



South Carolina Department of Corrections South Carolina Department on Aging

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For immediate release

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COLUMBIA, S.C. – Holiday gifts made by inmates at the S.C. Department of Corrections were delivered to long-term care residents across the state today.

The gifts are part of Operation Spread the Joy, which began in 2020 as an effort to lift the spirits of long-term care residents during the COVID-19 pandemic as part of the collaboration between SCDC and the S.C. Department on Aging.

The inmates drew cards by hand and made jewelry, knitted caps and footies, stuffed animals, bookmarks, blankets, and other comfort items.

"This program gives our inmates the opportunity to give something back to the community," SCDC Director Bryan Stirling said. "It's a tradition that keeps growing stronger every year, and we're grateful for the chance to spread some joy during the Christmas season."

There were about 2,000 items delivered to residents across the state. Inmates in 20 of South Carolina's 21 prisons made gifts for this project, which many said allowed them to help someone in this time of need.

"These special handmade gifts and cards by the inmates are a treasure for our residents because many do not have visitors, and these are sometimes the only piece of joy they may have during the holidays," SCDOA Director Connie Munn said. "We are so grateful for the opportunity to continue collaborating with the Department of Corrections to spread the joy to so many of our long-term care residents this holiday season."

The gifts and partnership are invaluable to those on the frontlines of caring for South Carolina's most vulnerable residents.

The S.C. Department on Aging's mission is to enhance the quality of life for seniors in South Carolina. The agency works with local organizations and a network of regional offices to provide services that help seniors in their communities. The agency also operates the state's Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, which serves as the advocate for more than 44,000 residents in long-term care settings.