

Contact:

Lorena Andon

Marketing Manager

Phone: 410.729.1133 x 145

www.planwithtan.com

TAN BRINGS CHRISTMAS TO INNER-BALTIMORE SCHOOL

MILLERSVILLE, Md. – What may have been a bleak Christmas season for many of the students at Father Charles Hall Catholic Elementary School in Baltimore turned into one filled with red, furry stockings, toy-stuffed striped bags and about 11 TAN employees playing Santa. On Dec. 12, more than 70 employees, led by President Brad Callahan, donated \$6,355 in toys to the 130 students from low-income families who attend the school.

“The kids absolutely loved it,” Callahan says. “The volunteers were very organized and the students delivered some outstanding performances,” he says of the songs the 11 volunteers heard in each class as they delivered their goods. “We loved it. It warmed our hearts.”

It’s the second year TAN has supported the school in this way. The first gift donation made a lasting impression on school Principal M. Kathleen Filippelli. “Oh, they were so excited,” Filippelli says of the students. “They had never seen anything like that. Just parades of people coming in with these gift bags. A third-grader ... turned to her friend and hugged her because she didn’t have very much Christmas at all. Actually, they weren’t going to have Christmas, so she was just overwhelmed.”

That overwhelmed feeling affects the teachers, too. “I think this whole project is unbelievable,” says fourth-grade teacher Maureen Fanborn. “I was worried about their Christmases and what they were going to be, but this is really going to make a huge difference in their lives.”

A tour of the school and neighborhood several years ago gave Callahan a glimpse of the severe economic conditions that these inner city students and school faced daily. By the end of the tour, “I was personally committed to helping with any time, ideas or financial commitment I could muster,” Callahan says. That commitment evolved to include TAN’s gift donation effort.

Through the program, TAN employees each purchase \$40 worth of gifts for an assigned child. Callahan then reimburses them for half the cost. It’s a program with mass appeal within the company and one with a solid future. “I think everybody will absolutely make sure we do it next year,” Callahan says.

In 2008, TAN employees donated more than \$10,000 to charities like the Muscular Dystrophy Association, National Alopecia Areata Foundation and The MISS Foundation.

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