

MEET EACH NEED WITH DIGNITY



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## \*\*\*PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES\*\*\*

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### **Santa's Helicopter and Red Cadillac Arrives in Pacoima**

*MEND, Anthem Blue Cross Medi-Cal Health Plan, Boeing and Group 3 Aviation partner for Santa's arrival to deliver gifts and food to families in need*

**Pacoima, CA** – December 10, 2016 – On December 10<sup>th</sup>, families attended MEND - Meet Each Need with Dignity's annual Santa's Fly-In event where Santa Claus arrived by helicopter donated by Group 3 Aviation. This sighting drew in excited local area children who were eager to receive their presents from Santa. The event also served as an unofficial start to MEND's Christmas Program basket distribution where approximately 1200 pre-registered families receive holiday baskets filled with staple items .

"For the last 45 years, MEND has been fortunate to serve families in the northeast San Fernando Valley through the Christmas Program. With help from our 2016 lead sponsor, Anthem Blue Cross Medi-Cal Health Plan, and Boeing, we are able to provide toys and gifts, blankets, a large food box and other holiday items to make a very merry festive season for our families in need," said Maggie Torres, MEND's Program Director.

Thanks to individual contributions, volunteer power and sponsorships from Anthem Blue Cross Medi-Cal Health Plan and Boeing, families will visit MEND's "Toy Land" to receive enough food for Christmas dinner, a new blanket, a new gift/toy for each child under the age of 14 and of course, stocking stuffers.

"Anthem Blue Cross is proud to support MEND to ensure that all children have access to healthcare in their community and continue to live healthy lives," said Steve Melody, president of Anthem Blue Cross Medi-Cal Health Plan.

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## **ABOUT MEND**

[MEND-- Meet Each Need with Dignity](#), serves an average of 37,000 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 approximately 5000 volunteers (and only 33 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 2015, 199,291 volunteer hours were provided, equating to 110 full-time employees.

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