Metropolitan K-Family Project Brings Holiday Joy to Children

METROPOLITAN DIVISION – This holiday season marked the first annual Children's Christmas Party Metropolitan Kiwanians have begun. Over 60 underprivileged children and their parents were treated to joyful party. There were 143 children and 96 adults who came to enjoy the festivities. The children ranged in age from 2-10. These children came from the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island.

The project was a joint Divisional and Key Club event. In attendance were, Curtis High School Key Club with its advisor Janet, and the newly formed Saint Joseph Hill Academy Key Club with its advisor Brian and 12 of its new-to-be inducted members.

The party was held at the Renaissance on Hylan Boulevard from 11am to 3pm. Four characters continually walking around this is when the Key Clubbers helped out and played with the children. Key Clubbers face painted and used stick on tattoo's for the children.

Bonkers the Clown and his associate brighten up the experience. Throughout the four hours the clowns continually walked around making balloon animals for the children. Bonkers wowed the children with a 20 minute magic act in front of his audience of children and adults. He was great!

After the magic show, all the children sang Christmas Carols which hailed in the big man himself. Santa visited the children and toys were given to each child present.

The DJ kept the action going on, playing Christmas songs and the Macarena, as well as the Cha Cha Slide. The food ranged from a fine breakfast to an elegant dinner with dessert bestowed to all in attendance.

The Chairmen for this event were DPP Alex Inseira and DPLG Joe Battista. Thank you to IPLG Mark Russo and LG Fran Hogan for their great insight in making this party a reality as a joint venture between two terms of office. Also a great thanks to the sponsors; Sean Cusick, PLG and board president Lindy Marrazzo, Mark Russo, Jodi’s Bar and Grill, and JR Landscaping. The event was a huge success by the smiles on the children’s faces, or was it all that food and the clowns?

Key Leader

John Swartwout

Key Leader is Kiwanians International’s new leadership education program for high school students. It’s a “life-changing experience that inspires young people to achieve their personal best through service leadership.” Service leadership is the concept of leading by example and empowering others to achieve their full potential. It is the cornerstone of the Key Leader program. The weekend program consists of experiential learning which focuses on building the participants’ personal integrity, growth, respect, community building, and pursuit of excellence.

To follow up on the successful Key Leader event held in Holmes, NY in September 2005, New York District will host 2 weekend events in 2006: on May 19-21 at Camp Stella Maris south of Rochester and on October 6-8 at the Warwick Center near the NY-NJ state line. The program is open to students in grades 9 through 12 (plus graduating 8th graders for spring programs).

What can you and your Club do to enable youth from your community to benefit from this program? Contact your local schools, Key Clubs, Builders Clubs, Scout Troops, Youth Groups, etc. and invite them to participate. Sponsor one or more of the local teens at $150 each. Partner with other local civic organizations, fraternal organizations, and businesses to sponsor additional participants. There is no limit on the number of students from a given school that may participate. You can download a fact sheet on this program to share with your community by visiting the sponsored youth page of the New York District Kiwanis web site (www.Kiwanis-NY.org).

For further information, contact John Swartwout (Upstate Co-Chair) at (518)274-8639 or jswartwout@worldnet.att.net; or Kim Scharoff (Downstate Co-Chair) at (516)432-0850 or kscharoff@yahoo.com. A PowerPoint slide show of the September Key Leader event is available for your use and Key Leader Committee members are available to speak to your Club.

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