



United Way's Community Christmas Program Collects Thousands of Items for Local People

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EAST ALTON, IL (December 13, 2019) - This year, the Riverbend community donated thousands of items for United Way's annual Community Christmas program. The items collected include new toys, non-perishable food, baby and personal care items, and winter essentials like coats, hats, gloves, and scarves. (Photos available for download.)

This year's drive concluded Thursday when dozens of volunteers spent the day collecting donation boxes from nearly 60 local businesses, churches, and schools and sorting the items for distribution to 15 local nonprofit agencies. The agencies estimate that more than 8,000 people in the Riverbend area will be helped this holiday season through the program.

"Once again, the Riverbend community came together in a big way to help their neighbors through Community Christmas," said Maura Wuellner, director of the Southwest Illinois Division of United Way. "We are incredibly grateful to all of those who participated this year by making a donation or volunteering. Many people in our community will receive a special gift or an essential item this year during the holidays because of your generosity."

The 15 agencies distributing the items include 100 Black Men - Alton Branch; Boys and Girls Club of Alton; Caritas Family Solutions; Catholic Charities of Madison County; Catholic Children's Home; Centerstone; Children's Home & Aid; Crisis Food Center, Inc.; Illinois Center for Autism; Madison County Urban League; Oasis Women's Center; Operation Blessing; Riverbend Family Ministries; Riverbend Head Start & Family Services and The Salvation Army - Alton.

The following are supporters of United Way's Community Christmas program: Freer Auto Body, Feder Trucking, Main Street United Methodist Church in Alton, Phillips 66

Wood River Refinery, The Telegraph, Alton School District, Edwardsville School District, Alton's PACUP Program and nearly 60 local Riverbend businesses and churches who hosted a donation box.

Donations are still being accepted and can be dropped off at United Way at 707 Berkshire Blvd., Suite 270 in East Alton.

About United Way of Greater St. Louis United Way of Greater St. Louis mobilizes the community with one goal in mind - helping people live their best possible lives. Located throughout 16 counties in Missouri and Illinois, United Way helps one in three people in the region build a foundation for a good quality of life through basic needs, education, financial stability, health and strong communities. For more information, contact 314-421-0700 or visit www.HelpingPeople.org.