

Knits for the Needy on St. Mary's Campus

Knits for the Needy is a club sponsored program that has a threefold goal. First, volunteers endeavor to provide high-quality, hand-made scarves and hats to homeless and low-income women and children living in the local community. Secondly, we strive to develop a sense of community and belonging to college-age knitters and other fiber artists. And third, we want to foster an environment where skills can be learned, developed, and shared.

The combination of the service and social aspects of the program seeks to serve two populations at once—the women and children who will wear the knits and the college students who will make them. Volunteers may also come from college faculty, staff, and local community knitters. Initially, an advertising campaign consisting of flyers and e-mails will promote interest and spread the word. Volunteers will be sorted into three groups: those who need instruction, those who are willing to instruct others, and advanced knitters who will be self-sustaining but unavailable to instruct.

Then, early in the semester (after club programming has begun) an informational and material distribution meeting will be held at an on campus location. Volunteers will be provided with needles and yarn appropriate to their chosen pattern, which is also provided by *Knits for the Needy*. During the course of the semester, volunteers will meet weekly or as needed at a convenient time to gain support and socialize, building self-confidence and skills at the same time. Refreshments and entertainment will be provided by *Knits for the Needy*. In the Fall, the program will culminate with a “knit-a-thon” in Upper Monty during Hunger and Homelessness week (exact date to be determined). Completed projects are due before Thanksgiving break and will be shipped or delivered to the shelter. (subject to change according to semester needs)

With the recent surge in popularity of knitting, and the potential material and/or monetary donations from local stores such as WalMart, Target, Michaels, and Crazy 4 Ewe, *Knits for the Needy* has wonderful potential as a program. Thank you.

Tiffany A. Turbin

Founding Coordinator, '05/'06