



Fontana Unified School District

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fontana Unified's 23rd Annual 'Fontana Santas' Toy Distribution Brings Holiday Cheer to Families

FONTANA, CA – Fontana Unified families were greeted with cheerful holiday decorations and festively dressed volunteers, the melodies of classic holiday music and the smell of fresh Christmas trees as they collected gifts during the District's 23rd annual Fontana Santas toy distribution.

The socially distanced drive-thru event, held Dec. 19 at the District Office, bestowed families in need from Fontana Unified's elementary schools with age-appropriate gifts, supplies for a holiday dinner, stuffed stockings and more. Middle- and high-school families received gifts earlier in the week.

"Fontana Unified is committed to supporting the success and well-being of our students, an effort that extends to partnering with our community to ensure that families in need have the opportunity to celebrate the holidays," Fontana Unified Superintendent Randal S. Bassett said. "This year, Fontana Santas was more important than ever, and we thank our families, employees and local businesses and organizations for helping us provide a special holiday experience during challenging times."

Fontana School Police Officer Cindy Evaro and district employee Lydia Wibert began Fontana Santas 23 years ago when they learned a Fontana boy ran away from home after Christmas because he did not receive any presents. Evaro, Wibert and Fontana School Police collected toys and donations from local organizations and delivered them to students during the holidays.

The toy drive has become a treasured Fontana Unified tradition, hosted in partnership with the Fontana School Police Department, Fontana Teachers Association, United Steelworkers Local 8599, the Fontana Foundation of Hope, Fontana School Police Officers Association and the Fontana Management Association.

An array of community partners joined this year's toy drive, donating gifts to ensure the COVID-19 pandemic did not dampen the spirit of the holidays.

Empowering Success Now donated groceries for a holiday dinner, in addition to fresh Christmas trees donated by the local Walmart and over \$10,000 worth of gifts donated by the Amazon LAX9 warehouse, Fontana Chamber of Commerce, South Star Logistics, United Way of the Inland Valleys, and the Fontana Foundation of Hope.

– more –

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

FUSD_FONTANA_SANTAS1: Superintendent Randal S. Bassett hands out presents from the 23rd annual Fontana Santas toy drive during a drive-thru distribution for elementary school families on Dec. 19.

FUSD_FONTANA_SANTAS2: Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus bid farewell to families after receiving gifts during Fontana Unified's Fontana Santas toy distribution on Dec. 19.

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