

Christmas Connections

 Catholic Charities Atlanta



About the Program

For over twenty years, families from four Catholic Churches in Atlanta, Roswell and Alpharetta have participated in a Christmas giving effort through Catholic Charities Atlanta. Low income families from metro Atlanta and Cedartown write wish lists of items needed in their homes and gifts for their children. Donors purchase the gifts and buy a gift cards for the family to purchase food for Christmas Dinner.

Last year, 753 local families including 3,372 people received gifts.

About those We Serve

- 68% of CCA's clients are below the poverty level
- 87% of CCA's clients are low income (less than 200% federal poverty guidelines)

Investment in the Community

Wal-Mart is the single most popular choice for families when choosing food gift cards or gifts for adults. It is also the store most donors go to buy clothing, winter coats, toys and bicycles.

Most of our clients are the "Working Poor" and they shop at Wal-Mart.

We estimate that donors spent on average of \$125 on each of the 3,372 people that the agency provided gifts for last year—for a total of **\$421,500.00**.

As a testament to the collaboration between Catholic Charities Atlanta and the Walmart Foundation, the agency is currently a recipient of a SNAP (formerly Food stamps) Outreach and Enrollment Grant. Under this grant, our staff work to reach the underserved and under employed residents with children in the Atlanta area and assist them in applying for benefits.

www.catholiccharitiesatlanta.org



A family helped by CCA's Christmas Connections program.

Their story...

Joe and Ester are the parents of five children ranging from 3 to 18 years of age. Joe works in construction, but due to the economy he often finds it hard to keep steady work. Last year was a particularly rough year for them financially and they were burdened with the prospect of not being able to provide Christmas gifts to their children. Ester called us and asked if she could sign her family up for our Christmas Connections program which provides gifts to families in need in our community. She was only interested in being able to provide presents for her children to open on Christmas morning.

When she met with our intake counselor, she learned that we would not only provide gifts for her children, but we would also provide much needed items for her home. Ester was overwhelmed with emotion and began to cry—she kept insisting that she and her husband didn't need anything—her main concern was that the children did not have to suffer because their father couldn't find steady work.

After CCA staff finished the application process, Ester hugged the counselor and asked if they could pray to give thanks for everything that God had provided them with this additional blessing. She left our offices looking much better than when she walked in. We had provided Ester with the gift of hope - hope for a happy Christmas for her family.