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Customer Relations put together a massive effort to add to the Fred Jordan Mission, contributing 200 gifts to the overall goal of 5,000. Back, from left: Linda Perryman, EEO Program Investigator; Jay Fiskus, Senior Diversity & Economic Opportunity Representative; Gail Harvey, Director Customer Relations; Jeanne Kinsel, Director Contract Administration; Alicia Rodriguez, Administrative Aide, Customer Relations. Front, from left: Barbara Thomasson, Diversity & Economic Opportunity Rep and Alonzo Williams, Communications Manager.



Photo: Gayle Anderson

Metro's Forces Gather for Charitable Christmas Efforts

- 'Toys for Tots' at Division 9
- Stevie Wonder's "House Full of Toys" at Divisions 5 and 18

By JIMMY STROUP

(Dec. 4, 2007) As part of the major effort the agency has put together to aid the Fred Jordan Mission gather toys for underprivileged children, Metro Customer Relations presented 200 toys to the growing pile, Nov. 30.

Marie Tervalon and Alicia Rodriguez coordinated the effort that garnered donations like hooded sweatshirts, CD players and backpacks out of the Customer Relations department – which only has 103 employees.

"I [was] pleased that the staff was so excited about the opportunity to contribute to this annual activity and they did an outstanding job," said Alonzo Williams, Communications Manager.



Barbara Thomasson, Diversity & Economic Opportunity Rep, and Alonzo Williams, Communications Manager, collect unwrapped gifts from Customer Relations into clear plastic bags to include with donations the agency has made to the Fred Jordan Mission.

Donations for the Fred Jordan Mission drive are being accepted until Dec. 6 and will be distributed on Dec. 16. Volunteers are still needed for the distribution; for more information contact Barbara Thomasson at 922-4526.

Toys for Tots

Elsewhere in Metro's vast organization, San Gabriel Valley Division 9 Assistant Maintenance Manager Sal Llamas is spearheading a "Toys for Tots" endeavor. He first heard about and worked with the program while enlisted as a Marine, and wanted to continue his involvement with it now that he's out of the military.

With the help of the service sector offices, Llamas is coordinating with a local Marine Corps unit in Pico Rivera to aid their nationwide organization which distributes toys to various non-profit organizations.

"We collect new, unwrapped toys," he said. "The Marines get information from the non-profits who want toys and then they distribute them. We're helping get the toys that they give away all over the country."

The donations are being accepted at Division 9 until Dec. 14. The Marines get the toys shortly thereafter and deliver them to kids on Dec. 21.



Lynn Montano, Michelle Cardenas, Freddie Flores, Tensy Alba and Jim Montoya are the volunteers spearheading the Gift Giving Drive for the Fred Jordan Mission at the Metro Support Services Center (MSSC). Automated Guideway Vehicle 11 cheerfully holds some of the gifts already collected. For some reason, Number 11 refuses to wear Holiday colors. Montoya, who leads the gift collection efforts for the MSSC and bus divisions this year, said, "We've gotten a lot of gifts from rail and the MSSC. We look forward to the bus divisions coming through during the last week of the toy drive." The deadline for the divisions to donate gifts to the toy drive is at the close of business on Dec. 6.

Stevie Wonder's House of Toys

On the other side of town, Arthur Winston Division 5 and Carson Division 18 are working to contribute to Stevie Wonder's "House Full of Toys" annual toy drive, which corresponds with an annual concert by Wonder and various other artists.

Operator Jimi Greene is heading an effort that's now in its 12th year. Greene heard about the program 11 years ago and was so touched by the campaign that he was driven to become involved.

"I put myself out there and said, 'Let's see if we can get some more help here,' and the people at the divisions have been very helpful in making this a success," Greene said.

He and his Harley crew deliver the toys in a caravan of motorcycles that demands attention as it passes. Last year the divisions managed two truckloads of donations and Greene is eager to beat that this year.

To help, KJLH 102.3 FM is doing a special remote broadcast of Guy Black's morning show at Division 18 on Dec. 10 from 6 to 10 a.m.

"We've formed a kind of partnership with 'House Full of Toys' and it's been going very well for a lot of years now," he said.

The bulk of donated toys will be delivered to the organization on Dec. 15, but donations are being accepted until Dec. 22.