



*Holiday Aid
Program
Final Report 2018*



2018 Holiday Aid Program Final Report

Program Description:

Using donated funds and other gifts, Greenwich families and individuals are helped with food, funds, clothing and gifts at Thanksgiving and Christmas or Chanukah. For individuals or families to qualify for Holiday Aid, their income must not exceed 200% of the federal poverty guidelines. Under these guidelines, a family of four with a monthly income of \$4,183 or less is eligible for services. The amount for an individual is \$2,023.

Smaller families receive certificates or gift cards redeemable for groceries at ACME or Stop & Shop in Greenwich. The values of each year's gift cards are determined by the amount of donations received. Food baskets are often awarded to larger families of four or more people, but depending on the number of donated baskets, families of 3 or 2 also receive one.

At Christmas/Chanukah, new toys, hats, mittens, and scarves, and a variety of gifts such as jewelry or clothing are also provided for children fourteen and under.

Our Generous Donors:

The Holiday Aid program would not be possible without the generosity of concerned citizens, churches, community organizations, and businesses. The Department of Human Services staff work hand-in-hand with volunteers to raise funds to provide aid to Department clients on low or fixed incomes.

Community Expectations:

The Greenwich residents who contribute to our Holiday Aid program represent the intense community interest in ensuring that all members of the community participate fully in the celebration of the holidays. They enthusiastically support holiday projects through their churches, the workplace, and various organizations, and make individual contributions of cash, food, or other gifts.

In return they expect our Department to identify the eligible residents, refer them by age and gender for proper clothing and gift selection, and coordinate the selection of donated food baskets and other tangible donations with specific families and their needs.

Some donors recognize the need for more than the traditional items of toys and food (though important). They show their concern by meeting some special needs that will make a difference in clients' lives throughout the year and possibly for years to come. The Department appreciates the generosity of all community donors, and enjoys its effective public-private partnership with them that permits all Greenwich residents, regardless of circumstances, to enjoy the holidays as they are traditionally celebrated in our country.

Program Operation:

Much of our work consists of coordinating community efforts to help disadvantaged residents at the holidays. This year continued to be challenging, due to high volume of eligible residents, as well as their economic environment.

The Community Gifts Coordinator receives referrals from Department professional staff on behalf of clients identified as having little or no means of celebrating the holidays in keeping with tradition in this country. Clients may receive assistance at Thanksgiving and/or Christmas or Chanukah, depending on need and the amount of donations received. Some seek help for one holiday only.

The activities of the 2018 Holiday Aid program are summarized below.

Achievements This Year:

A total of \$17,540 was available in donations this year, \$3,175 or 15% less than last years \$20,715. Included in this total is \$6,950 in Stop & Shop and Shop Rite gift cards as described below.

Thanksgiving Project:

We served 404 unduplicated households, 16 more than last year's 165. The households consisted of 1,069 individuals, 2 less than last year's 1,071. We issued 165 ACME Food cards, an increase of 26 food cards or 19% from last year, totaling \$3,300. This was \$620 or 73% more than last year's \$2,680. The Thanksgiving Food cards were funded by a generous allocation from the Salvation Army, Greenwich Service Unit. 349 food baskets (200 last year) were delivered by various groups. One donor, Suzane Diddel, also donated and delivered 36 additional baskets to Greenwich residents who are not our clients (families that were referred by school social worker/psychologist). That was in addition to her 9 baskets for our clients. Please see Appendix B for a list of Thanksgiving contributors.

Christmas and Chanukah Project:

This year, 446 unduplicated households were served, compared to 421 last year. The households were comprised of 1,170 individuals, 25 more than last year. We issued 359 \$20, \$25 or \$50 ACME or Stop & Shop gift cards, an increase in cards of 13 over last year's 346. The cards totaled \$8,215, less than last year's \$8,600. Most households served at Christmas/Chanukah are also served at Thanksgiving.

Donors contributed 87 holiday baskets or wish list packages, 8 more than last year. Some families of three or four received food baskets, usually reserved for families of 5 or more. In addition to food, some baskets contained books, gifts, and other items. See Appendix C for Christmas basket donors.

Specialized Christmas/Chanukah Giving:

In addition to the types of assistance mentioned above, some groups and individuals specialized ways of giving.

For the second year a group of Greenwich couples got together to sponsor a very special project. They organized an evening where they all went shopping together at Target for the wish lists of 24 of our client families who were eligible for the Holiday Aid Program. Afterwards, they had dinner together and wrapped the gifts. They then delivered the gifts to families in time for the holidays. When one of the couples delivered the packages to their family, they learned that the family was in the middle of moving to Armstrong Court; so they went home to get their pickup truck and helped them move! They then proceeded to collect donations from 10 of the other couples and bought this family a refrigerator! What a wonderful holiday surprise.

A church which has been a holiday donor for years went above and beyond their generous norm this season.

The Second Congregational Church has provided many food baskets and gifts to clients at Christmas over many years. This year the church parishioners once again were asked to donate funds, which would be turned into food gift cards. The generous outpouring resulted in a donation to our Dept. of \$5,000 in Stop & Shop gift cards.

We also received cards from others in the community, after the Greenwich Time published a story describing our need to help hundreds of households.

A new donor, Diane Turk, who also put together a food and gift basket for one of our families donated \$700 in Stop & Shop cards.

And Suzanne Diddel, mentioned above in the Thanksgiving section, gave us \$1,250 in Shop Rite cards.

Toy Project:

The annual Toy Distribution Project, co-sponsored by the Department and the Greenwich Housing Authority at Agnes Morley Heights, served 313 (out of a total of 393 eligible)

unduplicated children, 14 or 4% less than last year's 327. The number of toys each child received was determined by the number of toys donated, and the number of children comprising each age group. Donations were considerably higher in 2017. A little over 1,000 items were donated.

For many years the distribution has been successfully organized by randomly assigning appointment times to participating families; six one-hour periods on the Saturday before Christmas. The flow was smooth, a steady stream of clients throughout the day.

See Appendix D for Toy distribution volunteers and Appendix E for toy donors.

Angel Tree Project:

The Department was fortunate to have eight agencies or groups and several individuals who wanted to participate in the Angel Tree Project.

All the agencies coordinated their Angel Trees in about the same way. The Department submitted referrals including age, sex, size and needed clothing items (mostly jackets, sweaters, shoes and boots), for each child, age zero to seventeen. Most of the agencies also accepted toy requests. The "angel" was then chosen, the gift shopped for, and the gift was returned to us wrapped. The distribution occurred at Town Hall about a week before Christmas.

We are extremely grateful to the following who participated in the project: St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church, (167 items), Greenwich Municipal Credit Union (218), The Travel Exchange (15), First Presbyterian Church (125), St. Barnabas (80), Members Credit Union (18), Salon H (77), Westchester Lazer Assoc. (29). The individuals donated a total of 25.

Altogether 754 gifts (676 last year) were donated to 476 unduplicated children through the Angel Tree project. This was the most ever! Everyone involved was understandably very pleased. See Appendix F for Angel Tree volunteers.

Salvation Army Kettle Drive:

The Army allocated funds from its local Christmas Kettle Drive to support some of our programs and other services in the community. The Kettle Drive raised \$4,456 this year, \$2,395 or 116% more than last year's total of \$2,061. After not participating last year, the Retired Men's Association of Greenwich picked up a few weekends this year at ACME in Riverside.

Per Salvation Army policy, 10% must be sent to Army headquarters in Hartford. This leaves \$4,010 in Greenwich.

Out of the total, \$1,687 came from one sight on Greenwich Ave., Betteridge Jewelers. This is \$374 or 16% less than last year's \$2,061.

The Community Coordinator assumes most of the recruiting for the Kettle located on Greenwich Avenue. Coordinator Alison Brush again coordinated the Kettle Drive for this site, using volunteers from a community including a few families who rang together and sang Christmas Carols. The combined volunteer hours for all groups, on four weekends and some weekdays, totaled 23, 12 less than last year. A total of 16 volunteers rang bells this year, 20% less than last year's.

The Community Gifts Coordinator visited the store, Betteridge Jewelers, where the kettle was to be placed to gather information on store hours, kettle storage, etc. She took responsibility for collecting money at the end of each day from the Greenwich Ave. sport. She recruited her spouse and friends to ring the bells, collect money and assist with this and other holiday projects.

Submitted by Alison Brush, Coordinator Community Gifts Program

January 7, 2019

APPENDIX A
2018 HOLIDAY AID PROGRAM DONATIONS
(63 Donors)

Mrs. Salma Admad	Mr. John Margenot
Ms. Mabel Arteaga	Mrs. June Marks
Mrs. Lucille Auger	Mrs. Shirley Marzullo
Mrs. Stephanie Barrett	Ms. Nancy Mott
Mr. Eric Beiley	Mr. Ronald Napoli
Mrs. Deborah Berner	N.L.A.P.W. CT Pioneer Branch
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Bingle	Mr. George Nelson
Mr. Jim Blake	Ms. Lorelei O'Hagen
Mr. Kenneth Bloom	Mr. Thomas Ohlsohn
Mrs. Ann Blumensaadt	Mr. Peter Orthwein
Mrs. Adrian Holmes-Bradford	Mr. Ronald Papa
Mrs. Lauren Caputo	Ms. Irene Peluso
Mrs. James Carroll	Mr. Thomas Petrone
Mr. Stanley Connell	Ms. Kathryn Pignataro
Mr. Jerome Caulfield	Mrs. Jacqueline Raffa
Ms. Sophie Dowling	Ms. Nina Restieri
Mr. David Finn	Mr. Ronald Ropiak
Ms. Stacey Fox	Mr. Bruce Russian
Mr. Michael Galbreath	Susan Ryder/Michael Tierney Fund
Mrs. Swan Grant	St. Saviors Church
Mrs. Anne Greene	Mrs. Linda Schwartzman
Mr. Mitchell Goldberg	Mrs. Katherine Simon
Mr. Jeff Grossman	Mr. Paul Sitarz
Mrs. Linda Grunow	Mrs. Bridget Snyder
Mrs. Marilyn Harris	Mrs. Sindy Steinberg
Mrs. Margaret Heap	Mr. Robert Strucker
Mrs. Joan Insigna	Mrs. Jean Treacy
Mrs. Virginia Keeshan	Dr. Russell Turk
Mr. Frank Kelly	Mrs. Catherine Wan

Mr. Robert Lichtenfelt
 Mrs. Margot Mabie
 Mr. & Mrs. William Mahoney

Mr. David Windreich
 Mrs. Alison Wolowitz

APPENDIX B
THANKSGIVING FOOD BASKETS
Community Donors (12) Baskets (239)

Kathy Derene	3	Greenwich Police	3
Suzanne Diddel & Family	9	Ladies Auxiliary of Byram Vets	5
First Lutheran Church	1	Ladies Auxiliary of Cos Cob	10
Maria Garzona	1	Little Bethel AME Church	4
Greenwich Academy	40	St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church	55
Greenwich Firefighters	12	The Travel Exchange	1
Greenwich High School	96		

APPENDIX C
CHRISTMAS OR CHANUKAH FOOD BASKET
Community Donors (13) Baskets and Wish Lists (87)

Name/Organization	Baskets	Name/Organization	Baskets
Christa Civitello	1	Nicole Heath	1
Laurie Curtis	1	Marsha Mifflin	1
Kathy Derene	6	Stonepoint Capital	1
Maria Garzona	1	Mollu Zola	1
Hill House Wishlists	4	Diane Tank	2
Faris Abi Naber Wishlists	2	Greenwich Academy Lower School	42
Laura Getts & Emily Michaud Wishlists	24		

APPENDIX D
TOY DISTRIBUTION PROJECT

(12) Volunteers

Mrs. Ampara Aoboleda
Ms. Sandra Bria
Mr. Roderick Brush
Mrs. Lidia Calderon
Mrs. Alba Calle
Mrs. Virginia Inocencio

Mrs. Teresita Laredo
Mrs. Virginia Meza
Mrs. Marlene Ramos
Mrs. Idalia Rodriguez
Mr. Fernando Ruiz
Mr. Mickey Slater

APPENDIX E
TOY DISTRIBUTION

(14) Donors

Mrs. Joanne Benvenuto
CT Pioneer National League of Penwomen
CNG Co. & Union Local 380
Greenwich Country Day School
Glenville Mavericks
Improved order of Redmen
Ivy, Barnum and O'Mara

Mrs. Anne Leonhardt
Mrs. Lillian London
Mrs. Judi Rutkamp
St. Mary Church Social Concerns
Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Sheridan
Ms. Jean Treacy
Ms. Liz Wold

ANGEL TREE PROJECT

(4) Volunteers

Mr. Roderick Brush
Mr. Craig Friedman
Ms. Angelique Keyes
Mr. Fernando Ruiz