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CEO Art Leahy is joined by Diversity & Economic Opportunity employees Sr. Rep. Jay Fiskus (a.k.a. Santa) and helpers, from left, Rep. Violeta Aguilos, Manager Tashai Smith and Asst. Admin. Analyst Elizabeth Garcia. *Photo by Michael D. White*

## 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Gift Giving Drive Has Now Begun...

- Employees Asked To Pick Up a Tag, Donate A Toy To Benefit Fred Jordan Mission

By Laura Kloth  
*Staff Writer*

(Nov. 17, 2009) Accompanied by Santa and his elves, CEO Art Leahy was on hand Tuesday to help launch Metro's 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Gift Giving Drive benefiting Skid Row Kids at the Fred Jordan Mission.

Employees who wish to participate are being asked to pick up a tag at a table on the third floor from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. this week.

Some of the items requested include blankets, cars, dolls, sports balls, stuffed animals, backpacks, rain gear and canned goods. Organizers have set a goal of distributing gifts to 30 percent more children this year, including more gifts for middle school-aged children.

"Last year more than 5,000 toys and other items were donated," said Diversity and Economic Opportunity Representative Barbara Thomasson, who is assisting in coordinating this year's drive. "And this year, people have already started signing up early and bringing their gifts."

All unwrapped items must be delivered to the Diversity and Economic Department on the 13<sup>th</sup> floor by 4 p.m. on Dec. 11.

Deputy Chief Executive officer Paul Taylor joked that Leahy was the “Chief Elf Officer” as he signed up to help to launch the holiday charity effort.

“It’s wonderful. We’re all lucky that we can do this,” Leahy said after receiving his tag.

Once collected, the toys will be loaded onto Metro buses and delivered to the mission on Wednesday, Dec. 16.

Participating divisions and rail location employees can pick up their tags from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the MSSC, where the contact is Jim Montoya, and at participating rail yards where the contact is Amador Silva.