



**PATRICK "PAT" LABAT**  
FULTON COUNTY SHERIFF

## **FULTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **South Annex Jail Hosts Inaugural "Hearts Reunited" Christmas Initiative**

**UNION CITY, GA** – During a season centered on family and hope, the Fulton County Sheriff's Office South Annex Jail in Union City hosted "Hearts Reunited," a first-of-its-kind holiday program that brought incarcerated residents together with their children and family members for in-person visitation.

For select fathers housed at the South Annex Jail, the event marked a deeply emotional milestone by reuniting them with their children up to age 17. Seventeen-year-old inmate residents were also permitted to visit with their parents and siblings. Some participants have been incarcerated for five years or more, and in certain cases, this holiday visit was the first time they had ever met their child or sibling in person.

At the Fulton County Jail, visitation currently takes place exclusively in a virtual format, with in-person visitation having not occurred since 2012. As a result, Hearts Reunited offered families a unique opportunity to connect face-to-face.

The event was led by South Annex Commander Major Burnice Howard, whose vision centered on restoring family bonds and creating moments of dignity and hope. Younger children selected toys from beneath a Christmas tree, while older children received gift cards.

Hearts Reunited was made possible through the generous donations and collective support of the Fulton County Sheriff's Office team, Fulton County Commissioner Mo Ivory, members of the Fulton County Attorney's Office, Pastor Gregory Pollard and The Enon Church, Pastor Gerald Jennings with House of Restoration, Inc. and Rush Memorial Congregational Church, Judge Glenda Hatchett, Mr. Artis Brunson, The Dinker Foundation, Caring For Others, Inc., Mark Carroll and Friends, NoteActive, and Walmart Supercenter Union City.

"Christmas is a season of hope and joy, and this event brought just that to so many families," said Sheriff Patrick "Pat" Labat. "As a father, I know there is no gift greater than being able to look your child in the eye. I'm deeply grateful for our incredible team whose compassion and hard work made this possible. Moments like this remind us why we must continue to see the humanity in every resident and foster hope within our facilities."

**ABOUT THE FULTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE:** The mission of the Fulton County Sheriff's Office is Service; through laser-focused efforts to protect the citizens of Fulton County with coordinated law enforcement operations, special strategic teams, and community outreach methods. The Sheriff's Office is constitutionally responsible for the security of all courtrooms, executing arrest warrants, and serving civil papers. In addition, the Sheriff's Office is responsible for the administration and operation of the Fulton County Jail.

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