



Saint Viator Students Pitch in for Walter Payton Toy Drive

December 10, 2010



Students organize the many boxes of toys collected for the Walter Payton Toy Drive.

For the fifth consecutive year, Saint Viator students responded to the Walter Payton Toy Drive by bringing stacks of new, unwrapped toys to the holiday drive mounted by the Walter and Connie Payton Foundation based in Hoffman Estates.

In all, Saint Viator students and their families filled 17 large boxes with children's toys. A boy's and a girl's bicycle were the final items added to the pile that were purchased with family donations.

The Walter and Connie Payton Foundation serves neglected and underprivileged children in the state of Illinois, including 16,000

children served by the Department of Children and Family Services.

Last month, Connie Payton also formed a new partnership with Fellowship Housing in Hoffman Estates, whose mission is to provide safe and affordable housing for single mothers and their children.

Club members in Saint Viator's Students Making Smart Decisions (a division of SADD) spearheaded the toy drive. Beyond the desire to cheer children at Christmas, the students responded to a friendly competition offered by the foundation for high school bragging rights for the school that could bring in the most presents.

Supporting the Walter and Connie Payton Foundation comes naturally to Saint Viator students. The couple's son, Jarrett, graduated from the school in 1999.

"The Saint Viator community always responds generously to this drive," says Cathy Abrahamian, who moderated the drive with registrar Rose Ruffatto. "A little friendly competition never hurts, but our students genuinely want to help make it a merry Christmas for these children."