

The Gift that Keeps on Giving: Hope

Imagine a home without basic living essentials. Imagine children without proper nourishment, not knowing when the next meal will come or even if there will be a next meal. Imagine walking to school in one of Rochester's winters without proper seasonal clothing. This is a reality for many families in the Greater Rochester Community, our community.

During the holiday season the University of Rochester Office of Human Resources – Multicultural Affairs & Inclusion (MCAI) in partnership with Philipa Stuart and Cheryl G. Lee-McIntyre from the Rochester City School District's Youth and Justice Program, members of the African-American Network @ the U of R, Gold School Inc., Ken Holland from Frontier Communications and Ika and Catherine Thomas provided support to families in need.

This collaborative relationship began with a phone call to MCAI from the Rochester City School District requesting support for a family in need of basic living essentials. That initial request expanded to more than 10 families receiving support from Thanksgiving through the Christmas holiday. Food, clothing, housewares, and daily hygiene essentials were provided to families continuously throughout these months.

With many holiday gifts already buried in closets and forgotten, at a time when fear of joblessness and the reality of smaller paychecks are making people careful about how they spend each dollar, this community of people cared about those less fortunate than themselves. This caring and generosity provided hope to community members who often live a life of hopelessness. Our efforts provided an opportunity to preserve the innocence of children who don't understand why their lives are so different from that of others in the community.

The University of Rochester's Office of Human Resources – MCAI is committed to continuing our partnership with the Rochester City School District's Youth and Justice Program to serve as an advocate in restoring hope to our community.