

**HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
VOLUNTEER AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM
SPECIAL GIFT FUND – 2017 ANNUAL REPORT**

BACKGROUND: The Hennepin County Special Gift Fund was established in 1970 to provide financial assistance to Human Services and Public Health clients who are faced with a crisis or have special needs where all other financial resources to meet those needs have been exhausted. Access to the funds on behalf of a client is made by the client’s case manager or social worker. Individual requests are generally limited to \$200.00 except in compelling cases. All funds in the Special Gift Fund are donated – no tax dollars are used.

2017 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

1/1/17 Balance	\$29,608.58
2017 Cash/Check Donations	\$50,843.58
<u>2017 Disbursements</u>	<u>\$19,484.38</u>
12/31/17 Balance	\$60,967.78

The Special Gift Fund received a one-time donation of \$26,718.44 from the estate of a former recipient of county services. The Fund also received \$6,980 in Target, Cub, Walmart, and miscellaneous gift card donations; \$1,680 of the gift cards were used for the Backpack and Holiday Programs, and to meet client needs, leaving a gift card balance of \$5,300.

SUMMARY OF 2017 DONATIONS

The Special Gift Fund (SGF, or the Fund) is 100% funded by donations. In 2017 the Fund received almost 200 individual, corporate, and employee donations ranging from \$5.00 to \$5,000.00. (That is just under the number of donations received in 2016, and, not counting the one-time donation of \$26,719, \$7,774 more than was donated in 2016). Employees are able to contribute to the Fund via the County’s Charitable Contribution Campaign, by participating in annual Bake Sale, and of course individually.

The Fund is also used to manage donations to and purchases for the annual Backpack Challenge and the Holiday Giving Partners programs. In 2017 almost \$9,500 in donations were received for the Backpack Challenge, while the Holiday Program received \$2,025 in direct donations. The Hennepin County Retiree/Alumni group donated \$2,649, while employee contributions totaled \$3,161. More energy was focused on the annual Bake Sale fundraising event, resulting in donations of \$5,190.

In addition, donations of backpack supplies totaled over \$81,000 in 2017. Volunteers and donors contributed enough to distribute 1,316 backpacks, a significant increase over 2016.

Volunteer and Community Partnership Program’s Holiday Giving Program had another successful year bringing in over \$133,000 in corporate, employee, community, and individual donated gifts that provided holiday gifts, winter clothes, and necessities to almost 1200 clients and families.

The Knitters and Stitchers program brought in over \$7,000 in donated yarn that volunteers turned into blankets, hats, mittens, and scarves that were distributed at homeless shelters and to kids in foster care.

Finally, county staff who play in a band held a concert at a local establishment and donated the entrance fee to the show to the Special Gift Fund. That money, along with “passing the hat”, brought \$377 to the Fund.

SUMMARY OF 2017 EXPENDITURES

111 HHS clients received a grant from the Special Gift Fund in 2017 – that is just under the number of requests received in 2016. The vast majority of grants went to support health, housing, mental health, and to provide clothing. Grants ranged from \$40 to \$200, and totaled \$19,484 for the year, a slight increase over 2016 expenditures.

The Fund also distributed \$2,010 for the Backpack Challenge, \$985 to support transportation needs, and \$205 to get reading glasses for people using the Healthcare for the Homeless clinics.