



MASSACHUSETTS

Local Girl Celebrates Birthday by Giving Back to Community

Mass. (Jan. 16th, 2018) – In celebration of her upcoming 10th birthday in February, Abigail of Tewksbury, decided to volunteer for the national Little Hats, Big Hearts initiative for the American Heart Association. The nationwide campaign raises awareness about family heart health and congenital heart defects with the support of the Children’s Heart Foundation by providing handmade red hats to newborns nationwide. Abigail and her mom, knit 22 red hats that will be given to babies born at participating hospitals in Massachusetts throughout the month of February.

“I had a lot of fun making these hats,” said Abigail. “I liked seeing all the hats that people donated, and I hope that I can knit even more next year.”

While Abigail’s initial reason for volunteering was to do something for others during her birthday month, she also has a family connection to the cause. Her older cousin, who is now 18, had open-heart surgery shortly after he was born, and her grandfather passed away from a heart attack three years ago.

As part of the program, all babies born at participating hospitals during American Heart Month will receive a knitted or crocheted red baby hat. Volunteers across the state assisted the Little Hats, Big Hearts program, donating thousands of handmade red hats to be delivered this February, to encourage Americans to join the fight against heart disease.

More than 2,000 hats have been collected in the American Heart Association’s Waltham office, and will be distributed to Brigham & Women’s Hospital, Tufts Medical Center, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston Children’s Hospital, Milford Regional Medical Center, UMass Memorial Medical Center and Saint Vincent Hospital.

This year’s program is locally sponsored by Benchmark Senior Living to support the American Heart Association’s mission to build healthier lives free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke.

“We are proud to be a part of the Little Hats, Big Hearts program during Heart Month again this year,” said Thomas Grape, Chairman and CEO at Benchmark Senior Living. “Through this

program, we are working together as a community to raise awareness, provide resources, and empower moms to live heart healthy lives and to help their children do the same.”

The Little Hats, Big Hearts program started in Chicago in 2014 and has expanded to more than 40 states. More than 2,000 hats will be distributed throughout Massachusetts next month. For more information about the Little Hats, Big Hearts program, visit www.heart.org/littlehatsbighearts.

###