

Toyota Turns Detroit Auto Show Focus to Detroit's Eastside by Donating Winter Boots and Socks to Local Residents and Homeless Women and Children

January 11, 2016

Image not found or type unknown



Detroit — As temperatures fluctuate this winter in Michigan, one thing for sure is snowy, icy and even cold rainy days are here through March and warm winter boots and socks are still a “must have” in Michigan. To protect families from the cold, on Saturday, January 9, 2016, **Toyota Motor North America through its “Toyota Walk In My Boots”** community outreach project and the North American International Auto Show activities, for the fifth year, stepped in to help area low-income and homeless families by providing new insulated winter boots and socks to more than 200 participants of The Salvation Army Conner Creek Corps Community Center located on Detroit’s Eastside and The Salvation Army Booth Services of Detroit, a homeless shelter for primarily women and single mothers and their children.

Without adequate clothing, often low-income families and people experiencing homelessness have a much higher risk than the general population of developing exposure-related conditions such as hypothermia and frostbite. “With the need greater than ever because of the cold winter months, we are blessed to have support from good corporate citizens like Toyota, who are ‘Doing the Most Good’ by raising awareness of our mission to feed, shelter and clothe those who are less fortunate,” said Major Russ Sjogren, general secretary and Metro Detroit area commander, The Salvation Army Eastern Michigan Division.

If you are poor, you are essentially an illness, an accident, or a paycheck away from living on the streets. In Detroit alone, two-thirds of people can’t afford basic needs like housing and health care, even when family members are employed; and 67% of Detroit families are either under the poverty line or what is identified as “ALICE”, asset-limited, income-constrained, employed. Meanwhile, more than half of Michigan’s homeless population is made up of families; and one in three who are homeless are children.

“At Toyota, we want to build more than just great cars and trucks,” said Michael Rouse, vice president, Diversity, Philanthropy and Community Affairs, Toyota Motor North America. “We want to help build great communities; and in times like these, we must remember to help one another. We want the work that is being done at The Salvation Army of Metro Detroit to continue for years to come. And, we hope that our donation of winter boots and socks will help to enrich lives...one step at a time.”

With this donation, many families will be shielded from the cold. **Toyota also donated \$15,000 to The Salvation Army of Metro Detroit** enabling them to continue to provide refuge for children and families in times of crisis. They also treated the families to a “Thanksgiving-style” buffet luncheon by Unique Food Management. In its fifth year, Toyota has donated over 1,000 pairs of winter boots and contributed more than \$65,000 in cash just in Detroit alone. The project has also been held in Chicago, Washington DC and, new this year, in Baltimore.

While many programs offer winter coat giveaways, a person’s feet are often left vulnerable to freezing temperatures and even frostbite. The timing of the winter boots and sock giveaway was a comfort to many as predicted snowfall and freezing temperatures were expected the next day.

The Salvation Army Conner Creek Corps Community Center located on Detroit’s Eastside provides emergency financial assistance, food and nutrition programs, character building after school programs for children, music and arts programs and worship services for the local community. Meanwhile, **The Salvation Army Booth Services** provides residents with emergency shelter for up to 90 days for single women and single mothers and their children who have become victims of unfortunate life circumstances such as house fire, job loss, foreclosure or domestic violence. Through the shelter they can receive emergency assistance, case management and pastoral care and worship and special services such as utility assistance, down payment assistance toward first month’s rent, food and clothing assistance.