

United Way's annual Community Christmas is in full swing with 100 boxes available for contributions

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**COMMUNITY
CHRISTMAS**



EAST ALTON — United Way's annual Community Christmas is in full swing with more than 100 boxes at participating businesses, churches, schools and organizations throughout the Riverbend area. The program is collecting items through December 5 for local people in need this holiday season. A list of participating locations hosting a box can be found at [HelpingPeople.org/ Christmas2018](http://HelpingPeople.org/Christmas2018).

This year, the top needs in the community are for new coats, blankets, household and personal care items. Other items needed by local agencies include non-perishable food, new toys for kids of all ages, baby formula and diapers, and new clothes, socks, hats, gloves and scarves.

All of the items collected will be distributed to the following agencies to help people in the community during the holiday season and beyond:

100 Black Men – Alton Branch

Boys and Girls Club of Alton

Calhoun County Council for Senior Citizens

Caritas Family Solutions

Catholic Charities of Madison County

Catholic Children's Home

Centerstone

Children's Home and Aid

Crisis Food Center

Illinois Center for Autism

Madison County Urban League

Oasis Women's Center

Operation Blessings

Riverbend Family Ministries

Riverbend Head Start Family Services

Salvation Army

In addition, monetary donations are also accepted and will be used to purchase items in short supply or not collected. Donations can be made online at [Helpingpeople.org/christmas2018](https://helpingpeople.org/christmas2018) or mailed to United Way at 707 Berkshire Blvd., Suite 270, East Alton, IL 62024, marked Attn: Community Christmas.

[Helpingpeople.org/christmas2018](https://helpingpeople.org/christmas2018)

“United Way’s Community Christmas program helps more than 8,000 people each year, but that is only possible because of the incredible generosity of local businesses, schools, churches and individuals in the Riverbend community,” said Martha Morse, chair of the Community Christmas Committee and business development representative for 1st MidAmerica Credit Union. “Not only do these gifts represent a brighter holiday for children and families, but often times the items collected through our program are basic necessities like coats and hats that ensure people are warm all winter long.”

In addition to donating items, volunteers are needed for a variety of opportunities, including picking up donation-filled boxes and sorting the thousands of items. Those interested in donating items, hosting a box or volunteering can call 618-258-9800 for more information.