

# Wisconsin Boys & Girls Club delivers 30,000 gallons of water to Flint residents



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FLINT, MI – Michael Johnson was taken aback at the stories he heard and people he met while going door-to-door on Flint's north and east sides on Monday.

"Today was very, very humbling," said Johnson, CEO of the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County, Wis., part of a group of volunteers that donated bottles and jugs of water, filters and test kits to residents before heading back to the Badger State.

"This one young lady, she had me in tears. She just said I can't believe you all are coming to my house to give us as much water as we wanted," he said, of Flint resident Alise Collins' issues with her dog's skin. "When I think about what we're (doing) here, how do we utilize our lives to change somebody's else life, I'm thankful our city stepped up."

Johnson is from Madison, while other volunteers distribution the 30,000 gallons of water include residents from Gary and Hammond, Ind. and Chicago.

Atonye Adjei, an organizer of the effort, came to tears when she was presented with a certificate of appreciation from Detroit City Clerk Janice Winfrey for the group's efforts. Winfrey's daughter is a reporter for WMTV in Madison.

A geriatric nurse, Adjei spoke of the potential impact of the issue for seniors and shared a story of an 85-year-old man whose door the group came to that had only one bottle of water left before they loaded him up with a fresh supply.

Having heard stories of people with dementia, Adjei said "They are not going to remember, hey, I can't drink this water. It's not good for me."

"It did my heart good know that if there's clean water there that they'll be safe," she said.

Johnson, who was presented with a proclamation by Flint City Clerk Inez Brown for his efforts, also handed over a \$1,500 check to Tazzari Robinson, CEO of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Flint, during a presentation at the club's Averill Avenue site.

"The longer this goes on, the more resources we're going to need, the more resources families are going to need, cooking food, just drinking," said Robinson, with the club providing bottled water and covered drinking fountains in September. "It's great that so many people have jumped to help."

He was concerned about the summer program the club runs, when their numbers swell from the 125 children in the after-school program to upwards of 300 during a 10-week long summer camp.

"The building is very hot. "We're taking field trips, going to state parks and things," said Robinson, sharing some concerns once the story is out of the national spotlight people may forget about the city's plight.

With so many different resources currently available to residents, Robinson said they've become place where parents come with questions.

"Now that it's kind of come back to the forefront, we've been having those conversations, making sure we get resources out to the families, making sure they know where they can go to get testing kits and filters," he said, while Johnson found the situation unimaginable for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

"You just can't think of something like this happening in America," said Johnson, pledging he would be back if more help was needed. "This sounds like something that happens in an underdeveloped country and the fact that kids' lives and senior lives are being put at risk and just people in general, we felt like we had to do something, we had a moral obligation to do something."

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