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Bike giveaway brightens holiday for Riverside County children

There are few things that will light up the eyes of a child at Christmas time more than a shiny new bicycle.

Thanks to Community Action Partnership (CAP) and a Corona-based non-profit organization, 75 Riverside County youngsters will be riding a new bike in time for the holidays. The Holiday Bike Giveaway is handing out the bicycles this week to children from each of the five supervisorial districts.

“It is such a wonderful feeling to see the smiles and laughter when the kids ride the bicycles for the first time knowing they will be able to take the bikes home,” said Supervisor Chuck Washington.

The first batch of bikes was handed out today (Dec. 19) in Perris and others will be given out Wednesday in Palm Desert and Thursday in Riverside.

“The holidays are a special time of year for our children and families. I am pleased to join with Community Action Partnership of Riverside County to put a smile on the faces of so many children during the holidays,” said, V. Manuel Perez, fourth district supervisor.

The children were selected by a committee made up of CAP staff after being recommended by parents, community members and others. Financial need is a key factor in the selection, CAP officials said. CAP is part of Riverside University Health System-Public Health.

The CAP program started in 2015 and scores of bicycles have been given out over the years. Bicycles for Children, a non-profit based in Corona, was a key partner, and John White, peer assistance and leadership teacher at El Cerrito Middle School, is the program coordinator, said Brenda Salas Freeman, executive director for CAP.

“The program continues to grow which shows there is a need in the community,” said Salas Freeman. “It is worth it to see the joy the bicycles bring to the children.”