

Southwest Comm-Unity Forum's Annual Toys for Tots a Huge Success

BY PAUL TAYLOR

The Southwest Comm-Unity Forum annual Christmas Toys for Tots was another huge success. The Forum was held on Saturday, Dec. 12, 2020, from 11 a.m. - 4 p.m., at Westminster Presbyterian Church (WPC). We could not have wished for a more beautiful Saturday with children laughing, music pumped up, and volunteers sharing Christmas treats with the hundreds of families lining the perimeter of WPC and stretching almost to Arena Stage.

Over 2,500 bags of toys were joyfully distributed to needy families from Wards 6 and 7. A special thanks to WPC's Co-pastors, Revs. Brian and Ruth Hamilton, for hosting this year's event. Dedicated volunteers made sure that masks were worn and everyone remained socially distant, including volunteers from the DC Department of Corrections (College and Career Readiness Division), DC Department of Parks and Recreation, Southwest Business Improvement District (SWBID), church members and friends.

Southwest teens especially thank the community churches, including Christ United Methodist, Riverside Baptist, Second Union Baptist, and St. Augustine's Episcopal, for their generous donation of purchasing \$25 gift cards for over 100 teens, and the SWNA Youth Activities Task Force for the purchase of 15 SW sweat hoods for



Courtesy of Author

Volunteers for the Southwest Comm-Unity Forum's Annual Toys for Tots drive pause for a picture

the youngsters.

Also, a special thanks to the Friends of Southwest DC and The District Wharf for their generous donations, which helped to purchase toys, baby pacifiers, bottles, onesies, blankets, socks, long johns, hats, scarfs, and gloves for area families with infants, as well as the 60 families residing at the AYA Shelter, located at the old SW Clinic, who expressed their gratitude as well.

Paul Taylor, a long-time former SW resident, is the founder and executive director of the Southwest Comm-Unity. Prior to COVID-19, and under Taylor's leadership, the Southwest Comm-Unity held a well-attended annual community-wide gathering of individuals and families representing old and new SW residents.

THE SOUTHWESTER JANUARY 2021