

## Donations Needed for Pets of the Homeless

**UC Davis vet students are assembling boxes of pet supplies for distribution to the homeless and their pets.**

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Veterinary students and newsletter officers at the University of California, Davis, William R. Pritchard Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital are seeking donations for gift baskets for pets belonging to the homeless. Since 1995, the students and committee members have filled approximately 130 decorated boxes annually with canned and dry food, treats, toys, leashes and pet-care products. The boxes are then provided to families who visit the December Mercer Veterinary Clinic for the homeless in Sacramento.

This year, the boxes will be assembled at noon Dec. 8 at the veterinary hospital and distributed Dec. 12 at the Mercer Clinic.

"During these unusually difficult times, we especially need monetary donations that can be used to purchase pet toys, which are a real source of joy for both the animals and their owners," said Eileen Samitz, a clinical microbiologist at the veterinary teaching hospital.

Samitz noted that pet supply companies provide the pet food and some of the other items for the holiday baskets, but other donations for toys and treats come from the community.

Mercer Clinic provides the pets of homeless individuals with basic veterinary care, access to emergency care and pet food, all free of charge. It is open on the second Saturday of each month, staffed by faculty and private veterinarians who volunteer their time and supervise the veterinary students.

More information about the holiday pet basket project is available on the school's website.