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## **The Village Bank participates in Holiday Gift Drive co-sponsored by the City of Newton's Department of Health and Human Services**

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The holidays were brighter for more than 200 deserving families this year, thanks to the generosity of local residents and businesses participating in the fifth annual Holiday Gift Drive co-sponsored by the City of Newton's Department of Health and Human Services and The Village Bank. Susan Paley, community relations officer for The Village Bank, and Ana Gonzalez, Newton's community social worker, coordinated the month-long collection of donated gifts for children ages newborn to 10. The Village Bank's Newton branches in Auburndale, Newtonville, Nonantum, Newton Highlands, Waban and West Newton served as the primary Holiday Gift Drive collection sites.

The Woodland Golf Club collected donations at its annual holiday party, and the employees and guests attending the Capital Grille of Chestnut Hill holiday party also made a significant donation of toys and gifts.

At Newton North High School, the Future Business Leaders of America Club, business students, and the boys and girls Tiger hockey teams helped with the collecting, and the Williams, Bowen, and Franklin schools also held successful gift drives at their locations. Newton Youth Hockey and its Learn to Skate program collected gifts at the Fessenden rink during the drive.

Again this year, Devaney Oil of Newton made a cash donation, which was used to purchase merchandise gift cards from area stores. Local businesses including Century 21 Commonwealth, Fraser Engineering, and Just Next Door also participated in the drive, as did the Trinity Episcopal Church and Newton Highlands Congregational Church, according to Paley. The Goldman Family Fund and the Horace Cousens Fund also contributed to the Holiday Gift Drive's success, as did the involvement of the City of Newton Planning & Development Department.

The recipient families picked up their holiday gifts at the Nonantum branch throughout the day on December 21 and 22, assisted by a number of The Village Bank employee volunteers.

Mayor Setti Warren and Dr. Dori Zaleznik, commissioner of the Newton Department of Health and Human Services, stopped by the Bank's Nonantum branch to view the height of the Holiday Gift Drive activity.

They were welcomed by The Village Bank chairman Alfonso De Vito and president and CEO Kenneth Brennan.

Toys and other gifts that remained after all the families were served were forwarded to the Hellenic Gospel Church to support its holiday gift-giving needs.

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