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Arapahoe County Toyland donates thousands of toys *Judicial services program pairs defendants with meaningful service*

LITTLETON, CO --- Arapahoe County Judicial Services has found a unique way to give back during this season of sharing.

The Toyland project gives offenders with woodworking, sewing or crocheting experience an opportunity to create toys and blankets for children and adults in need, while receiving credit for court ordered community service hours. Community service as an alternative sentencing option is intended to provide a meaningful and positive restorative justice experience.

Judicial Services operates the Community Service Program, overseeing offenders who are ordered by court to perform community service hours as part of their sentence for a felony, misdemeanor or traffic conviction. The Toyland program began in 1992 and thousands of toys have been made and donated since.

Offenders receive credit for hours based on the type of toy they make. Each toy is worth a different amount of hours based on the level of detail and difficulty it takes to complete. For example, a fleece blanket is 10 hours, while a wooden wagon is worth 48. Other project types include toy chests, trains, rockers and wooden blocks.

In order to participate, offenders must provide their own materials and demonstrate the needed skills to complete the projects. All projects go through quality checks to make sure they are well made and ready for children to enjoy.

More than 2,600 toys have been made and more than 1,000 have been donated to date in 2016.

Agencies receiving toys include the Arapahoe County Santa Claus Shop, Arapahoe County Senior Resources, Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office, Arapahoe County Human Services, Aurora Chamber of Commerce, Denver Indian Center, Covenant Cupboard, Children's Hospital, The Baby Haven Community Corrections program, Denver Inner City Parish, Meals on Wheels, Developmental Pathways, the Humane Society, Sheridan Head Start and School District and Shiloh House.

For more information on the Toyland project or Judicial Services, visit <http://arapahoegov.com/index.aspx?nid=335> or call 720-874-3350.

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