

Tulane community celebrates the season with holiday toy drive

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Through Monday, Dec. 4, Tulane community members can donate gifts to children in need during the annual holiday toy drive benefiting Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for Children. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

As you gear up for your Black Friday and Cyber Monday shopping sprees, consider picking up extra gifts for children in need this holiday season. Since 2008, the Tulane community has given thousands of presents to local children living in foster care in Orleans, Jefferson and St. Tammany parishes through an annual toy drive organized by the Staff Advisory Council ([SAC](#)).

All donations collected during the toy drive will benefit the local chapter of the nonprofit organization Court Appointed Special Advocates ([CASA](#)) for Children, which operates a nationwide network of 933 community programs caring for abused and neglected youth.

“CASA volunteers go through training to serve as advocates for children in the foster care system, who are often going through court proceedings and other challenges,” said Trina Beck, assistant dean of Newcomb-Tulane College.

As an SAC representative for the Tulane uptown campus, Beck is coordinating the holiday toy drive for the fourth time.

“This event is one of my favorite things to be a part of. I find it really rewarding, as it’s such a fantastic cause,” she said.

The toy drive’s goal is to generate gifts—including developmental toys for toddlers, athletic equipment, Legos, comforter sets and books—that are suitable for all ages, ranging from infants to teenagers.

Beck also noted that each donated gift should not exceed a \$25 value, and every item should be new, not wrapped and boxed in original packaging.

“Our CASA partners especially need gifts for teens,” said Beck, adding that gift cards for local movie theaters or retailers like Foot Locker, GameStop or Bath & Body Works are ideal presents for this age group.

Through Monday, Dec. 4, SAC will collect contributions at several [sites](#) located on the uptown and downtown campuses, at University Square, and at the National Primate Research Center.

[Online credit card donations](#) to CASA are also being accepted.

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