



NEWS RELEASE

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

Commissioner Terra Taylor

Presented by Jason Miller, Office of the Commissioner, Chief of Communications and Community Relations

245 McKee Road | Dover, DE 19904 | Office: 302.857.5232 | Jason.Miller@delaware.gov

Probation and Parole's Operation ZiPP Up collects 1,400 winter clothes items to warm local residents in need

Dover, DE -- Delaware Probation and Parole's 16th Annual *Operation ZiPP Up* clothing campaign collected a record number of cold weather items for vulnerable area residents this winter. An all-volunteer program initiated by Probation & Parole Officers and staff, *Operation ZiPP Up* solicits coats, blankets, gloves, hats, socks and other items for distribution to community organizations that serve residents who face homelessness and other critical needs. This year's effort collected 1,441 items through the generosity of Department of Correction employees and partners, including 469 coats and 972 hats, gloves, socks, blankets, and other cold weather apparel items.

This year, **the 3rd grade students from East Dover Elementary School** joined the effort and together donated a heartwarming – and footwarming – 100 pairs of new socks for Code Purple of Kent County. The Department of Correction extends a sincere thanks to these caring young people, to their Principal Jennifer Christman, and to their teachers Jennifer Miller, Davynn Roberts, Julie O'Reilly, and Nolan Katz.

Over the past 16 years *Operation ZiPP Up* has collected and distributed more than 9,200 winter weather items through the generosity of Department of Correction employees and friends.

"The officers and staff of Delaware Probation and Parole and across the Department of Correction have a deep desire to make our state safer and stronger," **said Department of Correction Acting Commissioner Terra Taylor.** "Their sense of service and a motivation to help others is what inspires *Operation ZiPP Up*, an employee-driven donation campaign to meet basic needs in our communities. I am proud of our amazing employees for recognizing those needs and taking action to lift up our most vulnerable neighbors each winter."

Items collected through *Operation ZiPP Up* are distributed through the following network of community-serving non-profits:

- Friendship House of Delaware (Wilmington location)
- Love INC of Mid-Delmarva (Seaford location)
- Peoples Place (Milford location)
- Code Purple of Kent County
- Home of the Brave (Milford)
- Ministry of Caring (Wilmington)

Cheryl Bryant, Director of Friendship House Clothing Bank said “The coats and winter gear donated through Operation ZiPP Up will be distributed to people throughout the state. At Friendship House we focus on serving where gaps exist. We are a sanctuary, safe haven, stepping stone, and resource for many people in Delaware. Your donation will help many people who are having a difficult time. Your efforts matter! The loving support of people like those at Probation & Parole is what allows us at Friendship House to continue to perform our life-changing and life-saving work.”

Operation ZiPP Up is organized through the leadership of Senior Probation Officer Dennis Desilet. The following *Operation Zipp Up* Project Coordinators solicited donations across Department of Correction offices and facilitated the distribution of donations to community non-profits:

- Cherry Lane Probation & Parole: Patrick Connell and Joseph Sweeney
- Hares Corner Probation & Parole: Deborah Sanna and Mary Agnes Degli Obizzi
- Dover Probation & Parole: Wanda Hill and Ray Hill
- Sussex Probation & Parole: Dawn Stevens and Matt Behornar
- Steven R. Floyd Sr. Training Academy: Victoria Macklin, Richard Negley, Olivia Banton and Samra Carter

Attached photos:

- James Timmons and Jen Matticks from Georgetown Probation and Parole: donation drop-off at Home of the Brave
- Ray Hill from Dover Probation and Parole: donation drop-off at Code Purpose of Kent County
- Deborah Sanna and Mary Agnes Degli Obizzi from Hares Corner Probation and Parole: donations collected for the Ministry of Caring

###