

# Shoe, backpack giveaway prepare kids for school



IECN CYNTHIA MENDOZA

On Thursday, July 19, families at Maplewood Homes in San Bernardino's Westside, a program of the Housing Authority of San Bernardino County, were treated to hot dogs and shoes and backpacks for the kids, courtesy the Art Davis family and Community Action Partnership. Between this event and one the week before at Waterman Gardens, about 348 kids received shoes and backpacks.

**By Cynthia Mendoza**

Thanks to a generous donation by the Art Davis family, about 348 kids in San Bernardino will now have a new pair of shoes to start off the new school year.

In partnership with Housing Authority of San Bernardino County (HA) and Community Action Partnership (CAP), on two different days families at Waterman Gardens and Maplewood Homes both HA properties were treated to an afternoon of picking out shoes and hot dogs, donated by the Davis family, and backpacks, courtesy CAP.

The photos in this story were taken at the Thursday, July 19 event at Maplewood Homes in San Bernardino's Westside.

"It was great to see," said Estella Nuñez, Community Program & Services Coordinator for the Housing

Authority. "It was a great gift to them, especially with school starting. It takes a financial burden away from families that they may not have been able to meet otherwise."

The donor, Art Davis and his family, though not living here anymore, are from San Bernardino. Davis was born in the South but moved to San Bernardino early in life. He attended Mill School, Richardson Junior High, Pacific High School and San Bernardino Valley College and eventually New Mexico State Las Cruces.

He retired from a long career with General Motors in 2006.

His father was a sharecropper and always shared of what he had with others. Davis, an African American, says he didn't experience as much discrimination as he hears about today.

He said his father taught him to treat others as he would want to be treated.

"He said, 'the mission is bigger than you,'" he recalled.

And so with the same spirit of giving and mission that he observed his father sharing of his abundance with everyone, he too wants to share with others. Providing shoes to kids in need was just one way to do that.

It was a very welcome and much appreciated gift.

For the families, like many others with similar needs, shoes are just one of the many needs they face.

According to Nuñez, she would like to set up more community partnerships to provide other valuable programs and services that Housing Authority serves.

One such program that Nuñez would like to see is GED prep, high school diploma completion and English as a Second Language.

And if these programs were available on site at the housing community centers, it would be

even better as transportation is often an issue for many people.

"There's a great need," she said. So while Housing Authority does not directly provide such services and programs, they are always looking for partners who can.

"We try to leverage community partnerships in activities and anything that will help residents reach

economic independence," concluded Ana Gamiz, Director of Policy and Community Affairs for the Housing Authority of San Bernardino County.

For more information on Housing Authority programs or possible partnership opportunities, call Estella Nuñez at (909) 890-9533 ext. 5373.



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Apart from getting shoes and backpacks, families at the Thursday, July 19 giveaway also received information and resources for numerous other community services and programs that could help them. "We try to leverage community partnerships in activities and anything that will help residents reach economic independence," concluded Ana Gamiz, Director of Policy and Community Affairs for the Housing Authority of San Bernardino County



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Dozens of Westside families from Maplewood Homes line up to receive backpacks and shoes to prepare them for a new school year. The giveaway was made possible by a generous private donor and Community Action Partnership.

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