steve Mueller, who has been volunteering as a driver and mover every August for about 12 years, said the positive impression the service leaves on parents and new students is far more enduring than the occasional muscle aches.

"It's actually a very rewarding experience," he said. "Every year I've done it has been very fulfilling. They're just so thankful and happy to have some assistance, and they're struck by the fact that we as staff and faculty and students are helping them unload their van or cart their stuff to the residence hall. They really appreciate that."

Once during student move-in, a grateful parent from New York City offered Mueller a tip — not a dollar or two, but \$10 or \$20, Mueller recalls.

"I told him over and over, 'No, I work here; this is what we do,'" Mueller said, "but he finally shoved it in my hand and said, 'This is what we do in New York.' It's an East Coast vs. Midwestern thing, I guess."

In his years as a volunteer, he's seen load sizes increase and then decrease as technology has advanced. Bulky CD players, stereo speakers and video systems have waned with the near-ubiquitous iPod, and since UD now distributes student computers, he doesn't move many of those anymore, either.

And, true to his counselor nature, Mueller also notes, "There's an inverse statistical relationship between the humidity level and the smiles people have."

Jeannie Perry, a compensation manager in human resources, has driven a golf cart at move-in for the past five years.

"I have a great time meeting parents and students, and it supports our welcoming culture," she said. "Daily, my job has little interaction with students and parents, and it can be a stressful time for them, so I try to use a sense of humor."

Perry remembers a few items in particular:

- Oddest: a 6-foot-tall Pink Panther stuffed animal
- Largest: a futon that later was carried back to the car
- Heaviest: Televisions before flat screens
- Biggest surprise: Students bring bottled water and healthy snacks.

To volunteer, contact Andy Fulton, assistant director of educational and special programs, by e-mail or by telephone, 229-4114.

In order to drive the golf carts, staff and faculty must complete an online safety program; click on the related link.