



SANTEE SANTAS FOUNDATION 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

The Santee Santas Foundation is celebrating our 70th year of bringing holiday cheer to Santee low-income families and seniors and completing another successful program year. This past holiday season *Santee Santas* served 208 qualifying families, which included 408 children, touching the lives of over 770 individuals. In addition, 225 poinsettia plants were distributed to many seniors living in mobile home parks and senior residences throughout the community. **This season we served 33% more families than the previous few years.**

Santee Santas is a Santee institution, and it is only with the support and involvement from our community that we are able to accomplish our Mission. As an original partner, Santee School District schools continued to support our distribution of food by holding a gift card drive from local grocery stores for our recipients to purchase fresh food items to supplement the food we provide. Community businesses housed collection boxes for donated toys and gifts for children. Many volunteers from the community and local businesses assisted in a variety of ways; wrapping and packaging gifts, boxing food, and delivering holiday packages to families. Many local businesses, their employees and customers, as well as many Santee residents donated the funds needed to fulfill the Mission of Santee Santas: *To deliver the holiday spirit throughout the Santee community.*

There are many wonderful businesses and organizations that help us in ways other than, or in addition to, financial contributions. The community of Santee always amazes us with their support!

We wish to acknowledge several businesses and organizations for their ongoing support of Santee Santas:

- **Santee School District: Chet F. Harritt** Principal Ted Hooks coordinated a districtwide grocery store gift card drive culminating in nearly \$9,000 in gift cards donations. The gift cards were provided directly to families to purchase fresh food items to supplement the non-perishable foods they receive.
- **American Eagle Self Storage:** Year-round, storage space is donated for our supplies.
- **Reliable Property Management and Kimco Property Management:** Donated the use of vacant properties for storage and packing of food and gifts for families.
- **Pacific Green Landscape:** Donated poinsettias for 225 seniors in mobile home parks and senior living residences.
- **Valley Box Company:** Hundreds of boxes and miles of tape were donated for packaging and distributing food and gift boxes to families and seniors.
- **Santee Fire Department:** Fire Department crews coordinated and loaded family food and gift boxes into vehicles on delivery. Throughout the year they assist us in helping Santee families displaced by a house fire.
- **Waste Management:** Provided waste and recycling bins at both of our program facilities.
- **Whissel Realty:** Provided a truck and a large crew of employees to deliver food and toys.
- **Barnes & Noble Bookstore (Santee):** Hosted a book drive for age-appropriate books for each child.
- **Eccentric International Chef and Raising Canes:** Provided food for volunteers on delivery day.
- **Santee/Lakeside Rotary Club:** Assembled hundreds of food and toy boxes for our families.

Over 125 individuals and businesses provided financial contributions that were used to fulfill the need for food, toys, teen gift cards and operating expenses.

More than 150 volunteers came together to build hundreds of boxes, distribute, and collect toy boxes throughout the community; sort food and pack food boxes; sort, select, wrap and package toys; and help with delivery day operations.

We wish we could mention by name all the many wonderful people, businesses, and organizations that are responsible for making our 2023 Holiday Program successful. We hope the community will take note of the businesses and organizations that supported us this year and consider saying thank you by patronizing their businesses or supporting their organizations as opportunities arise. We look forward to working together again in 2024 for our 71st season.

We can only accomplish our Mission with the support, involvement, and enthusiasm of our community. Thanks to all for contributing to the success of our program.

Sincerely,

Santee Santas Foundation Board of Directors

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