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## Dunwoody family donates 500 boxes of food for the holidays

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by **Christine Fonville**

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Although Dunwoody resident Bob Shumard said he hopes his family's donation of more than 500 boxes of food for the Community Assistance Center will help put the spotlight on the nonprofit, communications associate with the center, Kristen Ristino, said the Shumards deserve recognition.

"In years past, [the center] would request donations of food so that we could assemble boxes to give to our clients," Ristino said. "The Shumards' donation has been welcoming and significant, providing for over 500 families in need."

The center, which serves families suffering from unexpected financial crises such as job loss or medical expenses, runs its holiday food program in November and December and is completely dependent on donors.

Each box of food contains items such as canned vegetables and meat and goes to a local family in need.

Shumard said his family became involved with the food drive because of a family friend.

"We asked a friend in our church what she wanted for her birthday and she told us she wanted to help out with a food drive, so we just took that idea and ran with it," he said.

The family organized friends and volunteers to pack the boxes for the center for the last three years.

Shumard said his family was particularly interested in helping the nonprofit because the organization was localized and promoted self-reliance.

"Everyone needs help at some point and [the center] provides assistance to prevent eviction and feed people who are working hard but are struggling," he said.

Shumard said the donation process is also a chance for his family to work together and learn valuable life skills.

"This year, my 18-year-old son did a lot of the organizing and it was a great leadership opportunity for him," he said.

The food donations have become part of a holiday tradition for the family, and Shumard said they are excited each year to participate.

"It's a process that is really intergenerational," he said. "We have everyone from grandparents to kids involved."

Donations for the holiday food drive were recently distributed, but the center, at 1130 Hightower Trail in Sandy Springs, accepts canned goods, cereals and snacks monthly to provide for families in need.

To see a list of food accepted, visit [www.ourcac.org](http://www.ourcac.org).

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Hurrah for all, the Shumards and helpers!

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