

Hello All,

For a child in poverty, Christmas can be very different. It can reinforce the hopelessness they experience daily; it can be a vivid reminder to parents that they are unable to provide for their children. ***In many ways it can be a day to get through instead of a day to look forward to.***

Operation Christmas Good Cheer is an entirely volunteer Christmas gift-giving program that focuses solely on children placed in our RMSER programs. These are some of the most seriously financially troubled and vulnerable children in North Denver, Pueblo and Alamosa. For many of these children it will be the first time they receive Christmas gifts from someone they see every day and not a stranger. For about the cost of lunch, you can bring holiday cheer to a family by empowering a parent or guardian of a child living at or below the poverty level to give their child gifts at Christmas time. With a sluggish economy and increasing unemployment rates, the 2011 Holiday Season promises to bring unique challenges. We expect that many of our recipients as well as our regular contributors may be negatively impacted by these difficult financial times.

No matter how bad we think the economy is right now, there are millions of people around the world who have it far worse than us, and consider us richly blessed, as indeed we are. One of the truly horrifying statistics about world poverty is that a child dies of hunger related causes every seven seconds of every day of the year. Many of us want to help these starving children, but we just don't know how to begin or what to do. What better gift could you give to yourself and some beautiful child this year than the decision to sponsor that child? Most organizations average around thirty dollars a month for child sponsors; so for about a dollar a day you can be a lifesaver for some needy child in the our Rocky Mountain SER Youth & Community or Head Start program.

“It’s not an exaggeration to say that for most of these students, gifts they receive from sponsors will be the only ones they get this holiday season,” said Jermaine Stafford, RMSER’s Director of Youth & Community Service Division. “Most to all of the students are low-income, and many will spend their holidays here at our center. More than the material items themselves, it means a lot to the students just to know that someone remembered them.”

All sponsors and donors will be invited to the Operation Good Cheer Christmas party held on December 23, 2011 at the Pecos Community Center, Pueblo at the Seton Center on December 21, 2011 and Alamosa on December 19, 2011. This event will also include appearances by local business, Rocky Mountain SER employees and special appearance by local professional athletes. This event will be a mammoth time to experience the breathtaking feeling we here RMSER witness daily with the students and community.

Once again, we hope you will make a child smile this holiday season. It will be a moment they will never forget and one that you will remember for a very long time as well.

Rocky Mountain SER is looking for individuals, families, groups, and companies to sponsor the (5000) plus children in low income households in North Denver, Pueblo and Alamosa. We need partners throughout the community willing to help us to ensure each child in our target community has gifts for the holiday season. Wish lists have been completed by each child in care listing the items they wish for most this holiday season, including needed clothing sizes.

HOW CAN YOU HELP SPREAD THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS?

Call us at (303) 480-6850 or (720) 254-4200 and talk with us about the age and sex of a child you wish to sponsor. Once you have completed shopping for your sponsored child, you may deliver your new, unwrapped gifts to our office or call the number above to make arrangements for pickup.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Do I have to purchase everything on a child's wish list?

A: No. Most of our children turn in reasonable wish lists. Sometimes they do ask for more expensive items such as electronics or game systems. We ask you to purchase the items on the list you feel most comfortable in purchasing.

Q: Why do you want the gifts unwrapped?

A: Before giving the gifts to the child we check the items for correct sizes, safety, etc. Gift bags are perfect for the gifts or if you wish you may include rolls of gift wrapping paper for the gifts.

Q: Can I purchase toys and donate them or do I need to ask for a child's wish list?

A: We always need items for children who come into our center at the last minute so generic gifts are always appreciated.

Q: Can I make a monetary donation?

A: Yes! Monetary donations are accepted year around and are most needed during the Christmas season to help fill the wish lists of children who did not get sponsored, or to sponsor children who come in to our center closer to Christmas who have not had the opportunity to complete a wish list.

Q: Are my donations tax deductible?

A: Yes. We will be happy to provide you with a receipt for your donation.

Q: Can I deliver the gifts to the child I sponsor?

A: All sponsors will be invited to the *Operation Good Cheer* exchange Christmas party held on December 23, 2011 at the Pecos Community Center and Seton Center on December 21, 2011 and Alamosa RMSER Headstart on December 19, 2011 . This party will give all the sponsors and the families' time to exchange gifts and meet. All details will be forwarded to all sponsors.

GIFT SUGGESTIONS

Gift cards for the teenagers in RMSER programs. The most requested gift cards are from any of the following stores:

Best Buy, Academy Sports, Westgate Mall, Target, Wal-Mart, Movie Theatres, Ross, Marshall's, Dicks Sporting Goods, gift certificates for manicures, and Bed, Bath and Beyond.

Building Blocks, remote controlled cars, dolls, Barbies, riding toys, wagons, MP3 players, jewelry, body sprays, etc. Just take a stroll through the toy department and most anything you can imagine will be on some child's list this year!

OFFICE ADDRESS/ HISTORY

3555 Pecos Street, Denver Colorado 80211, (303) 480-9394

Rocky Mountain SER/Jobs for Progress, Inc. (**RMSER**) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in Denver and operating throughout the state of Colorado to provide education, youth development, job training and employment services to underprivileged families and at-risk individuals. RMSER was founded in 1980 and has served more than (75,000) Coloradans since that time. Currently the organization serves more than (8,000) low income and disadvantaged people annually in Colorado through its Head Start, Workforce Training and Youth & Community Services Division.

RMSER's Youth & Community Services Division headquartered at the Pecos Community Center (PCC) currently serves (1561) lower income, primarily Latino children, annually between the ages of (5) and (17) in the Denver Metropolitan area, by integrated and all-encompassing program that incorporates wellness, academics, mentorship, athletics, cultural historical activities and leadership awareness within the walls of the Rocky Mountain SER Youth & Community Service Center. Within these neighborhoods surrounding our target audience (District 1), you will view children that reflect neglect physically, mentally and academically which is reflected by their low high school graduation rate of only 48%. The RMSER's Youth & Community Services Division program currently employs a successful holistic wrap-around approach that addresses all aspects of a child's life.

JERMAINE STAFFORD, HSBS PAC

DIRECTOR OF STATEWIDE YOUTH & COMMUNITY SERVICE DIVISION