

# United Way's Community Christmas Raises Thousands for Local People in Need

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**EAST ALTON** — This year, United Way’s annual Community Christmas program raised more than \$40,000 to help an estimated 600 Riverbend area individuals and families in need this holiday season.

The program concluded Friday as Riverbend area nonprofits finished shopping for gifts and essential items to be distributed to local people in need. The items purchased include new toys, baby and personal care items, and winter essentials like coats, hats, gloves and scarves.

“Even with the changes to the program this year because of COVID-19, the community united together to make an incredible impact for local people in need,” said Maura Wuellner, director of the Southwest Illinois Division of United Way. “Our agencies were very intentional in shopping for their specific families and identifying the perfect gifts for each one. The agencies are so grateful to everyone who made this possible.”

The 13 agencies distributing items this year include 100 Black Men – Alton Branch, Boys and Girls Club of Alton, Caritas Family Solutions, Catholic Children’s Home, Centerstone, Crisis Food Center, Illinois Center for Autism, Madison County Urban League, Oasis Women’s Center, Operation Blessing, Riverbend Family Ministries, Riverbend Head Start Family Services and Village of Royal Lakes.



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 people in the region build a foundation for a good quality of life through basic needs, financial stability, education, health and strong communities.

For more information, contact 314-421-0700 or visit [www.HelpingPeople.org](http://www.HelpingPeople.org).