



*Dear Readers,*

With another holiday season behind us, the staff, Board and clients of Action, Inc. would like to take a moment to reflect on our most successful Project Uplift toy drive *ever*, and to thank the many generous individuals and businesses who made it all possible.

Nearly 700 children throughout Greater Cape Ann received toys and clothing through the program – more than doubling the number served last year. We accepted applications for help from 462 families who are experiencing difficult times and would otherwise have been unable to provide their children with gifts.

After a year in which so many were hit hard by a failing economy, it was truly heartwarming to see people so willing to put their own problems aside and to donate toys, clothing, money, time, services, and space to help those less fortunate. We'd like to share just a few examples...

A host of businesses and organizations donated gifts, money, and space to Project Uplift, among them Gorton's, Converge, Spectrum Adult Day Health Program, Woodman's, NOAA, Cape Ann Savings Bank, Eastern Insurance, Rockport Police Association, Hiltz Moving & Storage, Foster from Gloucester, and so many others. The list of businesses that served as donation sites is impressive, and can be found online at [www.actioninc.org/projectuplift.html](http://www.actioninc.org/projectuplift.html).

BankGloucester generously donated the space for Project Uplift's main collection site, which quickly became a sea of stacked goodies.

Through a program called Kids Helping Kids, youngsters at West Parish Elementary and Rockport Elementary helped their parents shop for gifts for less fortunate children – many of whom were their own classmates.

An Assistant at the West Parish school and a Boy Scout Troop Leader, Tania Theriault worked with her troop to collect donations and also brought the boys to the Project Uplift collection site so they could experience first-hand how the program works.

Ruth Taylor of Rockport Congregational Church started out donating knitted items, but after becoming involved she made it her personal mission to collect donations specifically for older children. With Project Uplift's maximum age changing from 10 to 13 years old this year, Taylor appealed to local businesses and groups to collect gift cards and money for this sometimes neglected age group.

Heidi Jackson Dean, Assistant Vice President of First National Bank of Ipswich's Essex branch, was instrumental in collecting donations throughout the town of Essex, using the bank as a drop-off location.

The staff at Converge competed in teams to see who could collect the most donations through their Mitten Program, while wait staff at Morning Glory restaurant donated their own tips to help a family in need. After their house in Gloucester was foreclosed on, this family was able to use the money from Morning Glory to rent an apartment close to the home they'd lost.

The Patio Restaurant and Eileen's Bridal Alterations in Magnolia also chose to collect donations for a specific family – one with small children whose parents couldn't afford gifts on their own.

Clients of Spectrum, an adult day program for individuals with Alzheimer's, collected approximately 200 toys – including a bicycle – and presented them in person during a small ceremony at the collection site.

Senator Bruce Tarr and North Shore Radio 104.9 played a major role in Project Uplift again this year, gathering donations from collection sites all over the North Shore as part of their annual Holiday Toy Drive. Tarr's journey was broadcast live and culminated in an event at Cape Ann Savings Bank in Gloucester with guests Santa and Mrs. Claus. Some folks were overheard commenting that Santa looked an awful lot like Rudi Macchi...

Finally, we'd like to thank Christina Curcuru and Kathie Gilson, two special women who volunteered their time to help organize and distribute donations this year.

To all of you mentioned here and to the many, many others we weren't able to include, we would like to express our most sincere and heartfelt gratitude. The outpouring of support for this year's Project Uplift toy drive serves as a reminder that we are all very lucky to be part of such a wonderful group of communities.

The holidays may be over, but assistance to those in need and opportunities for others to experience the joy of helping are available all year 'round. Contact Action, Inc. at 978-282-1000 to learn how you can help – or be helped – this year.

Sincerely,

*Tim Riley*  
Executive Director

*Ellen Petrilli*  
Project Uplift Coordinator

**ACTION, INC.**  
180 Main Street  
Gloucester, MA 01930  
978-282-1000