

Basketball makes giving back to the local community a team priority

Program has notched more than 530 hours of service, donated thousands of canned goods

BAYTOWN, TX — Between the classes, practices and games that fill their busy weekly schedules, the Lee College basketball team has made it their mission to roll up their sleeves and get to work helping others in Baytown and beyond — completing more than 530 hours of community service since August 2016, and donating more than 6,000 canned goods to local food pantries in the last year alone.

To Head Coach Roy Champagne, volunteering their personal time to support worthy causes is an essential responsibility of being a Lee College student-athlete.

“It’s important for our guys to be a part of the Baytown community,” said Champagne, who started the team’s “I Can, U Can, We Can” collection and donation drive for canned goods. “The Baytown community affords these players the opportunity to get scholarships and be able to attend Lee College. Our service is a small way of trying to give back.”

The Lee basketball team visited six elementary schools in Baytown and Highlands to speak out against bullying and encourage kids to be great students and avid readers. They’ve cheered for young athletes at youth basketball nights and team try-outs. They’ve pulled on aprons and plastic gloves to dish up free dinners at Curt’s Kitchen run by Cedar Bayou Grace United Methodist Church. They’ve delivered thousands of canned goods to food pantries at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church and the Missouri Street Church of Christ, among others. And they’re mentoring students at Charles R. Drew Elementary School in Barrett Station, which the college has adopted as part of its Cradle to Career Network.

Now, the team is asking the community to join their efforts at the home game against Angelina College, which is set for a 6 p.m. tip-off on Saturday, Jan. 28, at the Lee College Sports Arena. Fans aged 19 and older who bring two canned goods will be given free entry in exchange for helping the team reach its goal of collecting 20,000 canned goods to help feed the hungry in the local community.

The team hopes to pack the 1,500-seat arena for the game against the Roadrunners and are encouraging all fans to “Rock the Red” and show their spirit. Additional information about “Rock the Red” is available online at www.lee.edu.