

*DCF Commissioner Blake Joins GE Healthcare Employee Volunteers to
Put Holiday Smiles on Children's Faces*

Commissioner Allison Blake of the New Jersey State Department of Children and Families joined a group of volunteers from GE Healthcare to create holiday cheer by reading to and singing with a roomful of children during the Fun with Books and Music (FWB&M) Family Celebration at The Children's Home Society of New Jersey (CHS of NJ). It was an evening of joy and excitement at CHS of NJ's South Ward Family Success Center for the children ages 1-month to 6 years who came with parents and older siblings to reunite and celebrate with friends made earlier in the year through the FWB&M program.

This event was the creation of a motivated, caring volunteer team from GE Healthcare. The group worked with the CHS of NJ staff to plan, fund and execute the party.

"I look forward to the Fun with Books and Music Holiday Party every year," said Miranda Alfonso-Williams, GE Healthcare Global Privacy Leader, MDx, who is also an officer on the CHS of NJ Board and volunteers with her GE Healthcare team each year. "I think that I have more fun than the kids, and I am left with such a feeling of satisfaction. Nothing beats the looks on the kids' faces when they first see Santa.... If I could, I would bottle their smiles and happiness!"

GE Healthcare is a committed funder of the Fun with Books & Music program and the children of CHS of NJ. GE Volunteer Foundation provides funding for this critical pre-literacy program and generously hosts a year-end reunion for families who participated during the year. In addition to its work with Fun with Books and Music, the GE Healthcare volunteers collect new coats and other necessities for children of CHS of NJ throughout the year.

Donna Pressma, CEO and President of CHS of NJ reminds us, "at this holiday season, each of us, no matter how busy we are, be it as a GE Healthcare employee or the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Family Services, we can use our caring, time and energy through volunteerism to create a happy few hours that these children and families will not forget."

Fun with Books and Music is a nine-week interactive family literacy program with cycles in English and Spanish, offered by CHS of NJ to Trenton area families with at least one child under seven years old. The program has successfully impacted over 700 families since its inception in 1994. Enrollment for the 2012 program is underway. For more information on enrollment, sponsorship or volunteering, please call 609-695-6274 or visit chsofnj.org.

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About The Children's Home Society of New Jersey

The Children's Home Society of New Jersey is a nonprofit child and family serving agency whose mission is to save children's lives and build healthy families. Founded in 1894, the agency protects abused or neglected infants and at-risk children by insuring stable, permanent, and loving homes for each and every child it serves. All services are confidential and most are free. For more information, visit The Children's Home Society of New Jersey website at chsofnj.org.