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## Honors Student Ambassadors' 'It's Personal' campaign to benefit Black Bear Exchange

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## UMaine Today



## Honors Student Ambassadors' 'It's Personal' campaign to benefit Black Bear Exchange

February 23, 2021

University of Maine Honors Student Ambassadors Katie Tims and Bailey West are launching the "It's Personal" personal care items donation campaign to benefit the Black Bear Exchange (BBE) on campus.

Through the donation drive, Tims, a fourth-year Honors biology major from Cornish, Maine, and West, a fourth-year Honors biochemistry major from Stockton Springs, Maine, hope to increase access to personal care items, decrease stigma around utilizing food pantries and fight food insecurity on the University of Maine campus.

Individuals who face food insecurity often struggle to meet other basic needs, and may go without necessities like personal care items, the student leaders say.

"Food pantries, including our campus food pantry, are often lacking much-needed resources such as personal care items, because they are unable to prioritize purchasing those items over food products," says Tims.

Last fall, the team hosted a "Giving Tuesday" drive that yielded over 500 donated goods for the BBE. They were awarded a \$500 grant in December from the Maine Hunger Dialogue to fund their ongoing work.

The "It's Personal" campaign seeks to foster friendly competition between units and organizations campuswide. The competition will be designed in a bracket system, with campus units competing to collect the most personal care items.

The campaign runs from March 8 until Maine Day, April 28. The campus group collecting the most donations of personal care products for BBE will receive a trophy. All individuals and fellow Black Bears are encouraged to support their favorite "team" and join in on the friendly competition.

For more information or to register a group for the competition, contact Bailey West, [bailey.west@maine.edu](mailto:bailey.west@maine.edu), or Katie Tims, [kathleen.tims@maine.edu](mailto:kathleen.tims@maine.edu), by March 1.

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