

MEET EACH NEED WITH DIGNITY



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For Immediate Release

December 5, 2014

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***** PHOTO OPPORTUNITY*****

Santa's helicopter and red Cadillac spotted in Pacoima

Santa to deliver gifts to families in need in a very special way

- WHAT:** Santa makes his special flight again this year for MEND – Meet Each Need with Dignity, the San Fernando Valley's largest poverty-relief agency. Santa will arrive by helicopter and deliver gifts for MEND's annual Christmas Basket Program. Families traditionally line up around the MEND building early in the morning, eager to choose toys from the MEND "Toy Land" and receive their holiday basket.
- WHERE:** Santa's helicopter – generously donated by Group 3 Aviation - will land at Whiteman Airport, across from the MEND Center, near Pierce Street and a classic red Cadillac will drive him to the MEND Center at 10641 N. San Fernando Rd, Pacoima.
- WHEN:** Saturday, December 13, 2014. Helicopter arrives at 8:40 a.m. Gift distribution will continue at MEND until 5 p.m.
- WHO:** MEND identified 1300 of the area's neediest families to receive Christmas Baskets which include enough food for Christmas dinner plus staple items, a new blanket and a new gift/toy for each child under the age of 14. Each of these families was visited in their home to determine their need and thus the size of their basket.

WHY: To enhance Christmas and the holiday season for families who would otherwise do without.

MEND's 2014 Christmas Program is sponsored by Anthem Blue Cross.

ABOUT MEND

[MEND-- Meet Each Need with Dignity](#), serves an average of 38,000 and as many as 53,000 poverty-level clients each month, while remarkably keeping operating costs to less than 6%. MEND takes a holistic approach to relieve the effects of poverty by providing basic human needs while giving their clients the education and training, that fosters self-reliance. Named California Nonprofit of the Year in 2012 by the Governor's Office, MEND is one of the largest, most efficient and most comprehensive poverty-relief organizations in the Los Angeles region.

Born as a volunteer-powered organization four decades ago in a garage, today MEND benefits from the assistance of more than 5200 volunteers (and only 32 paid staffers) to implement its vast array of programs that provide food; clothing; job training; medical, dental and vision care; classes for adults in English as a Second Language, literacy, and computer training; an after school program for kids; showers and other services for the homeless; and a Holiday Basket Program for 1200 pre-screened families in need. In 2013, 172,609 volunteer hours were provided, equating to 95 full-time employees.

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