



NEWS RELEASE

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Trees Glow with Gifts for Needy Seniors

Wool socks, fleece caps, soft blankets, space heaters and pharmacy gift cards top the holiday wish list for many older adults in the Detroit area. With meager income and few resources, these seniors struggle to pay heating bills, buy warm clothing, and purchase needed medications. The American House Foundation – with the community’s help – can make these practical wishes come true.



Holiday Hope for Seniors kicks off its second year with a tree lighting ceremony in all 19 American House Senior Living Communities from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. on November 4. Sparkling gold and silver ornaments will adorn a Giving Tree in each lobby; guests choose an ornament and grant the wish. Gold ornaments include a senior’s name, age, wish and the dollar amount (maximum \$20) needed to make the wish come true. Donors contribute the money; volunteers buy, wrap and deliver the gifts. Silver ornaments encourage open giving to support the program.

Last year’s Holiday Hope for Seniors raised \$55,000 and helped more than 250 older adults in metro Detroit. This year’s goal is \$75,000 with gifts for 300 seniors. The gifts are not given to residents of American House, but go instead to seniors not fortunate enough to live in the comfort of assisted housing. “Our residents are very moved to be able to give back,” said American House CEO Rob Gillette. “They like the idea of seniors helping seniors. It feels right.” The additional funds support American House Foundation (AHF) grants throughout the year.

Created in 2007, AHF’s mission is two-fold. **“We wanted to do something immediate and hands-on for individuals,”** said Gillette, **“while also supporting long-term research into aging.”** Seventy percent of AHF contributions go directly to needy seniors and 30% to the Institute of Gerontology at Wayne State University to support research. AHF has raised more than a quarter of a million dollars to date and helped more than 1,000 older adults with healthcare, dental, medical equipment, home maintenance and renovation needs not covered by insurance or other service programs.

The Giving Tree lighting ceremony is open to the public at all American House Communities. Refreshments or a light dinner will be served. Giving Tree donations are due by Dec. 20 to insure delivery by Dec. 25. **To learn more about the program or to make a gift, contact American House Foundation Administrator Danielle Conti at 248-203-1800.**

