



ToyMakers of East Lake

"Making Smiles One Toy at a Time"



Toy Stories

Winter 2020 by Angela Li

AMAZING volunteers overcome COVID adversity

Although this year is coming to an end, toy making is not! The current global pandemic has not stopped 140 volunteers from continuing to build toys that bring smiles to children who need it most. In living rooms, porches, garages and kitchens, toys continue to be sanded, painted, and assembled.

Work inside the workshop has not stopped either. Students and adults have been coming to the workshop to drop off and pick-up toys to work on in the comfort of their homes. In accordance with cautionary health measures, the typical bustle of the workshop has been reduced to only a skeleton crew: 2-3 volunteers spray painting bright colors onto the toys and 2-3 people preparing the toys for volunteers to pick up for routing, drilling, sanding and assembling at home.

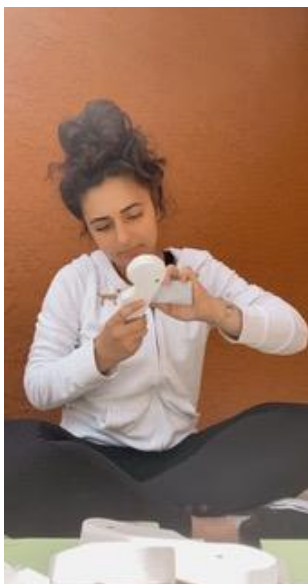
Thanks to the efforts of our amazing volunteers, we have donated over 135,000 hand-made, brightly painted wooden toys that made their way into children's hands over the years. Last year alone, 20,000 toys were delivered. This year, despite the many challenges, over 15,000 toys were given to children in need.

Our community is stepping up. In the face of having our main fundraising events cancelled this year, we very much appreciate the many individual donations that we received to help make up for that lost income.

We also appreciate our many student volunteers who have stepped up to work from home and for bringing in more student volunteers. One student, Steven Vautier, has committed to building and donating to ToyMakers, a multi-tier mobile workstation for his Eagle Scout Project.

Thanks to ToyMaker volunteer creativity, students, 13 and older, are able to have a safe alternative for earning volunteer hours toward their Bright Futures Scholarships. Also, thanks to all our volunteers and supporters for making 2020 an awesome year in spite of the challenges.

We wish everyone a happy holiday and hope the Christmas cheer we are sending you today brings joy, like our toys bring smiles to the children we serve.



To Donate via PayPal or Credit Card:
(www.toymakersofeastlake.org)

Checks may be mailed to ToyMakers of East Lake, 2690
Tanglewood Trail, Palm Harbor, FL 34685.