

Stockings from Karen

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T'was the month before Christmas

LeeAnn Petersen landed in the foster home of Karen and Dave Schwartzkopf in November of 1984, the day after her 15th birthday. She had never really celebrated Christmas and never received a stocking. Imagine their wonder on Christmas morning when LeeAnn and her foster sisters opened a stocking custom made for each of them. All stockings had the usual staples of teen personal care and maintenance: deodorant, razors, mouthwash, tooth brush, lip balm, hair bands, barrettes, lotion. Then there were the items that made you feel beautiful: makeup, nail polish, hosiery, earrings. Karen would always throw in a few

things to customize the stocking for each girl. For LeeAnn it meant something with her topaz birthstone, something related to sports and a cassette tape of music. Whether Karen knew it or not, these stockings gave the girls a sense of self-esteem and pride. Most of all, they told the girls someone cared about them and wanted them to feel special.

LeeAnn founded Stockings from Karen in her foster mother's name in 2014 to deliver the gift of self-esteem to teen foster girls in the DC, Northern Virginia and Southern Maryland region.

SFK AT A GLANCE

Often when kids arrive in foster care all they have is the clothes on their back. Our holiday stockings are stuffed with staple toiletries teen girls need like deodorant, toothbrush and paste, lotion, etc.

To customize the stockings for the girls, we include a couple of items from one of our four themes: academics, fashion, sports and music. Volunteers from our beneficiary organization Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) can then choose the theme that best fits their client. Each stocking is personally purchased, assembled and donated by our donors and delivered to the CASA offices.

SFK began in 2014 and delivered just 40 stockings to CASA of DC. In 2015 SFK delivered 162 stockings – 40 to CASA of DC, 40 to CASA of Prince Georges County, 30 to CASA of Montgomery County, 10 to Carroll County, 10 to Frederick County, 22 to SCAN Northern Virginia and 10 to the Mesa Grande Indians of CA. In 2016 we delivered 200 stockings and added Anne Arundel and Fairfax Counties to our list of recipients. In 2017 we delivered 300 stockings and added Winchester and Baltimore counties.



Stocking stuffing party at Nossaman, LLP



Fairfax County CASA Staff

Four Ways to Get Involved with SFK

There are four ways to help give the gift of self-esteem to a teen foster girl this holiday season:

- **Donate a Stocking**

Donate a stocking with esteem building items to give a much-needed holiday boost for a teen foster girl. Please limit spending to \$30. Get details [HERE](#).

- **Donate Stocking Stuffers**

Help ensure stockings have all the basics by donating stuffers such as nail files, deodorant, lip balm, tooth brushes, etc. See the list [HERE](#).

- **Donate Cash**

We prefer for each foster girl to receive a stocking from a donor but if you are strapped for time we will do the shopping for you. Donate [HERE](#).

- **Volunteer**

Volunteers can help shop for supplies, assemble and deliver stockings. Do you want to be one of Karen's elves? Sign up [HERE](#).

SFK Featured on People.com! Click [HERE](#) to read the story.



OUR FOUR STOCKING THEMES

ACADEMIC

Books, book markers, puzzles, crosswords, calculator, ruler, pens, pencils, calendar, appointment book, journal, planner.

FASHION

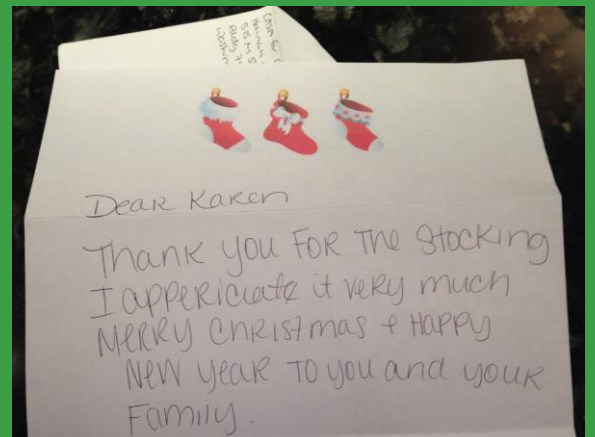
Fashion magazines such as Elle, Ebony, Uptown, accessories, sewing kit, costume jewelry.

MUSIC

CD's (no explicit lyrics), magazines such as Vibe and Rolling Stone; earbuds, books about artists/musicians, music themed accessories.

SPORTS

Head bands, athletic socks, Sports Illustrated, calorie counter, pedometer, jump rope.



Thank you letter from a recipient