This is a reminder that the university will celebrate the Christmas holiday break this year from Monday, December 23, 2013, through Wednesday, January 1, 2014. The holidays at Christmas are obtained by combining the Memorial Day (May 27) and Veterans’ Day (November 11) holidays with the three days given for Christmas. On December 30 and 31, 2013, employees in leave earning status have the option of using vacation, bonus or special leave, or leave without pay. FLSA eligible employees (those subject to overtime) may also use compensatory time off for this day. This will allow the University to close at the end of business on Friday, December 20, 2013, and remain closed until the opening of business on Thursday, January 2, 2014.

GIVING BACK

Season’s Greetings! It’s the time of the year when many people give back. This issue includes some ways that you can give back in Western North Carolina this holiday season!

GIVING BACK IN WNC FOR THE HOLIDAYS

The holiday season provides a perfect opportunity to give back, and there are many ways that staff members can help the community in the coming weeks. If you are able to share your time, there are a variety of groups that could use your help:

- The Jackson County Christmas Store distributes Christmas gifts to low-income children in our community and needs help sorting & distributing the donations. To volunteer, contact Elaine White at 828.507.6366.
- United Christian Ministries provides emergency assistance to people in need, with a food pantry and other aid programs. Call 631.0317 for more information about volunteering.
- Many other local groups can use an extra hand when our students are away during semester breaks. The Community Table, Catman2 Shelter, and Habitat for Humanity of Macon/Jackson County are just a few groups that can use help during the holiday season. Visit servicelearning.wcu.edu for a list of more volunteer opportunities.

Even if you can’t volunteer your time, you can still help. A variety of donation drives occur around the holiday season:

- Angel Tree works in tandem with the Jackson County Christmas Store to distribute holiday gifts to local children. Contact Residential Living at 828.227.7303 if you would like to make a donation.
- Jackson Neighbors in Need operates a cold-weather homeless shelter, a heating assistance program, and a weatherization program. Call 828.586.2345 for information about donating.
- The Center for Service Learning is collecting donations to help victims of the restaurant building fire, and Soul Infusion tea house will be donating a portion of their profits on December 21.

CONTACT US!

staffsenate@wcu.edu
staffsenate.wcu.edu
pinterest.com/wcustaffsenate/
THE STAFF SENATE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

This fall members of the Staff Senate (Marty Brow, Brian Wood, David Rathbone and Robin Hitch) participated in home football tailgating activities by selling ornaments to raise money for the Staff Scholarship Fund.

Students who are children and relatives of SPA and EPA non-faculty employees, and who will be attending WCU are eligible for the Staff Senate Scholarship. Preference will be given to the children and dependents of WCU employees, including those of the university’s contractual employees. However, consideration will be given to grandchildren, nieces and nephews. Applications are due in March.

If you have an article, announcement or suggestion relating to this newsletter, contact Staff Senate at staffsenate@wcu.edu to have it included.

SOUND OFF!

Last month, we asked if you think that the new changes to the state health care plan address your concerns about the health care costs. Here is what you said!

Out of 3 responses, 67% said yes—the new changes address their concerns while 33% thought they did not address their concerns.

This month, we would like to know how many community service hours you plan to use this calendar year (January 1-December 31, 2014) as well as what type of boards you’d like to see on the new Staff Senate Pinterest page! Sound off here!