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TD Bank gift helps restock cupboards at Philabundance

Philadelphia Business Journal

A recent donation of \$25,000 from **TD Bank's** charitable foundation to the food bank Philabundance will help feed hungry people in Philadelphia this winter.

The contribution, which is equivalent to 83,000 pounds of food, is part of a broader \$100,000 donation from TD Bank's Charitable Foundation to food banks in New York, Washington and Florida.

In Philadelphia an estimated 900,000 people, or 25 percent of the population, lives in poverty, said Martha Buccino, senior vice president of strategic development for Philabundance. Children account for 200,000 of that number. Yet hunger remains largely unseen because people unable to afford food are ashamed to admit it, she said.

"They'll pay mortgage, rent, utilities, health care, but they know they can do without food occasionally as opposed to living without heat in the winter," Buccino said.

The recession has forced people to manage their finances more frugally, and that has resulted in food shortages at local food banks. Philabundance reports that though it still receives donations from regular supporters, it has been getting less than it used to. A meal can be produced at a cost of around 30 cents.

TD Bank, which is jointly based in Cherry Hill and Portland, Maine, is one of many corporations that recognizes the problem of hunger by donating to Philabundance. **Sunoco** of Philadelphia donates fuel to the nonprofit group. **Bank of America** also supports Philabundance.

"It is any large corporate partner's need to give back to people where we do business, because our objective as an organization is to be a partner in the community and help serve the needs of the community," said Mike Carbone, TD Bank's president of the metropolitan area.

"We manage wealth and provide insurance, so we are at the center of what goes in the community, so [we] should be willing to give back," he said.

"[Hunger is] a very comprehensive effort and it can only get worse," Buccino said. "It takes local communities, the city itself, social service agencies, and the corporate sector."

Philabundance asks donors to contribute simple food items like peanut butter, macaroni, canned tuna and soup, all of which are still cheap and usually surplus items in people's cupboards. Buccino said cans of Campbell's Chunky Soup can be stretched into two meals by simply adding water.

Volunteering is also crucial for Philabundance, she said. Committing a few hours to stock shelves at the food bank or organize a food drive pays huge dividends for the nonprofit group and only costs the donor his or her time.

Adoption donations

Adoptions From the Heart (AFTH), a nonprofit group based in Wynnewood, donated \$14,000 in gift cards to go toward toys, food, shelter and housing for 43 women. Founded in 1985, AFTH assists birth mothers who place their children up for adoption with living costs and also raises and distributes funds throughout the year to offset medical expenses or purchase special equipment for critically ill children adopted through the agency.

Neighborhood windfall

ACE Group of Cos., an insurance provider based in Philadelphia, donated \$100,000 to Neighborhoods Now. The money will be used to preserve middle-class neighborhoods and finance transit-oriented development. The grant was made through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's neighborhood assistance program, which awards tax credits to businesses that invest in maintaining and increasing business-community partnerships.

Book it

American Executive Centers (AEC), an office furnishing company operating in seven locations throughout the Delaware Valley, raised \$2,000 for the Philadelphia School District's Philadelphia Reads Early Literacy Program. AEC raised the money by creating and selling a book titled, "Celebrating 4 Seasons with Cooking and Recipes."

— James M. Viola



Mike Carbone and Ronald Matthew of TD Bank tour Philabundance's warehouse at 302 W. Berks St. with Martha Buccino, a senior vice president for Philabundance.

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