**Public Outreach**

**8.12 Holiday Family Sponsorship – Fresno Branch**

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| **1. Section, Branch** | San Francisco Section, Fresno Branch |  |
| **2. Section/Branch Size** | Small |  |
| **3. Project Contact** |  | |
| Name | Alexander Jones, EIT | |
| Phone Number | (559) 676-1381 | |
| Email | [community@fresnoymf.org](mailto:community@fresnoymf.org) | |
| **4. Project Category** | Public Outreach | |
| **5. Project Description** | For the last four years, the Fresno YMF has volunteered with the Fresno Evangel Home, a nonprofit organization and crisis shelter for women and children. Fresno YMF participates in the Holiday Family sponsorship program to collect and deliver gifts to one or two families in the home. | |
| **6. The Process**  (What you did, When and How) | During the holidays, the Evangel home asks its residing families to create a wish list of items they need or would like to receive as gifts. In early November, the Fresno YMF signs up to participate in the Family Sponsorship program and in late November receives the chosen families with their wish lists.  Once the wish lists are received, an email is sent to our members via Constant Contact asking if they would like to participate by purchasing one of the items from the wish lists. Additionally, social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and our local website are used to advertise participation. Those participating are then responsible for purchasing, wrapping and delivering the item to our Outreach Chair. A deadline to receive all of the gifts is usually set as the second or third week of December. During this time, the Outreach Chair arranges a date, up to one week prior to Christmas Day, with the Evangel Home to deliver the gifts and meet the family. The visit is usually limited to those individuals that have purchased a gift. On our visit to deliver the gifts, the members have the opportunity to get to know the mothers and children on a more personal level. The Fresno YMF has been able to enjoy opening gifts with multiple families, learned of personal accomplishments from many of the mothers, and interacted with children ranging from 2 years of age to seventeen. | |
| **7. Those in Charge** (Committee, Task Committee, Etc.) | Our Outreach Chair is in charge of communication between the Evangel Home and YMF members. The chair is also responsible for assigning gifts to each member participating. | |
| **8. Time Frame**  (When Started, When Completed) | The timeline of this project is as follows:   * + Early November: Outreach Chair receives email from the Evangel Home to be a sponsor.   + Mid November: Outreach Chair receives the wish lists and notifies YMF members to participate in the program.   + Early December: The majority of the gifts should be collected at least one week before the delivery date   + Mid December: Gifts are delivered to the Evangel Home. | |
| **9. Success Factors**  (The Parts that Worked Really Well) | Many elements of this project have worked well for us:   * + Partnering with an organization that focuses on helping those in need and that can facilitate the creation of the wish lists.   + Assignment of a specific gift to each YMF member participating to avoid any confusion of who is responsible for each gift or any duplication of the gifts.   + Allowing at least one week between the deadline of when members need to deliver the gift to the Outreach Chair and the distribution date to the Evangel Home. | |
| **10. Setback Factors**  (The Parts that did Not Work Well) | Adding additional families to sponsor, after the initial ones have been assigned, can increase strain on members participating. | |
| **11. Creativity**  (This is something off the wall that we did) |  | |
| **12. Administration**  (What was most Important?) | Tracking the status of each gift such as:   * Which gifts have been assigned and delivered * Which have been assigned * Which have yet to be assigned   A spread sheet was developed (attached) to aid in this process. | |
| **13. Follow-Up**  (What was most important?) | Communication with the Evangel home and YMF members is key to ensure all gifts are assigned and deadlines are set to deliver prior to Christmas. | |
| **14. Recommendations**  (What you should ALWAYS do with this project?) | When working on a venture such as this, the group should observe the following recommendations:   * + Collaborate with an organization that aids those in need and that can facilitate the creation of the wish lists.   + From the beginning, decide on the size of family or number of gifts that your group can commit to.   + Assign gifts to members   + Set the deadline for members to turn in gifts to the Outreach Chair at least one week before presents will be delivered to the Evangel Home. | |
| **15. Cautions**  (What you should NEVER do with this project?) | Do not publish the wish list to members. This may cause issues with multiple members wanting to purchase the same gift or provide gifts to a specific child while others are neglected. | |
| **16. The Outcome** | Every year we have been able to provide a little holiday cheer to the families that we have sponsored. This program is a great way to bring our members together to help a family in need. | |
| **17. Ongoing Activity**  (Would you do it again?) | Absolutely, we would like to continue participating in this program every year. | |
| **18. Speaker Contact Information**  (person from your Region who would be willing to speak about the Best Practice) |  | |
| Name | Alexander G. Jones | |
| Address | 286 West Cromwell Ave  Fresno Ca, 93720 | |
| Phone Number | (559) 676-1381 | |
| Email | [ajones@ppeng.com](file:///C:\Users\Alexj\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\2ECSEQYV\ajones@ppeng.com) | |
| **19. Additional Comments** | This Best Practice includes the following attachments:   * Family Sponsors Program Template | |

