



# DHS News

Newsletter of the Allegheny County  
Department of Human Services



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## **Holiday Project brings seasonal joy to local youth**

The DHS Holiday Project had another successful year, delivering more than 3,400 gifts to children and youth.

The 2020 holiday season got off to a strong start as the Holiday Project was selected as a partner organization for the Pittsburgh Pirates' Friendsgiving campaign. Pirates fans, players, coaches and office staff contributed to a drive that ran through the month of November and raised \$55,000. This money was then divided among the four partner organizations. The \$13,750 received by the Holiday Project will be used to purchase gifts for pre-teens and teens – two groups that traditionally do not receive as many general gift donations.

To maintain physical distancing, gift selection at the Holiday Project Workshop took a different approach than previous years. Caseworkers were asked to visit in shifts to hand pick items for children on their caseloads, and CYF transportation staff volunteered to create gift packages for any caseworkers unable to get to the workshop.

"When we were planning for this year's Holiday Project over the summer, there was significant concern over whether we would be able to secure similar support to ensure that each child received a complete and generous gift package – which is something we strive to be better at year after year – but it truly did all come together pretty seamlessly. The community was wildly generous this year in the face of such uncertainty. Their support and the support of our colleagues at CYF really allowed this year's Holiday Project to come to fruition," said Shelli Luchs, event and donations team coordinator in the Office of Community Relations (OCR).

The Holiday Project would not be possible without the generous individuals, businesses and organizations who donate or sponsor gifts. Additionally, the event and donations team continues to be grateful for the unwavering support of DHS facilities staff who go out of their way to make sure gifts are picked up and delivered to the CYF regional offices in a timely manner. Without them, Holiday Project would not be able happen on the large scale that it does.