

Movers reach out
to their communities
in a variety of ways

By John Parkinson

Charitable GIVING

The holiday season is a time of year when many peoples' thoughts turn to those in need. And yet, in every issue of this magazine, readers have to look no further than the Members Doing Good section to see moving companies giving to charities and supporting philanthropic causes during the course of the entire year.

The industry has not only shown a willingness to give continuously throughout the year, but the diversity of the giving is most notable. Numerous examples exist that display movers' commitments to the variety of causes, and they include: delivering donated food to local food banks; providing scholarships to deserving students; lending portable containers during natural disasters, and funding school supplies to list just a few.



GROWING A GRASSROOTS CAMPAIGN

As many long-standing movers started out as mom and pop organizations, their roots often remain connected to the local communities they serve, and their giving is often done at that level. Lowy's moving company-based in Neptune, NJ has been in business for 85 years and provides a good example of making a difference locally. Seeing the enormous amounts of food being thrown out by moving customers prompted the Lowy brothers to begin asking families who were going to discard their food to let them take it and deliver it to local food banks. This selfless gesture by the Lowy brothers turned into a regular habit, and earlier this year, it morphed into the development of Lowy's Move For Hunger organization. This non-profit organization, formed last summer, has collected nearly 7,000 pounds of donated food and delivered it to nearby food banks in just the first few months. Today,

when Lowy's goes out to do an estimate, their salespeople bring along a collection box, and a letter with specific hunger facts related to their geographic area. They later remind customers that if they want to donate food, Lowys will pick it up and deliver it to the food bank.

Adam Lowy, executive director for Move for Hunger, and son of one of the brothers explains why the program has worked thus far. "People want to donate, and we are giving them that avenue to make it easy for them."

Move For Hunger has already launched several grassroots' food campaigns. The organization went to 15 nearby beach clubs this past August and put out collection boxes. They collected close to two tons of food for a one-month drive.

Move For Hunger has even picked up a corporate partner: Wheaton Van Lines. The company is helping with funding and has a network of nearly 300 movers from which the Mover for Hunger



Suddath's Spirit of Christmas program provides gifts to families who might not be able to have a traditional gift-giving holiday due to various hardships.

organization can expand its initiatives. The non-profit is now working with 10 Wheaton moving agents in eight states. These agents do their daily food pick-ups from customers, and together, the agents



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and Move for Hunger coordinate food drive events. For example, Lowy mentions a drive being done where the local mover involved in it donated boxes and delivered the donated food to the local banks. Move for Hunger provided signage and marketing for the drive.

BALANCING CORPORATE GIVING

On the other side of the spectrum, corporations may have the means to support larger charitable organizations, but face the responsibility and the questions of who and what they should give to? One good example of a larger company striking the right balance is Jacksonville, Fla.-based the Suddath Companies.

The company provides donations to well-established national non-profit organizations as well as helps with smaller localized causes in each of its 16 markets. A few of the bigger organizations they contribute to include: the Red Cross, Cancer Society, and United Way. While

Suddath makes decisions about its major contributions at its upper management and board of director's levels, their individual business units can explore local charity options explains Barry Vaughn, CEO, Suddath. "We believe in giving back to the communities we work with, and not only making charitable contributions, we do in-kind services for lots of organizations," states Vaughn.

While the company gives to various organizations, it does look to charities that involve children's causes, notes Vaughn. He points to the Dreams Come True, foundation which helps terminally ill children realize their dreams.

One of the ancillary benefits of giving, especially during the holidays is the opportunity for the entire company to engage in the charity-related events, according to Vaughn. Specifically, he points to its Spirit of Christmas program. Suddath helps families by providing children and parents with gifts.

THE GIFT OF GIVING

One of the biggest benefits movers receive is a personal satisfaction from their involvement. "The pride we have is in the feeling that comes back to us in the way that we have touched people's hearts, souls, and their lives," says Vaughn. "There is a lot of emotion with it, because these people are so grateful for the assistance."

At the age of 24, Lowy possesses a maturity and a foresight beyond his years. Previously, Lowy worked in marketing and handled events for a luxury car company, but he decided to quit his job to work at Move for Hunger. Lowy has no regrets. "I really have the ability to give back not only to my community but I am allowing others to give back."

Across the country, movers continue to give their time, energy, and support to whatever is being asked of them, and lending the helping hands that are needed in their local communities. ♦



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