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Cummings Properties distributed \$327,000 to local nonprofits during Thanksgiving week

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Thanksgiving week, Cummings Properties distributed \$327,000 to local nonprofits, including a total of \$64,000 to 34 organizations based in the cities of Woburn and Beverly, where it has significant properties and many of its employees work. The donations were made in honor of the commercial real estate firm's full-time staff members, who were each invited to select a charity to receive \$1,000 through the Employee Directed Giving program.

The program, now in its third year, supports local communities through organizations based and providing services in or near employees' hometowns. The donations support everything from food pantries to animal shelters to youth sports to veterans' causes to schools, libraries, and senior centers.

Several charities received more than one check, thanks to multiple nominations, often the result of employees enthusiastically lobbying their coworkers. Woburn's Jamie McKeown Boys & Girls Club and Beverly High School Marine Junior R.O.T.C. are two of nine Massachusetts nonprofits that received the maximum donation of \$5,000 allowed by the program guidelines.

Woburn resident and Cummings Properties tenant services admin Jo-Anne Varoutsos chose Joyce Middle School to receive her donation.

"It brought me such joy to deliver a thousand dollars to principal Tom Qualey and Joanne Young," said Varoutsos, who directed the donation to the Best Buddies program, which pairs children with intellectual and developmental disabilities with children who have no disabilities in an effort to create one-on-one relationships and an inclusive environment. "I used to work as a substitute teacher and saw first hand how the children accepted and interacted with each otherâ€"not only in the program but outside of school as well. They became friends."

"Employee Directed Giving is a unique opportunity for the company to make an impact in the communities where our employees live in a way that is particularly meaningful to them," said president and CEO Dennis Clarke. "The fact that families are sitting down having discussions about where to give and why has resulted in numerous colleagues feeling especially good about the program."

Employee Directed Giving is open to all regular full-time staff within the Cummings organization, including the firm's affiliated New Horizons retirement communities in Marlborough and Woburn. A complete list of the recipient organizations is available at www.cummingsproperties.com/employee_directed_giving.htm.

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