



**Gowanda Correctional Facility employees spread
Christmas cheer to ailing children**

December 18, 2015

On December 7th, Christmas came a little early to patients at Women & Children's Hospital in Buffalo. Accompanied by hospital staff with wish lists for children of all ages on each floor, three staff volunteers from Gowanda Correctional Facility (Erie County) distributed two gurney loads of toys and gifts to kids whose illnesses have caused them to become hospitalized during the holidays.

Toys, gifts and gift cards were purchased through donations of \$1500 from NYSCOPBA and \$200 from PEF. The employees used these funds to go on shopping sprees in support of this worthwhile project, while taking this opportunity to teach their children about the importance of giving by bringing them along on their shopping trips. The three divided the hospital's wish list into three age groups that corresponded with their own children: infants & toddlers, school age and pre-teen & teen. Each reported how helpful their kids were in selecting appropriate gifts, and how gratified they all were at the idea of other kids their own age experiencing joy from something they had picked out. The employees were also careful not to forget a few small requests from nursing staff, and gave each floor a small supply of cartoon character bandages, lip balm, hair care products and brushes. Toys and a few monetary donations were also collected at the facility from various staff and their families that chose to remain anonymous.

After the gifts had been distributed, the volunteers then presented hospital staff with a check donation of an additional \$200 from CSEA to be used for the Child Life Program at the hospital. With these funds, the program will be able to provide services and activities like this and smiles to ailing kids and their parents long after the holidays have passed.

Check out the Department's [Facebook page](#) to view photos from the even.