

CAMPUS

Volunteers to put books in schools

by Andy Bourelle

THE POST

The Student Coalition for Action in Literacy Education is seeking volunteers to unload and sort 50,000 books. The book drive is part of a program to help fight illiteracy in the area.

The drive, started during National Volunteer Week, needs volunteers to sort books from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. today and May 31 at Stirling Technology Inc., 178 Mill St. The books will be distributed to adult learning labs, schools and libraries in Athens County.

English classes from Federal Hocking Schools have been volunteering, and help from more schools would be appreciated, said James Wynn, SCALE's adviser.

The Christian Appalachia Project asked Penguin Books to donate unused books, which would have

been recycled.

The books are separated into boxes.

Volunteers are needed to sort the books according to quality and get them ready to distribute, Wynn said.

One of the project's objectives is to group books into sets for use in area schools.

"We might have to go through 100 boxes to find 100 copies of any one book," Wynn said.

Full sets of books are needed so each student can have a copy, said Bonnie Lacky, librarian for the Federal Hocking School District.

"The book drive is really going to defer the cost of education in the county," Wynn said.

The Adult Basic and Literacy Labs already have received about 20 boxes of books from the book drive.

"We're always looking for new materials for our labs to help people

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Bonnie Lacky, librarian, Federal Hocking School District

with literacy," said Joe McGowan, a literacy lab worker.

The OU chapter of SCALE was established three years ago. The 30 members provide free help in reading, writing, math and GED preparation. SCALE creates strong community awareness and supports studies about literacy problems.

Half of the chronically unemployed are not functionally literate, according to SCALE. Also, high school dropouts have an unemployment rate four

times higher than that of graduates.

"I think education is the main role of society," volunteer Emily Stein said. "I think (the book drive) is a big step."

Those interested in volunteering in the book drive can contact SCALE through the Center for Community Service on the ground floor of Baker Center or call (614) 593-4007.

Volunteers also can show up at the warehouse between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. today or next Friday. Volunteers and donations are needed year-round.