

## **ESTAR: Milligan hosts 5th annual Advent Market**

Christmas time is officially in full effect at Milligan College.

To celebrate the upcoming holiday season, the institution hosted their fifth annual Advent Market on Wednesday, Nov. 30, inside the Gregory Center – right in the heart of the campus.

The event is used as an “alternative” to the hectic Christmas shopping season as local vendors lined up throughout the main hallway of the Gregory Center to present their different arts and crafts. Director of Campus Activities Jason Onks, who spearheaded the event, added the market is always a popular sell to the community.

“It actually predates me,” Onks said. “The premise for the event is to give our students, many who are not from this area, to have a very convenient option to be able to do some shopping for the holidays. This event is also used as a way to highlight some of our local talents and give them the opportunity to be on campus and showcase what they can do. It always seems to be a good community event.”

While students flocked to check out what was available, Onks added the market was also open to the general public.

“It’s open to anybody, not only the campus community,” he said. “A lot of the time we’ve seen people stop by on their lunch breaks to see what’s offered.” Approximately 15 vendors were on hand Wednesday with different items available, including jewelry, clothing and other handcrafted items. Each of the vendors were from the Tri-Cities area, so customers were able to keep the “shop small” attitude alive following up a successful “Small Business Saturday” celebrated in the county. Onks added he had to turn away a couple of vendors due to space requirements. Customers were also greeted with free refreshments and the soothing melodies of Christmas music throughout the building.

While the annual events continue to pick up steam each year, the excitement that’s been on campus is close to reaching a fever pitch. Milligan College will celebrate its 150th anniversary of being an institution on the campus’ Saturday, Dec. 10.

“It’s been pretty fantastic,” Onks said about the campus atmosphere. “We’ve been celebrating the sesquicentennial now for over a year. We started celebrating October 2015 and have been going since. Our actual birthday is in the next couple of weeks, so it’ll all cumulate during that time. It’s been a lot of work, but we’ve had a lot of fun with all the different events. We’ve been able to take the time out to really acknowledge and appreciate all the history here and see the impact Milligan College has made in this community and the country, quite frankly, because we have so many students that aren’t from around here.”

If an individual missed out on the opportunity to take part in the market, there’s no need to fret. Onks added that interested customers can contact him via email at [jonks@milligan.edu](mailto:jonks@milligan.edu) or call (423) 461-8335 and that he can get patrons in contact with a vendor that took part in the event.

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MILLIGAN COLLEGE is a Christian liberal arts college in Northeast Tennessee whose vision is to change lives and shape culture through a commitment to servant leadership. The college offers more than 100 majors, minors, pre-professional degrees and concentrations in a

variety of fields, along with graduate and adult degree completion programs. To learn more about Milligan College, visit [www.milligan.edu](http://www.milligan.edu) or call 800-262-8337.