



Assurant Health's "Giving Tree" a Holiday Trend for 20 Years

The quest for Lalaloopsies threw [Assurant Health](#) employees for a loop this holiday season.

For more than two decades, Assurant Health employees have bought holiday toys and presents for those in need through the Giving Tree program - a holiday drive that matches people in need with volunteers to purchase gifts on their wish lists. During that time, they've seen requests for simple items like socks to electronics, such as Game Boy Advance systems, and have diligently kept up with the latest holiday trends, but this year many employees were baffled by requests for the Lalaloopsy doll.

"Many of our employees had never heard of this holiday season's must-have present for little girls," said Denise Garczynski, employee events and programs manager at Assurant Health. "But that didn't stop them from making Lalaloopsy gift requests, and many other holiday wishes, a reality."

In partnership with the Volunteer Center of Greater Milwaukee, the Giving Tree program is a yearly tradition for Assurant Health, with employees who have participated for more than 20 years. Garczynski said the annual holiday event continues to thrive because employees really enjoy taking part and giving back.



Buster Wilks, a volunteer from Penfield Children's Center, wheels out some of the 300 presents given by Assurant Health employees participating in an annual Giving Tree program.

[Milwaukee](#) and [Penfield Children's Center](#) - all [Assurant Foundation](#)-sponsored organizations.

Employees donated a total of 300 gifts this year for children, as well as some adults, with items ranging from basic essentials to toys and games.

And although Lalaloopsies were the hot ticket item that at first eluded many, the gift of giving to those in need is one that all who participated in the Giving Tree Program had no trouble checking off the list.



Penfield Children's Center volunteers Buster Wilks and Wendy Clark stopped by Assurant Health's offices in Milwaukee to pick up gifts purchased by employees through the Giving Tree program -- a holiday drive that matches people in need with volunteers to purchase gifts on their wish lists.

Volunteers could select one or more gift tags, each with three gift wishes to choose from, hanging from Christmas trees in the office or donate money for the presents. Garczynski said often times, employees buy all three gifts listed on a single tag, or opt for multiple tags.

"Employees go above and beyond what is asked of them. During a time of year when people are often strapped for extra money, employees still find a way to help those who are less fortunate," she added.

All wrapped gifts were collected and distributed to the clients of [Children's Outing Association \(COA\)](#), [Youth & Family Centers](#), the [Guest House of](#)