The Second Annual SUNY Oswego Hunger Games event will be taking place this Sunday in the Campus Center Ice Arena at 3 p.m. The Hunger Games event is inspired by the popular book and movie series that pits tributes together from each “district” against each other in a fight to the death in a post-apocalyptic North America.

Although the Oswego version won’t be seeing any bloodshed, the competition which selects one male and one female tribute from each SUNY Oswego residence hall is a fun competitive event that also raises awareness for the important cause of local hunger.

The Hunger Games event sees the tributes go at it in the Campus Center Ice Arena by trying to eliminate their opponents by removing Velcro bulls-eyes from their bodies, or by shooting them with NERF bullets. The tributes will get to use such weapons as foam noodles, NERF swords and axes, and gloves to try to eliminate their opponents. The last tribute standing is declared the champion and wins a $50 cash prize.

The tributes were selected in the previous months in “reaping” ceremonies in each residence hall. Those were interested in volunteering as tributes were given one free entry into the random drawing with each additional entry costing either money or canned goods to be donated to the local Oswego Food Pantry. From there, one male and one female tribute were randomly selected to participate.

Garrett Wilson came up with the idea for the event while he was a Resident Assistant in Funnelle Hall. “I was working in Hart over the winter last year, and had just finished the last book of the series. Myself and Audrey Egelston, a former GRM of Hart Hall, started brainstorming ideas. Originally it was just supposed to be an area program the for central-lake area but central-lake turned us down so we moved on to bigger and better things and it just grew from there.”

Wilson, now the President of Alpha Phi Omega and Assistant Hall Director of Cayuga Hall, says there will be differences in this year’s event as opposed to last year’s.

“We’re hoping it will be more organized, since last year was the first year. Overall the biggest change is audience participation and better awareness of what’s going on. Last year we feel like people were into it, but they didn’t really know what was going on in terms of giving gifts and stuff like that.”
The gifts Wilson is referring to are what allow the audience to participate and help out their favorite tribute during the games. Audience members can pay or donate canned goods to give the tributes an added advantage such as stronger armor or extra lives.

Wilson believes that The Hunger Games event not only promotes a good cause, but has the potential to change the culture at SUNY Oswego. “The first thing that this event promotes is that we can have a fun time while raising awareness about local hunger,” said Wilson. “The second thing is that this campus needs more healthy traditions. We have things like Questmas Eve and Bridge Street Run that seem to survive year after year but other things seem to die out that aren’t as popular. So we hope this event sticks for the future.”

The Hunger Games will be co-sponsored by Campus Recreation, who will be providing foam mats for use during the live event this Sunday. Wilson believes that The Hunger Games encourages recreation amongst students. “I’ve heard about tributes training well in advance for the event and getting in shape. It’s a safe environment on campus that allows them to get involved in a positive way with other students that is also physically fit.”

The doors will open at 2 p.m. this Sunday, April 7th and in the hour before the event audience members are encouraged to learn more about the games sponsors, enter raffles, and buy food and drink provided. All proceeds of the event go to the Oswego Food Pantry, a member of the Food Bank of Central New York.