

The Stony Brook Stitchers

by Cody Campbell

Reaching out to those in need, Stony Brook Stitchers, a new club on campus, brings together members of the faculty, staff, students, and friends of Stony Brook University and the Stony Brook University Medical Center. “Our objective is to use our creative talents to provide hand crafted items for those in physical, emotional or spiritual need here within the Stony Brook University Medical Center and Stony Brook University community,” says Melissa Donnelly, staff assistant at the Stony Brook University Medical Center and co-founder of Stony Brook Stitchers. “We work very closely with hospital unit staff to make sure that any items we make are suitable for our patient and family population.”



A sample of the many projects the Stony Brook Stitchers donate to the community. Photo courtesy of the Stony Brook Stitchers.

The club was founded in December of 2008 by Melissa Donnelly and Shakeera Thomas, the program and event manager at the Computer Science department. Stony Brook Stitchers isn't just meant for those involved in the Computer Science department or at the hospital, though. “Anyone interested in joining the Stony Brook Stitchers is welcome. No experience is necessary. Our volunteers work independently as well as together, and share their ideas and experience to help one another,” Thomas says. “Our members knit, crochet and sew to create items that are then passed along to anyone who could benefit from the comfort of those items we create. All items are donated.”

The club has been successful in reaching out to a dramatically large number of people. Since January of 2009, Stony Brook Stitchers has produced over 290 comfort pillows, more than 100 blankets, 358 hats, three dozen pairs of booties, and 25 prayer shawls. They are donated to several units in the hospital and a number of Long Island non-profit organizations, like the Long Island Veterans Home and LI OCEANS (Long Island Ovarian Cancer Education Advocacy Networking Support), where they make comfort pillows for women who have undergone surgery for ovarian cancer.



Photo courtesy of the Stony Brook Stitchers.

“Since we began, our volunteer base has doubled and continues to grow as we continue to solicit new volunteers,” says Donnelly. That doesn't mean that they aren't looking for new volunteers, though. Throughout the next semester there are many new goals to be reached, including marketing the club to the Stony Brook University community and completing the development of the Stony Brook Stitchers Website and blog. Their most important upcoming objective, though, is to “give, give, give!!!” says Donnelly.

Anyone interested in giving, giving, giving should go to the Stony Brook Stitchers' website: www.stonybrookstitchers.com.