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Davie students deliver gift cards, stuffed animals to family in need

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By Scott Fishman, Forum Publishing Group

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An act of charity can make a big difference during the holidays for those in need.

Members of the American Sign Language Club at the University School took this to heart. Days before Christmas, the Davie students collected and delivered \$125 in gift cards, 11 stuffed animals and other gifts to a single mother, who is hearing impaired, and her daughter.

When club founder Matthew Gore heard about the family through Neighbors 4 Neighbors, he wanted to help.

"They were down to about nothing," he said. "Giving is much better than receiving. The club was very happy to help give someone a Christmas."

A bed bug infestation forced the Lauderdale-by-the-Sea woman to throw away clothes, mattresses and her 8-year-old's stuffed animal collection. Gore and his classmates only had a week before the winter break to raise money for the effort.

"The results were better than I expected it to be," he said. "We had to pull through at the last minute. When we brought everything over, the mother was very thankful."

The club meets each month to discuss ways to help the deaf population. Calculus teacher and club adviser Kevin Dibert thought the group was a great idea because the sign language class had been recently cut.

"Matt wanted to raise awareness for the deaf," he said. "They've done collection drives and bake sales to raise money. They worked with organizations such as the Deaf Family Literacy Academy, which helps families with deaf children. They've been to deaf story time at the library."

For Gore, sign language is the mode of communication with his parents, who are both deaf. The senior also works with the other members on signing.

"I just felt it was important to spread the awareness of the deaf community," he said. "... We've donated to charity, and this year, we got to help a deaf family. It really makes you happy to give

the gift of giving."

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