

# Family Giving Tree

## News Release

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### ***Family Giving Tree Kicks Off Back-to-School Drive*** *Well-stocked Backpacks Help Kids Prepare to Succeed*

Milpitas, Calif. – Family Giving Tree, fulfilling the specific wishes of low-income children, has kicked off its 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Back to School Backpack Drive. The drive, which takes place through August 14, 2010, provides school supply-filled backpacks to San Francisco Bay Area students. Last year's drive supplied backpacks to 13,843 students.

The drive's nearly 280 host organizations have received children's "wish cards", which are available to employees and members. They, in turn, purchase backpacks with supplies and return them to the host's location for delivery to the Family Giving Tree warehouse. During the first two weeks of August, volunteers sort the backpacks and prepare them for pick up by the schools.

Many of the identified recipient schools are those in which 100% of the student population qualifies for the Federal Free or Reduced-Price Meal Program. In the four Bay Area counties Family Giving Tree serves, 239,955 children are enrolled in that program.

"Adding more hosts means we can serve more schools," says Family Giving Tree Founder and Executive Director Jennifer Cullenbine. "We are off and running with this year's backpack drive toward our goal of 14,000 backpacks, but we welcome new hosts at any time throughout the months of June and July. Potential hosts should call Alex Ralston at 408-946-3111, extension 218, to participate.

"Our ultimate goal is to help kids succeed in school, and feeling confident is a big part of that," Cullenbine continues. "Feeling as though they fit in and being well prepared to start the school year builds confidence and adds to their optimism about the future."

Individuals who wish to donate or purchase a backpack may do so through Family Giving Tree's website at [www.familygivingtree.org](http://www.familygivingtree.org), or by visiting participating Peet's Coffee & Tea Store locations during the month of July. Information regarding Peet's locations where wish cards are available may be found at [www.familygivingtree.org](http://www.familygivingtree.org).

[About Family Giving Tree](#)

Family Giving Tree has granted the specific holiday gift requests of more than 750,000 San Francisco Bay Area underprivileged children since its creation as a San Jose State University MBA project in 1990. Licensed as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Family Giving Tree acts as a catalyst between social services agencies serving children and host companies that display their gift requests during the holiday season. Hosts display cards containing names and wishes on a tree. Donors choose a card, purchase the requested gift and return it to the host company. Family Giving Tree accepts and processes the gifts for pick-up by the agencies. Family Giving Tree utilizes nearly 7,000 volunteers each year and has been recognized for its efficiency by Charity Navigator with its highest, 4-star rating.

In 1995, Family Giving Tree created an additional Back-to-School Drive program, which delivers backpacks and school supplies to low-income children in time for the opening of school each fall.

Information about becoming a host company, sponsor, volunteer or making a donation online is available at [www.familygivingtree.org](http://www.familygivingtree.org).

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