



Town of Palm Beach United Way

44 Coconut Row, M201  
Palm Beach, FL 33480  
561-655-1919

## 28th Annual Holiday Toy Drive collects over \$20,000 and hundreds of gifts to distribute to children in need in Palm Beach County

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**Contact:** Aleese Kopf, 561-655-1919; [aleesekopf@palmbeachunitedway.org](mailto:aleesekopf@palmbeachunitedway.org)

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**PALM BEACH, FL** – The Town of Palm Beach United Way’s 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Toy Drive was a huge success, collecting over \$20,000 and hundreds of toys to help bring hope and joy to low income families in Palm Beach County.

More than 200 families and organizations donated to the drive, which began on November 7 and ended on December 5. Collections started two weeks early this year to allow donors more time to purchase and receive toys due to shortages and supply chain issues. Palm Beach fire stations, Field of Greens and the United Way office served as drop off locations. By the end of the drive, the lobby of the town’s central fire station was overflowing with piles of toys.

“It was amazing,” said Board Chairman Mary Freitas. “We had such a remarkable turnout this year. We are so appreciative of the entire Palm Beach community – individuals, families, businesses and organizations. They all helped to make this a special holiday season for so many children in need in Palm Beach County.”

The toys were split evenly between three United Way nonprofit partner agencies: Catholic Charities, Clinics Can Help and Farmworker Coordinating Council.

Catholic Charities separated the items by age group, wrapped them and distributed the gifts to 120 families at a drive-through toy pickup December 7 in Riviera Beach.

“The families that we serve cannot afford to buy presents for their children,” said Krishna Rivera, Operations Director at Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Palm Beach. “They are individuals with children that were victims of human trafficking, families that have lost their jobs and/or homes, and new mothers that are experiencing child rearing for the first time.”

Rivera said many children were inside the vehicles during the pickup event.

“Their reaction was priceless and full of smiles,” he said. “The gratitude from the parents and children were beyond what words can express. It really showed the true meaning of Christmas, and we truly appreciate all the toys the Town of Palm Beach United Way and its supporters provided to us.”

Farmworker Coordinating Council will distribute toys to clients in Lake Worth and Belle Glade.

**ONE COMMUNITY. ONE GOAL.**

**“Families who receive help from our agency are below the poverty line, so buying toys for their children at times is last on their list,” said Dianelys Sanchez, Director of Programs at Farmworker Coordinating Council. “Your toy donation is a symbol of hope and healing to the families and their children, especially because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the changes it has brought to us all.”**

**Clinics Can Help will host an event at its office in West Palm Beach to distribute gifts to children and teens who receive services from the agency. Toys will be delivered to families who cannot attend the event.**

**The dollars collected during the toy drive will be evenly divided between 20 nonprofits located throughout Palm Beach County from Boca Raton to Jupiter to Belle Glade. Town of Palm Beach United Way partners receiving the \$1,000 grants include: Achievement Centers for Children and Families, American Association of Caregiving Youth, The Arc of Palm Beach County, Catholic Charities, Center for Child Counseling, Clinics Can Help, El Sol Resource Center, Families First, Farmworker Coordinating Council, HomeSafe, Literacy Coalition, The Lord’s Place, Milagro Center, Opportunity Early Childhood and Family Center, Project LIFT, Take Stock in Children, Urban Youth Impact, YMCA of the Palm Beaches, YMCA of South Palm Beach County and YWCA.**

**The Town of Palm Beach United Way graciously thanks toy drive partners Field of Greens, Findlay Galleries, Palm Beach Daily News and Palm Beach Fire Rescue. A special thank you to members and employees of Field of Greens, Findlay Galleries, IBERIABANK a division of First Horizon Bank, Palm Beach Flagler Rotary Club, Palm Beach Police and Fire Foundation, Palm Beach Rotary Club (Lunch), Symphony Workplaces, and Town of Palm Beach Recreation Department for collecting numerous toys for the drive.**

**— end —**

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 561 655 1919

 561 655 1740

 [info@palmbeachunitedway.org](mailto:info@palmbeachunitedway.org)

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