

# ARLINGTON HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY

#240

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January 8, 2008

Dear Bright Holidays Foundation,

Words cannot express how grateful we are to the Bright Holidays Foundation for selecting our school to participate in this year's Christmas project. The families who received the gifts were truly touched and for many tears flowed freely. The reactions of the parents and children truly moved me and I wanted to let you know just how appreciative they were.

One mother received the family's presents and profusely thanked everyone who was around. She asked how we knew what she needed and we told her the principal of the school had referred her. She then gathered all her belongings and went home. A couple of minutes later she returned and demanded to speak with the principal. The principal was in a meeting, however this did not stop her, she asked if she could go into his office to thank him for giving her name to Bright Holidays. She told the principal how much the gifts would help her with the holidays.

Another mother upon getting the gifts sat down and cried. This single mother of two children, one of whom is an infant, said this did not feel real, she could not believe there were people out there in the world who were so generous. This mother was having a difficult time providing lunch for her son, gas for her car, as well as paying for after-school care. She said the generous gifts she received would help her catch up on some of her bills and hopefully get a little ahead.

One fifth grade girl, whose father was disabled while fighting in his home country's civil war, has stopped me everyday to talk about the gifts. I have afternoon bus duty and she comes over to me and talks about this or that gift or tells me she is going to wear an outfit she received the next day.

However, my favorite story comes from a single mother of two. When opening her food gift cards and the presents the boys received, she broke down with tears streaming down her face. She told me that her children were not going to have a Christmas and she did not know how to tell them. She said she did not know how to thank me or the Bright Holidays Foundation. Afterwards our school found out the family was living in a hotel at that time, because they could not afford a permanent home. We have since learned this family's situation is improving.

These are just a few of the families your generosity and kindness have touched here at Arlington Heights Elementary School. Your spirit of giving inspired us all and created Bright Holidays for our students in need. Thank you again for all that you have done for our families and the other families around the city of Jacksonville.

Sincerely,



Anna Kimball  
School Counselor