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University of Connecticut students are being asked to donate unneeded items to charity instead of tossing them out as the students leave at the end of the academic year. From left, Karolina Fucikova, a UConn graduate student organizes some of the items at one of the collection points, Eric Phillips, a junior from Mansfield, carries donated food to a van, Mary Reilly, a freshman from New Jersey, hands off a rug to a volunteer, and volunteer Olafemi Hunter, a volunteer graduate student from New Haven, takes a break at one of the 'Give and Go' collection tents.

Roxanne Pandolfi photos

Students urged to give before they go

By CATLIN M. DINEEN
Chronicle Staff Writer

STORRS — As students from the University of Connecticut packed up their belongings over the course of the week, they were encouraged to think twice before throwing away their "old" items.

As a freshman, Mary Reilly came to UConn with everything she could possibly need for her dorm room.

As she packed up her room Friday she realized she and her roommate had two of everything and some things simply had to go.

Luckily for Reilly, there was a "Give & Go" collection point outside her residence hall where she could donate her used belongings.

During the university's "Give & Go" event, 11 collections points were set up across the campus for students who were moving out to donate their used items instead of throwing them away.

Reilly, from Mt. Laurel, N.J., said she did not want to throw away her items if they could benefit people in the community.

According to Reilly, the trashcans in her hallway of Lester E. Shippee Hall were full and she hoped more people would donate their belongings instead.

"I think it's great," said Reilly as she parted ways with an area rug and an unopened box of Fruity

Pebbles.

"People are throwing away futons, but they're still good."

She said people should consider putting their old items "to good use" and give them to those who need them.

For many students the week-long event was not only a chance to depart with their tattered couch or extra mini-fridge, but it was an opportunity to give back to the community they've lived in since September.

On Friday the collection point

outside Shippee Hall was quiet most of the morning, but a stream of donations began trickling in at approximately 1 p.m.

As the student volunteer overseeing the collection point, graduate student Olafemi Hunter, of New Haven, said the morning had been "hit or miss" for donation collections.

He said he thought the event was a great chance for students to give back before they vacated Storrs.

"I think it's a great program,"

said Hunter. "I think as it improves through the years it will provide a lot of assistance (for area residents)."

Although the event officially began Tuesday, event organizers said they think the weekend will have the busiest collection and drop-off times.

"I'm sure we'll be blown away in the next few days," said UConn Sustainability Coordinator Jennifer Sayers.

Sayers — one of the organizers of the event — said this year was

the first time the program went campus-wide.

According to Sayers, the event not only assists students in the move-out process, but it is extremely beneficial to members of the community who benefit from items collected.

As a mixture of food, clothing and housewares were being collected, 17 different local agencies and non-profits will receive the items donated through the event.

Beneficiaries will include the Salvation Army, Daily Bread, Maine Bookstore, Tabor House, Mansfield Youth Services, Access Agency, Ashford Food Bank, Cornerstone Shelter, Covenant Soup Kitchen, New Beginnings Women's Crisis Center, Tri-Town Shelter, Shepard's Place, Mansfield Human Services, Habitat ReStore, Domestic Violence Shelter, Holy Family Home & Shelter and Coventry Human Services.

Sayers said the event was great opportunity for students to donate their used items to a good cause before heading home for the summer.

She said when students begin packing up at the end of the year many of them realize they do not have enough space to fly or drive their belongings home.

"You can't take all this stuff with you," she said, adding many students choose to "toss" their items in the end.



Freshmen Josh Johnson of Ledyard and Eric Warner Hunter of Branford donate a couch while moving out of Shippee Hall Friday afternoon.

Roxanne Pandolfi