

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**YWCA Students Spread the Spirit of Giving with #GivingTuesday by Raising Almost \$1,000 to Benefit New York Asian Women’s Center Domestic Violence Shelter**

**FLUSHING, New York (December 2<sup>nd</sup>) – YWCA of Queens** students of the Education & Career Services (ECS) department participated in a special #GivingTuesday project today and **raised almost \$1,000 for toys, clothes, and other gifts for women and their children at one of New York Asian Women’s Center’s (NYAWC) domestic violence shelters.**

#GivingTuesday is a global movement that creates a national day of giving around the annual shopping and spending season to inspire every day giving.

For the last two weeks, classes in the ECS department—including English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), High School Equivalency (HSE) preparation, and Women-to-Work computer skills training—competed to raise the most money for the #GivingTuesday fundraiser. Each class elected an ambassador to encourage class participation. As 85% of students in the ECS department are at or below the 125% poverty level, we set our fundraising goal at \$200. YWCA students astounded staff with their generosity, raising \$776.37. **Combined with our \$200 matching gift from Board Member Grace Lyu Volkhausen, the YWCA raised \$976.37.**

**Board Member Grace Lyu Volckhausen commented, “The YWCA board is committed to upholding the YWCA mission by giving what we can to help our community thrive.”**

**Executive Director Helen Kim commented, “The YWCA’s mission is to empower women. This project helped us achieve that goal not only by providing needed items to women at NYAWC shelters, but by showing our student they have the power to make real change in their community, thus inspiring the next generation of philanthropic leaders.”**

**Director of Development Stacy McKelvey said, “The mantra of #GivingTuesday is that it doesn’t matter how much you give, or what you give, just that you give. We hope the generosity of our students—many of whom are struggling financially themselves—inspires others in our community to find a way to give this holiday season.”**

The winning class, our afternoon HSE class, donated \$168 to the cause. **Student and Ambassador of the winning class Katerina Perakis said, “Some kids who have everything don’t realize that other kids don’t have anything. I think this fundraiser is an important reminder about being grateful for what we have. I’m happy to be able to give back and hope it encourages others to do the same.” Lexia Nguyen, instructor of the winning class, said, “The students in my class have shown incredible generosity of spirit and they encouraged each other to give—not just in class, but in their community—by their own volition.”**

NYAWC provided a wish list for the 20 mothers and children at their shelter and the YWCA was able to purchase all the items on that list. Because of the enormous generosity of students, the YWCA was able to purchase high-quality and big-ticket items families might not otherwise be able to afford like a keyboard and remote controlled car. **NYAWC Director of Shelter Operations Alena Victor commented, “NYAWC values the relationship we have had with YWCA Queens. We appreciate their generous help in strengthening our efforts to make this year’s holidays a festive time for our community of women and children. Many of our clients come from Queens and so it is especially heartwarming to know that the Queens community is thinking of them during this season of giving. We also recognize the value of fostering a broad base of support for survivors, and are proud to count YWCA Queens as a trusted community partner in our work -- not just during this season but throughout the year.”**

The fundraiser culminated today on #GivingTuesday in a wrapping party run by volunteer students, complete with hot apple cider. **Student and volunteer wrapped Alice Penick said, “It was so exciting looking at all the gifts and I kept thinking, ‘Wow, we did that! Those kids are going to have a great holiday!’”** Gifts will be taken to NYAWC later this week with the gift tags left blank so mothers can give the gifts to their children on their own behalf.

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#### **About YWCA of Queens**

The YWCA of Queens, founded in 1978, is a multi-tiered community organization with a wide range of education, career services, home health, and social services programs located at the center of one of the most diverse communities in the country. The YWCA of Queens’ mission is to eliminate racism and empower women through education and advocacy. Visit [www.ywcaqueens.org](http://www.ywcaqueens.org) for more information.

#### **About New York Asian Women’s Center**

The New York Asian Women’s Center helps women and their children overcome domestic violence and other forms of abuse by empowering them to govern their own lives. The Center provides a safe haven through multi-lingual support programs and shelter services. In addition, the Center works to raise public awareness about violence against women, advocates for the rights of survivors, and acts as an agent of social change. Visit [www.nyawc.org](http://www.nyawc.org) for more information.

#### **About #GivingTuesday**

#GivingTuesday is a movement to celebrate and provide incentives to give. It will culminate with a global day of giving on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014. #GivingTuesday will inspire people to take collaborative action to improve their local communities by harnessing the power of social media to create a global movement that is dedicated to giving around the world. To learn more, visit [www.givingtuesday.org](http://www.givingtuesday.org).

for every woman