

## Village School's "Adopt A Child" Program

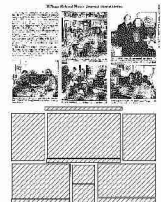
The Syosset Village Elementary School Student Council along with friends and families from Village held their second annual holiday "Adopt a Child" program. Thanks to the caring and generosity of Village families and staff members, the student council was able to grant the wishes of the young residents at Syosset's St. Mary's Mercy First who have limited or no familial relations. This year the Fifth Grade students, student council, and Fourth Grade Boy Scouts were treated to a very special program during their holiday workshop. Before the children began wrapping presents, stuffing stockings and boxing homemade cookies made with love by Village moms, three students from Mercy including Norberto, Ishmael, and Chris, accompanied by Cathy Menzies, senior V.P., and two dogs from the assistance-dog training

program came to Village Elementary School to demonstrate some of the techniques and training strategies of the program. The benefits of the program are three-fold: the boys learn to give love and care to the dogs, the dogs

are devoted and loyal to their young masters, and finally at the end of the two year training program, the dog become integral and vital parts of disabled people's life. The gifts were presented the following day at a festive breakfast at the Celebrity Diner in Syosset. This is the second year Celebrity Diner has hosted this event and the food was even more bountiful and delicious than last year. The festivities were culminated on January 8th, when once again Scott Princer owner of Pump-it-Up a popular party hotspot donated a party for the boys. A special thanks to Carol Ellert's second grade class for sponsoring twelve-year old Isaiah, whose face lit up when he opened up his first gingerbread house and read the beautiful holiday cards and Debra O'Gorman's Brownie Troop who sponsored Shameik. Shameik was so excited to explore the overflowing gift bag collected by this caring group of girls. In the end, it is we, the members of the Village Elementary School community who have received the greatest gift, and that is in the beauty and spirit of giving!



**Principal Kasper, Mary Majoy with Mercy First's Cathy, Norberto, Ishmael, and Chris share a smile with the dogs in training.**





**Here is Norberto, Ishmael, and Chris demonstrating some of the training they conduct with the dogs.**



**Village students look and listen intently and the Mercy First dog trainers share their experience with the dogs.**

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