

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TITLE: ASSISTANCE LEAGUE® of the BAY AREA TRANSFORMS LIVES FOR STUDENTS IN GALVESTON ISD

For over 30 years, Assistance League of the Bay Area has made significant impacts on Bay Area students across many districts. There has been tremendous growth in the philanthropic organization's programs due to increased fundraising and community need. With the help of members, community volunteers, donors, grantors, and partner organizations, Assistance League has been able to stay true to its mission to change one life at a time.

The organization's largest program, Operation School Bell®, had to adapt the program model this year due to COVID-19. Committee members have been virtually working since March to devise a flexible dressing plan which focuses on the health and safety of members, retail partner store personnel, and the families of the students identified by their schools. Working closely with the local Kohl's and Target stores and the corporate offices of both businesses, several options were discussed and explored.

Five Assistance League members will be allowed to enter the stores for two hours before opening to the general public. Members will shop for the clothing items requested for each student, pay for those items, remove tags, package with a hygiene kit, and label with the student's name and school. Additional volunteers will then deliver the packaged clothing to the students at their home schools or sites predetermined by the school district.

Assistance League added Galveston ISD to the Operation School Bell program in 2018 due to the increasing number of economically disadvantaged students. In 2019-2020, over 3,200 economically disadvantaged students from Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade were dressed across 8 school districts, 270 of which were from Galveston ISD. In addition, 739 polos were provided for elementary Galveston students.

Students are referred for Assistance League programs by their teachers, counselors, or school nurses. Criteria for selection may include financial need or special needs that may cause a child to be singled out for bullying such as homelessness.

Funding for Operation School Bell is raised through the chapter's award-winning Resale Shop located at 100 E NASA Road One, Suite 80 in Webster, an annual fundraiser, and a solid grants program. Other generous funding comes from private and community donations including Moody Methodist Church Permanent Endowment Fund aimed to provide specific funding for Galveston students.

Assistance League of the Bay Area is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization that changes lives through philanthropic programs in the Houston Bay Area community. For more information, visit www.assistanceleagueba.org.