

Salvation Army seeks volunteers for Red Kettle Campaign

If you're looking to reconnect with the spirit of the season and you can find at least two hours to volunteer between today and Christmas Eve the 2009 Northern RI Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign could use your help.

For over 10 years, Woonsocket and North Smithfield residents have received help with basic needs such as rent, utility/heating assistance and prescription assistance through the Salvation Army.

Volunteers working with Family Resources Community Action and other organizations have raised funds to help local residents by manning the Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign posts in these communities between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Ninety percent of all funds raised through the campaign go directly toward helping Woonsocket and North

Smithfield residents.

We are actively seeking volunteers to staff kettles at Shaw's Supermarket in Woonsocket, Stop & Shop in North Smithfield and Brigido's Fresh Market in Slatersville. There are many hours to fill at all locations between the hours of Noon and 8pm. Individuals, families, friends and social groups are welcome to staff kettles and ring the bell! Although we joyfully accept the help of young people, we ask that youth under the age of 18 be accompanied by an adult. Shifts are just two hours long.

Volunteer and find the true meaning of the giving season while ringing the bell with us! If you are interested in helping with the Kettle Campaign, please contact Julie Wunderlich at Family Resources Community Action, 401-235-6087 or jjwunderlich@famresri.org

Rhodes to Independence hosts Employment First Summit with gubernatorial candidates

LINCOLN — As part of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, Rhodes to Independence, which operates under the aegis of the University of Rhode Island College of Pharmacy, will host a RI Employment First Summit featuring gubernatorial candidates Ken Block, Frank Caprio, Lincoln Chafee, Todd Giroux, Joseph Lusi and John Robitaille on Thursday, Oct. 28, at Kirkbrae Country Club, 197 Old River Road, Lincoln.

The summit runs from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.; candidates are scheduled to speak from 9:30 to noon.

This latest event marks the third RI Employment First Summit held by Rhodes to Independence in the last 10 months. The RI Employment First Summits are intended to develop a blueprint for the state for increasing the employment rate of people with disabilities. Candidates have been asked to

outline their thoughts on disability employment policy in their respective Administrations.

Rhodes to Independence Executive Director Elaina Goldstein explains the importance of the Employment First initiative: "Work is a pathway for people with disabilities to escape poverty and maximize their potential as individuals and citizens. If the State of Rhode Island is to prosper, all should have the opportunity to become fully participating and contributing citizens."

The Summit agenda also includes discussion of the outcomes of the four RI Employment First Workgroups which are: Employer; Employment Providers; School to Work Transitions; and Employment First Policy for RI.

Registration for this free event is still open. Those interested in attending must register in advance by calling (401) 462-6022.

PPAC to hold scholarship breakfast fundraiser

PAWTUCKET — This Sunday, the Portuguese American Citizens Committee of Rhode Island will host its annual Fall Scholarship Breakfast fundraising event. Over the last decade, the PACC has distributed over \$160,000 in scholarships to deserving students of Portuguese descent and has recently established a scholarship endowment fund.

Please join us and help us in our ongoing efforts to help

those deserving students in the community continue with their studies at the collegiate level.

The menu will include sweet bread French toast, eggs, bacon, chourico, beans, home fries, and Dunkin Donuts coffee. Since it is Halloween, we are also encouraging all parents to bring children dressed in their costumes, as there will be some goodies on hand.

Also, a 50/50 cash raffle will be drawn on that day. Tickets for



Members of the White Family Foundation present a \$5,000 check to Project GOAL.

Submitted photo

Foundation awards \$5,000 to Project GOAL

CRANSTON — The White Family Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Taco, Inc., has awarded \$5,000 to Project GOAL, a non-profit organization which works with disadvantaged youth here in RI.

Project GOAL, which stands for Greater Opportunity for Athletes to Learn, focuses on students in grades 6 through 8 who attend public schools in Providence, Pawtucket and Central Falls. Project GOAL's program combines no charge after-school tutoring with soccer-related activities. Students are selected to participate in project GOAL for their academic potential and soccer abilities.

Student participants work with educators for an hour and a half after the school day ends, two days a week, to improve study skills and habits; they then receive soccer coaching from accredited coaches.

Some 60 students currently participate in Project GOAL, according to Peter Wheaton, the Chairman of CORE Business Technologies of East Providence and a co-founder of Project GOAL. 90 percent of students who have participated in Project GOAL since its inception have graduated from high school, fulfilling the organization's overriding objective of keeping disadvantaged youngsters in school. To date, 17 of its students have transferred to private schools.

Wheaton formed Project GOAL seven years ago with Darius Shirzadi and Javier Centeno, both former soccer players and coaches who remain active in the minority community. They use sport as a draw for soccer-loving students, providing an after-school haven that mixes academic support with the opportunity to learn and play soccer. Students are encouraged to "earn" time on the playing field by exhibiting good schoolwork habits. To continue their participation in Project GOAL, students must maintain their academic stand-

ing. "Project GOAL is a truly worthy program that merits the White Family Foundation's support," says Nelson Rego, Taco's Vice President of Quality Control. "These children come from disadvantaged families in challenging environments, where education is often not a high priority. Project GOAL helps these kids stay in school, which gives them the best shot possible for future success in life."

Project GOAL will use the \$5,000 gift, says Peter Wheaton, to pay for transportation costs, one of the organization's biggest expenses. Project GOAL regularly buses students to area soccer fields and brings students from Providence and Pawtucket to the Calcutt Middle School in Central Falls, where it conducts its after-school tutoring sessions.

Project GOAL maintains an existing relationship with the New England Revolution professional soccer franchise, with Moses Brown School which offers its soccer fields

for practice, and with Rhode Island College, where Project GOAL students receive literacy and reading assistance from Masters in Education candidates.

About the White Family Foundation

The White Family Foundation was established in 2000 to receive and evaluate grants and other assistance requests from non-profit, community-based organizations serving significant social goals in Rhode Island. Since its inception the White Family Foundation has provided assistance to almost 300 non-profit organizations active here in RI. www.thewhitefamilyfoundation.org.

About Taco, Inc.

Taco, Inc., headquartered in Cranston, is a leading manufacturer of heating and cooling equipment for use in residential, commercial and institutional buildings. The company employs approximately 500 in Cranston, Fall River, MA and Milton, Ontario, Canada. www.taco-hvac.com.

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