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Koch Companies Announce Record-Breaking Holiday Donations to The Salvation Army

Wichita, Kan. – With the economy in a recession and growing numbers of people experiencing economic hardship, employees of Koch companies in Wichita responded by setting an all-time record in their annual Salvation Army Angel Tree drive.

The three-week campaign concluded December 9 with employees of Koch companies purchasing gifts to serve 1,035 area children and adult angels. In addition, about \$1,300 in cash was donated to the Salvation Army. The 2008 campaign topped 2007 results when Koch companies' employees served a record 875 children and families and raised more than \$10,000.

According to Susan Addington, community relations manager for Koch Industries, Inc., Koch companies' 2008 goal was to serve 775 area children and adults. "We hoped to meet our increased goal, but given the economic uncertainty, did not know if that would be possible," Addington said. "The outpouring of support has been overwhelming. We've added employee volunteers just to help sort and pack Angel Tree gifts and get them to the Salvation Army for final distribution."

Major Douglas Rowland, Wichita Salvation Army city commander added, "The Salvation Army is very grateful to the people of Koch Industries. They have shown again how generous and caring they are in these difficult times. The people in need in Wichita will benefit greatly because of the support of the employees of Koch."

Spearheaded by employees of Koch companies in Wichita, the drive has traditionally been one of the Wichita-area Army's most successful, with thousands of toys, bicycles and other gifts donated to area children and their families. This marks the 18th consecutive year Koch companies have participated in the Angel Tree drive.

Attending the unveiling of thousands of toys was seven-year old Ricardo Vitela, Jr., his mother, Maria Vitela, and father, Ricardo Vitela. The family will receive a three-wheeled bicycle purchased for Ricardo who is a special needs child. Majors Doug and Janet Rowland, city commanders of the Wichita Salvation Army, and Major Carlos Bravo also attended the event.

Each year, The Salvation Army collects toys for disadvantaged Sedgwick County children and families. This year, The Army is expecting to help more than 18,000 people through its Christmas distribution initiatives, which will benefit more than 11,000 children.

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