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Cummings donates \$518,000 on behalf of employees

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Woburn, MA Hundreds of local nonprofits had reason to be thankful recently as they received a collective \$518,000 in donations through Cummings Community Giving. Each year, employees of the commercial real estate company, Cummings Properties, are invited to participate in this philanthropic initiative by selecting a local organization to receive a \$1,000 contribution from the firm.

The program is designed to give back in the areas where Cummings Properties team members live and work. In 2021, participants directed funds to 335 nonprofits in 98 local cities and towns.

Now in its 10th year, Cummings Community Giving has resulted in more than \$4 million in donations to date.

“The Cummings organization believes that its giving can be better informed and more impactful when community members help decide where donations go,” said Dennis Clarke, Cummings Properties chairman and CEO. “By ‘democratizing’ philanthropy in this way, we reach many organizations that are making a meaningful difference, but that we may not have heard about otherwise.”

Longtime Woburn residents Jo-Anne and Charlie Varoutsos, both Cummings employees, designated their combined \$2,000 to Joyce Middle School’s Best Buddies Program, which matches students with intellectual and developmental disabilities with students without disabilities.

“I used to substitute teach and saw first-hand how well the students interacted,” said Jo-Anne Varoutsos. “I have been able to direct funding to them through this program for eight years, which gives me such a good feeling, and it brings them joy as well. They are always so excited to receive our donation.”

Cummings senior graphic designer Mike Lamothe designated his \$1,000 to MSPCA at Nevins Farm in Methuen.

“Each year, my family and I discuss where the donation will go. We are big animal lovers, so this year we chose MSPCA because of the great work it does caring for animals,” said Lamothe. “I really appreciate that Cummings gives us the ability to choose a nonprofit that is important to us.”

Each eligible organization may be selected by up to five staff members per cycle, for a total of \$5,000. This year, 15 recipients reached the \$5,000 maximum, including Dana Farber Cancer

Institute, My Brothers Table in Lynn, Northeast Animal Shelter in Salem, and James L. McKeown Boys and Girls Club of Woburn.

Cummings Community Giving is open to employees of Cummings Properties as well as its affiliated retirement communities, New Horizons at Choate in Woburn and New Horizons at Marlborough. Colleagues with a decade or more with the company are given the option to select two organizations for \$1,000 each.

In recent years, the program has expanded to include longtime leasing clients, Cummings Foundation volunteers, and other friends of the Cummings organization. These participants made their selections earlier in the year, generating an additional \$225,000 for local nonprofits in 2021.

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