

TCC packs a load of TLC

Written by By Andy Gibbons III Sun Correspondent
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Local business serves the community by handing out free backpacks

What happens when a business wants to do more than take money from strangers? What if a business actually wants to be a valuable member of its community?

This is the case for The Cellular Connection. TCC is the authorized Verizon dealer you might have seen in the Rio West Mall, 1300 W. Maloney Ave. They've been around for 40 years as a family-owned business, and they even have a division called "Community Matters."

It's this part of the business that aims to give back to the Gallup community every three months.

On July 30, TCC participated in multiple events happening at the mall. Volunteers handed out 250 brand-new backpacks under a hot summer sun to a line of over 400 people, running out somewhere around halfway through the line.

David Madrid is a wireless sales professional at TCC and shared with the Sun more details about this backpack giveaway event and others like it.

"It's not a way to get sales; it's not a way to have you guys come visit the store. It's a way for us to give back to the community," Madrid said.

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Every single one of the backpacks was paid for exclusively by the cellular to help out families in the area. This kind of generosity is a routine exercise for TCC, as they also donate art supplies to teachers in January; lead “Heal the World” in the spring, where they clean parks and plant trees; and in the fall, they will do another food drive.

Madrid was moved by the experience and verified with others that many smiles were to be seen on the faces of children and parents.

Volunteers heard stories of tough conversations parents had to have with their children about not being able to afford a new backpack this school year. Then the conversation changed.

“It was truly awesome to see the kids and how much the kids and parents were appreciative of the gift of a backpack,” Madrid said. “Every child said ‘Thank you,’ and you don’t see a lot of that anymore.”

Many agreed it was a great experience even though the hundreds of backpacks ran out before everyone was able to get through the line.

“This was an amazing experience knowing my team at TCC and I were able to help so many kids but weren’t going to receive anything in return,” Madrid said.

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