



# press release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## HOLIDAY GIVING BRINGS JOY TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES *Thanks to Generous Friends of UCP Seguin*

The heartland of America has a reputation for having cold winters but warmhearted people. This holiday season proved this axiom to be true, as more than 1500 children and adults with disabilities were the delighted recipients of a treasure trove of gifts, care of hundreds of generous friends of UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago. Through a variety of special appeals and activities, individuals, businesses, public officials, UCP Seguin board members and staff provided gifts and holiday enjoyment to people with disabilities across the metropolitan Chicago region.

In December former Cook County Commissioner Al Carr and his son – and UCP Seguin Board member – Terry Carr and family hosted their 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Holiday Party. With help from dozens of volunteer “elves”, the Carrs served delicious meals to nearly 500 adults with developmental disabilities served by UCP Seguin. Cook County Commissioner and McCook Mayor Jeffrey Tobolski and his wife Cathleen facilitated the donation of space for the party at The MAX Center in McCook. As part of the festivities William Pacella and Pacella Trucking Express donated comfortable long-sleeved t-shirts, while former North Riverside Mayor Richard Scheck, his wife Judy and their family contributed backpacks to make the season merrier for adults served by UCP Seguin. Each year, UCP Seguin participants and their families look forward to this festive party celebrating the holidays, and they anticipation was amply rewarded through Al and Terry Carr and their family and friends.

UCP Seguin’s Infinitec Southwest held its 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Gift Drive to brighten the holidays for children with disabilities from area schools and special education co-ops. Nearly 720 children received beautifully wrapped gifts donated by nearly 80 board members, families, friends and co-workers, as well as area businesses, including prominent companies such as DLA Piper US LLC, Tower Watson, Pepper Construction, Functional Therapy & Rehabilitation, Mulcahy, Pauritsch, Salvador & Co., Starbucks, and Walgreens. For many children these were the only presents they received for the holidays.

UCP Seguin’s Children’s Foster Care program also appealed to donors to provide gifts to 170 foster children with disabilities and other special needs. Included among the generous contributors were

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the Walter and Connie Payton Foundation, Costco, Toys for Tots, and numerous board members, staff, individual community members and foster parents.

For the past eleven years UCP Seguin has conducted a “Secret Santa” campaign to ensure all of our participants’ holidays are bright. Several individuals served by UCP Seguin have little or no family support. In response to this appeal more than 150 donors provided gifts for nearly 140 adults with disabilities, based on each individual’s “wish list”. This bighearted throng of supporters included members of the Riverside Exchange, employees of Huizenga Capital Management, Berwyn Township, UCP Seguin board members, staff, other area businesses, and many community “friends” of UCP Seguin.

These gifts were many and varied, from warm winter and dress clothing, shoes and boots, from board games to stuffed animals, from laptop computers to Wii game consoles, from radios to various genres of music on CDs, and from gift cards to area restaurants and stores to the simplest of gifts. The value of these donations totaled into the tens of thousands of dollars. But their value to over 1500 children and adults with disabilities is priceless.

“While the holiday season at times seems too commercial and driven by personal interests, we are heartened by the amazing selflessness of so many people,” stated John Voit, President and CEO of UCP Seguin. “We are so grateful to the countless friends of UCP Seguin, in communities throughout the Greater Chicago area, for enriching the lives of people with disabilities through this outpouring of generosity.”

For more information on UCP Seguin, please call Dawneen Suriano at 708.222.4251, or visit [www.ucpseguin.org](http://www.ucpseguin.org).

UCP Seguin of Greater Chicago believes in a world where children and adults with disabilities achieve their potential, advance their independence and act as full members of the community. We strive to make this world a reality — in Illinois and beyond, for people at every stage of life — by leveraging technology to provide innovative training and education programs, family support, employment and life-skills training, and residential services.

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