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REACH Shares Holiday Spirit at Harbor House

Despite the many activities we participated in last year, REACH still continued to promote the annual holiday toy drive for needy children and families at Harbor House of Central Florida, a safe haven for victims of domestic violence. With help from generous community members, we collected over 320 toys and necessities this year – an increase compared to our success last year! On December 19th, REACH members traveled to Harbor House to hand out toys to the children and play Christmas music for the families to enjoy. It was heartwarming to see that every child was able to receive a toy they liked that night. Seeing the bright smiles on their faces was a reward in itself. This experience not only benefited the children but also REACH members. We got the opportunity to reflect about our own lives. Living in a materialistic world, we often assume that happiness comes from the things we get— iPads, new cell phones, the latest video games. However, going to Harbor House and being able to see how these simple gifts brightened up the children’s day taught us a valuable lesson that we will not forget: to be grateful for what we already have.

Harbor House also had a treat for REACH. The new Children’s Center was finally open. The center was beautiful, spacious, and vibrant. The center allows the children to learn and just be kids in a safe environment. Seeing how much of a difference Harbor House has made for these kids and their families - it’s truly an honor to support the needs of Harbor House. On behalf of REACH, I would like to thank China Garden, Global Media, CHEP finance department, REMAX, local high schools, and many other generous businesses and supporters for supporting our toy drive. And with financial support from organizations such as, the Asian American Heritage Council, CHARGE Dragon Boat Team – Orlando, the Chinese American Association of Central Florida, Citrus Skating Club, Florida College of Integrative Medicine, and Teens Go Green, we were able to collect over \$200 to purchase toys and necessities for the families at Harbor House. We appreciate all your support! Have a wonderful new year!

– Priscilla Leung, *President of REACH*

I have done toy drive volunteer work before, a Christmas toy drive with the salvation army. The level of organization and resources they had to create a successful toy drive really impressed me, and I thought it would’ve been incredibly difficult to be able to conduct one successfully. The Harbor House toy drive turned out spectacular. The amount of toys that the volunteers had accumulated from schools and other locations was amazing. The trip to Harbor House itself was quite the experience too. It was good to see that people who have suffered and been in hard times are still treated so well by such organizations. The toy drive made me realize that it doesn’t take much from one person to help another extraordinarily.

– Ben Liu, *Secretary of REACH*