



August 25, 2015

Dear Friends of Bright Holidays,

I'm writing to thank you for your generous support of Bright Holidays during the 2014 holiday season and to share the results of last year's drive to provide gifts of food, clothing, books and other essential items to less fortunate students and families in our Jacksonville community.

Despite a troubled economy and increasing competition for charitable donations, Bright Holidays raised \$110,838, an increase of 13% over 2013, and touched the lives of more than 920 children from 49 area schools. We were heartened to see that 56% of our 2013 donors joined us again in 2014 and, of those who repeated, 83% matched or exceeded their prior-year contribution.

Bright Holidays would like to extend special thanks to: Computer Technology Services; The Griggs Group; Gist Create; Natural Life; Eavenson, Fraser & Lunsford; Spectrum Installations; WalMart Store #1172; Regency Electric Co.; Jack Ward Fire Consultants; Sargent Cycle Products; Winn-Dixie Supermarkets; and the Women Business Owners of North Florida. These local organizations helped advance our cause by conducting toy and book drives, and by providing valuable gifts-in-kind, services and support.

In addition to gifts from individuals, local businesses and foundations, Bright Holidays received substantial donations from these Sustaining Sponsors: the Allstate Foundation; Baptist Health; the Warren & Augusta Hume Foundation; the Thomas M. & Irene Kirbo Foundation; the Neviasser Foundation; On Ideas; the Page & Otto Marx, Jr. Foundation; Publix Supermarket Charities; and Sawgrass Asset Management.

Once again, the students of Providence School provided a treasure trove of new toys and Bethlehem Lutheran Church provided socks for every child served by Bright Holidays. We're thankful for their long-term support.

As the picture below suggests, we had outstanding volunteer participation for our *Sorting Day* and thus wrapped up early, despite a 12% increase in the number of students participating in last year's campaign. We owe special thanks to the volunteer teams of

Allstate Benefits, Humana and Planet HS, and all others who so generously gave the gift of time in support of Bright Holidays' efforts.



We are again thankful for the media coverage provided by the *Florida Times Union* and Melissa Ross, who featured Bright Holidays on her morning radio program, *First Coast Connect*. Their continued support has helped Bright Holidays build awareness and garner support for its mission. Please visit [www.brightholidays.org](http://www.brightholidays.org) for links to local media and additional information about Bright Holidays.

In addition to gifts in kind, e.g., toys, Bright Holidays invested \$109,136 in the local community last year, of which 95% went for essential items such as food, clothing, books and sleeping bags. Bright Holidays also purchased a laptop computer for one Douglas Anderson High School student (Note that the computer purchase was made possible by a specifically purposed donation from Planet High School). Miscellaneous out-of-pocket expenses for the year, including general liability insurance, warehouse expenses, postage, domain renewal, etc., totaled \$2,986. The table below summarizes our 2014 expenditures.

| <b><u>Category</u></b>           | <b><u>Allocation</u></b> |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Food Items                       | 35%                      |
| Clothing Items & Shoes           | 57%                      |
| Books                            | 3%                       |
| Simple, Developmental Games/Toys | 2%                       |
| Miscellaneous Expenses           | 3%                       |

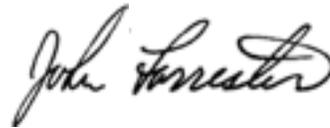
|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| <b>Total</b> | <b>100%</b> |
|--------------|-------------|

Again, we thank you for helping the children of less fortunate families, often the unintended victims of lost jobs and rising costs. On behalf of Bright Holidays, an all-volunteer organization operating without fixed overhead, we're grateful for so many generous gifts of time and treasure.

It is my hope that this letter gives you confidence that your 2014 donation was well spent. Moreover, I hope it encourages you to support our 2015 campaign when it launches in the coming weeks. We would be most grateful for your continued support as we strive to increase the number of area schools served and ensure more children have the food, clothing and other essential items they so desperately need.

Until then, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, comments or suggestions about Bright Holidays.

With thanks and all best wishes,



John Forrester

P.S. As in prior years, I've attached copies of a few thank-you letters received in January.