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SAN PABLO YOUTH SERVICES RECEIVES HOLIDAY WISHES

(SAN PABLO, CA) For the second consecutive year, the City of San Pablo's Youth Services Division is a recipient site for the Family Giving Tree's Holiday Wish Drive.

Through a community partnership with the Family Giving Tree, San Pablo's Youth Services Division will receive gifts this holiday season for 450 children, ages 12 and under, residing in or attending school in San Pablo; an increase of 47.5% from the 305 gifts distributed last year. As a recipient site, San Pablo Youth Services Division worked with community-based organizations, faith-based groups and schools to identify children and families that would most benefit from the Family Giving Tree's program.

The Holiday Wish Drive is a much needed and appreciated resource to this West Contra Costa County city, *"One of our mothers on the list started to cry when we asked if it would be okay to add her to the program,"* shared Maria Resendiz, Head Start Coordinator at Ford Middle School.

Twenty different groups responded this year and on the groups' behalf, San Pablo Youth Services staff coordinated, reviewed and submitted wish requests to the Family Giving Tree. Additionally, City staff will pick up all 450 gifts from the Family Giving Tree's Santa Clara County warehouse in December 2011.

Carlos Olivia, Community Outreach Coordinator at Riverside Elementary responded to the opportunity, *"Thank you so much for helping the children in our community. I really appreciate what you do for them. When I was young, I came to the San Pablo area from a foreign country and did not have much to look forward to in terms of gifts...due to our financial status. I'm sure there are many kids in the same situation now and thanks to your hard work, they will have a chance to get some type of gift."*

The City's Youth Services Division (www.sanpabloca.gov/youthservices) launched in June 2010 focuses on developing positive opportunities, programs and partnerships that would provide children, youth and families with the skills, knowledge and support needed to lead healthy and productive lives.

“We are very grateful for the ongoing support and relationship between the City’s Youth Services Program and The Family Giving Tree for the second consecutive year for much needed families in the San Pablo community,” stated Mayor Paul V. Morris. “Their annual giving really makes a difference to needy students and families in our community.”

The Family Giving Tree is a non-profit organization that works with corporate sponsors, private donors and volunteers to fulfill the specific wishes of low-income children in the Greater Bay Area. The Family Giving Tree began as a San José State University MBA class project that expanded into the largest gift and backpack donation program in California now in its 20th year. Visit www.familygivingtree.org for more information.

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