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# SPREADING CHEER:

## Officers Help Students Complete School Project While Giving Back

By Kelly DeJonge, Glendale (WI) Police Dept., NASRO Region 8 Director



In December 2015, School Resource Officer Kelly DeJonge of the Glendale (WI) Police Department used the department's long-standing "Shop with a Cop" event to benefit high school students completing a school service project. In doing so, they were able to spread cheer to the elementary students this past holiday season.

The purpose of the "Shop with a Cop" event is to foster positive relationships between youth and officers. Since the department's inception of the event in 2005, the funds had been previously obtained through donations from the Glendale Professional Police Association, the City of Glendale, and a donation from Kohl's Department Store.

Last December, Officer DeJonge approached students involved in the AVID program at the high school with the idea of a bake sale. The proceeds collected would be donated to the "Shop with a Cop" event. AVID is a global nonprofit organization dedicated to closing the achievement gap and preparing all students for college and other postsecondary opportunities. Officer DeJonge knew that the AVID students had to complete a service project during the school year and thought

**"EVERY YEAR, THE EVENT BRINGS AN AMAZING AMOUNT OF JOY TO THE LIVES OF THE ELEMENTARY STUDENTS, FAMILIES AND POLICE OFFICERS."**

this would be the perfect opportunity for the high school students to give back to the elementary students, and the community in a positive way.

The students and officers agreed to bake all the items and sell them during the lunch periods at the high school. The total amount of funds that were raised during the bake sale was approximately \$500. In addition to the bake sale donations, Officer DeJonge contacted businesses in the area to ask if they would assist with donations for the day's event.

Once a certain amount of money was collected, 10 elementary-aged school students were selected by the school district to take part in the festivities. On December 13, 2015, officers from the Glendale Police Department volunteered their time and partnered with ten 2nd and 3rd grade students for the day for a shopping event. The Officers met the students and parents at Kohl's Department Store in Glendale, WI, where each student was given \$150 to spend on themselves and family members for the holidays. Several of the AVID students and school administrators were also on hand to help spread holiday cheer. After the students completed their holiday shopping, everyone involved was invited to a bowling party and lunch donated by the local iPic Entertainment Center.

Every year, the event brings an amazing amount of joy to the lives of the elementary students, families and police officers. This year, Officer DeJonge helped to teach the high school students about giving back to the community along with helping them complete their school project. That's a **clear** winner!

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