



**174 families served**



**495 children served**



**255 volunteers served**  
**1,659.5 total hours**

*With thanks to our 2017 Sponsors:*



*The Christmas Store is an opportunity for families in our community to purchase new donated gifts at discounted prices so that they can share an affordable Christmas celebration with their children. Thank you for your donations.*



### Svitlana

Svitlana has four children, between age 7 and 14. She has only lived in the USA for 18 months, but this is already her second Christmas store. Recently emigrated from the Ukraine, she lives in Timberlake; her children attend the Puente after-school program. She appreciates how organized everything was today, and how helpful the volunteers were to her. She says "thank you for pouring out God's blessing through this store!"

### Alicia

Alicia (not her real name) has three children, including her youngest—a newborn baby less than a month old! This is Alicia's first year shopping at the store, and she was grateful to find a few of the things her older kids had mentioned on their wish list.

Alicia is especially grateful for help this Christmas, as her pregnancy was complicated and her Doctor decided it was too dangerous to continue working through her final trimester of pregnancy. Because of this unexpected time off, money is tight, and Alicia has already used up her maternity leave. She is due back to work the day after Christmas. She says "I heard about this store, but my experience has exceeded my expectations. Thank you for the help this year."

### Lupe

Lupe lives in Main Park apartments, and though her three children are too young to attend the after-school program she is involved in Puente. Lupe was excited about her experience at the store this year because her seven-year old daughter was hoping for a bicycle...and she found one! Not only was it exactly the size her daughter needed, it was pink...exactly what she had hoped for. Lupe spent some time excitedly brainstorming: how will I hide this bike for the next two weeks?!

She realized that her five year old daughter would also love a bike, and might be disappointed. But not too disappointed, for Lupe also found Shopkins toys at the store today, which her five-year-old loves but are not affordable elsewhere.

This was a significant help for Lupe, who is a single mom, and has had a particularly stressful several months. When she scheduled her appointment, she was disappointed to realize there were no spots left before 10:30am. Based on her experience with holiday charity, she assumed this meant the best items would be taken. But Puente's Christmas store volunteers intentionally sort gifts such that shoppers at any appointment time have an equitable selection. This was a meaningful surprise for Lupe.

Today, Lupe was able to purchase just what her children wanted--she is excited and grateful.

### Brian

Brian is a student at COD, works full time, and serves regularly in the Iglesia del Pueblo worship team. He has a full schedule (and had trouble getting the day off!) but Brian is committed to being at the store for both shifts as the Shopper Coordinator. He makes sure the gifts are ready, everything looks good, and that things are running on schedule. This is Brian's fourth year volunteering.

Brian is excited to see the Store improve each year. More volunteers, more families, gifts more suitable to the shopper's wish-lists. Brian specifically loves to see volunteers who started out as young kids running around while their parents worked, now a bit grown up and taking on a role of their own. He loves to see the young people chipping in on this important community day.