

Equipped with new studio space, Toys for Tots Westchester sets collection goal of 100,000 toys



YONKERS, New York (WABC) -- When the Toys for Tots facility in Westchester County was left looking for a home, a new studio space was donated to them, just in time for the holiday season.

It's Veterans Day, but some teens spent their day off from school getting ready for Christmas, volunteering at the new home for Toys for Tots Westchester.

"I think it's really special that we could do something for kids that don't get to have the same Christmas mornings like other kids that are more fortunate," said volunteer Trevor Simms.

"I feel good about it because not many people do this for their community, and I'm happy we get to help them," said volunteer Annalee Reynoso.

It's here that familiar collection boxes are distributed to businesses throughout the area, and it's where volunteers then sort through tens of thousands of donated toys once they are returned.

"Taking into consideration today's political climate, major cutbacks, we're really looking to do major things," said co-coordinator Harold McKoy Jr.

It's estimated the foundation will help 48,000 kids, but despite the need, this year's toy drive was nearly canceled.

Toys for Tots Westchester was left without working space when the longtime coordinator suddenly retired this fall.

Yonkers Arts came to the rescue, donating studio space in its warehouse for the next couple of months.

"A lot of people do it from their homes. For some things, for such a large county, we needed a large space. So, to get Yonkers Arts to donate this, it was a shocker, I couldn't answer without saying, I didn't think it would happen," said co-coordinator Patricia Laforey.

Over 300 boxes have already been distributed, the organization hopes to have a thousand in place, and anyone can stop by the warehouse on Nepperhan Avenue to drop off a donation, or volunteer in the spirit of the season.