



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA ADVISORY

Hundreds of Area Lawyers and Law Firms Gear Up for Annual Clothing Drive to Benefit DC Area Homeless

Washington, D.C., November 25, 2009 – As the number of homeless people and families in the DC increases, so do the efforts of area lawyers and law firms to provide them with warm clothing. Gifts for the Homeless, Inc. (GFTH), the non-profit, all-volunteer organization supported by the region’s legal community, is now collecting used clothing as part of its annual clothing drive that, over the past 20 years, has distributed *tens of thousands* of bags of used clothing to shelters in the District, Virginia, and Maryland.

“The clothing we collect each year is delivered to more than 70 area shelters, from an 8-bed home for men with AIDS to a 1,600 bed facility serving men, women and children,” said Bart Epstein, President of GFTH. “Every year, we meet the needs of more and more homeless people and families by delivering warm clothing to increasing numbers of shelters and soup kitchens. We intend to serve every facility in the region that helps the homeless -- from emergency shelters to transitional shelters to shelters for battered women and children to soup kitchens. Any shelter or soup kitchen in the area with needs should let us know so that we can do our best to meet their needs.”

During the weekend of December 4-6, several hundred volunteers are coming together to sort, categorize, repackage, and then deliver thousands of bags of donated clothing, blankets, and other necessities to dozens of area shelters to distribute to the homeless. Once again this year, Republic Properties has generously donated the use of its “Portals III” building (D St. SW, between 12th and 13th) for this event. Many parents will bring their school-aged children to have a hands-on experience helping others.

There is still time for interested firms, individuals, families, and school groups to donate clothing and/or to volunteer. For more information, please visit the Gifts for the Homeless web site at www.gfth.org.

About GFTH: GFTH was created in 1986 by Washington, D.C. lawyers as part of an effort to give back to the city during the holiday season. Over the years, GFTH has grown into a year-round operation that collects used clothing and monetary donations (that are used to purchase new clothing such as socks, sweatshirts, long underwear, blankets, hats and gloves for the homeless.) Fundraising for the purchase of new clothing continues throughout the holiday season in an effort to help GFTH meet the increased need resulting from the economic recession. Donations can be made anytime at www.gfth.org.

Last year, over 250 volunteers helped GFTH sort and distribute more than 4,500 bags of used clothing for D.C.’s homeless to over 77 shelters and soup kitchens. GFTH also collected more than \$210,000 in donations and purchased more than 110,000 items of new clothing (including 1,400 blankets) to 35 area shelters and soup kitchens. Of the \$210,000 collected, more than \$80,000 was raised at GFTH’s annual concert, known as “Banding Together: Battle of the Law Firm Bands.”

GFTH is wholly volunteer-run by lawyers, legal staff, and other D.C. area professionals, and receives donations and assistance from individuals at area law firms, government agencies, and associations. Contributions to GFTH are exceptionally effective because 100% of money received is used to purchase items for the homeless at bulk discount. All of the organization’s overhead is covered by participating law firms, organizations, and the individual members of GFTH’s Board of Directors.

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