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Gulf Region Division staffers distribute items to needy Iraqis, stateside donors encouraged to participate

By Norris Jones
Gulf Region South District



Ed Burdios with Gulf Region Division South District passes out gifts from U.S. donors July 27 at the Hilal Al Bajari grade school in Muthanna Province, southern Iraq. (USACE photo by Norris Jones)

MUTHANNA PROVINCE, Iraq – Because of the generosity of individuals and groups in America, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is doing more than just overseeing the construction of essential service projects in Iraq.

“We’re going out in the community distributing donated clothing and toys to some very grateful Iraqi families,” said

Sgt. Danielle Colson, the NCOIC of Gulf Region Division South District’s supply office. “Our goal is to make a trip each month to villages in southern Iraq.”

Those interested in supporting the effort are asked to mail clothes and shoes (any size), and toys for all ages to the following address: USACE GRS, Toys/Donation Closet, COB Adder, Tallil, Iraq AE



Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey Jackson with Gulf Region Division South District hands out stuffed toys to youngsters in southern Iraq. (USACE photo by Norris Jones)

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"It touches your heart when you're out there seeing their smiles," said Colson. "We sincerely appreciate those who have already responded and encourage others to consider joining this special effort."

Colson and three other GRS HQ personnel visited a four-classroom rural elementary school in Muthanna Province July 27. Hilal Al Bajari School Headmaster Salem Jaheel said, "The gifts mean a lot to our students. This is a special day. You have made them very happy." He said he is working with the Muthanna Provincial Reconstruction Team to get funding to expand his school that currently has more than 100 students attending grades 1-6. The headmaster has a personal investment there as he used his own funds to build the facility four years ago. "We need at least two additional classrooms," he added.

Apart from Colson, others participating in the school visit included Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey Jackson, Ed Burdios and Norris Jones.



It's all smiles as Army Sgt. Danielle Colson gives Iraqi youngsters some toys and clothing during a visit to Hilal Al Bajari elementary school in Muthanna Province, southern Iraq July 27. Colson is the Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge of the Gulf Region Division South District supply. (USACE photo by Norris Jones)

Note: Norris Jones is a Public Affairs Specialist with the Gulf Region South district, Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Iraq. For more information, contact public affairs by phone at 540-665-1233, by e-mail to CEGRD.PAO@tac01.usace.army.mil, or visit www.grd.usace.army.mil