

DISABLED IN UKRAINE GET HELP FROM HOPE SERVICES

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SAN JOSE, CA, UNITED STATES, August 25, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Hope Services will hold a press event Thursday, August 25th, to celebrate its successful fundraising campaign to assist

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those with intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health needs in war-torn Ukraine. From April 13-July 1, Hope Services’ retail outlet, HopeTHRIFT, allocated 25% of every sale each Wednesday and Thursday at their three store locations (San Jose, Fremont, and Watsonville) to support nonprofit organizations providing on-the-ground services in Ukraine. In all, more than \$56,000 was raised, far exceeding the original fundraising goal. The money will be divided between two organizations, Save the Children and Humanity and Inclusion.

The campaign was the brainchild of Hope Services President and CEO, Chip Huggins. “In any conflict, those with disabilities and mental health needs face a disproportionate risk of abandonment and violence,” he explained. “Watching the events unfold in Ukraine, we felt compelled to act and provide support however possible.”

Once formulated, the plan was quickly put into action. Signage went up, and text messages were sent out to regular HopeTHRIFT customers. Business grew steadily from April on, and there was a lot of positive feedback, according to HopeTHRIFT Retail District Manager Shawn Bailey. “It was a win-win: we got people into the stores and also helped spread the word about the work we do right here in our own community,” he said.

Two organizations were selected to receive the funds raised by the HopeTHRIFT Ukraine campaign: Save the Children and Humanity and Inclusion. Both were selected based on their sterling credentials and their ability to deliver assistance immediately to those in need. “It was important to partner with organizations whose missions match ours: serving children and individuals with intellectual disabilities and those with mental health needs,” says Cathy Bouchard, Hope Services’ Specialty Director, who was tasked with finding nonprofits that would effectively implement the funds being raised. “We decided to work with two organizations, one large and one small. We thought it would be important to utilize the power of a large

organization as well as access the nimbleness and flexibility of a smaller group," she recalls.

A familiar name to many, Save the Children has worked tirelessly since its founding in 1919 to provide refugees with assistance, improve access to education and quality healthcare, and protect children from harm. Today, the group is supporting the most urgent needs of children and their families in Ukraine and the region, providing essential humanitarian assistance such as food, water, hygiene kits, psychosocial support, and cash assistance.

"Save the Children is deeply grateful for Hope Services' support and partnership in response to the devastating crisis in Ukraine," says Dori Ives, managing director of individual philanthropy for Save the Children. "The funds raised will enable us to distribute critical emergency supplies and protect children from harm in Ukraine and neighboring countries.

While it may not be as well-known as Save the Children, Humanity and Inclusion (HI) has its own impressive track record as a co-recipient of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize for its work to ban landmines. According to an HI official, Ukraine is fast becoming the world's most polluted country when it comes to explosive devices. HI teams are on the ground, providing "Mine Risk Education" to ensure that civilians know how to spot, avoid, and report weapons in their midst. The nonprofit also provides financial, mental, and psychosocial support services as well as specialized rehabilitation for those directly impacted by the ravages of war.

Hope Services' efforts to help the most vulnerable populations in Ukraine are reflective of its mission here at home: to see all persons with disabilities and mental health needs supported and protected. Founded in 1952, Hope Services provides a wide array of services for clients of all ages, including day services like education, training, socialization, and volunteer opportunities; training and employment services; community living experiences; and mental health services. Its HopeTHRIFT stores are one venue providing career training for clients. "My name is Krishna, and I am a supervisor at HopeTHRIFT San Jose. I could not walk independently until the age of 5 and a diagnosis from a doctor left my family with little hope for the future. Hope Services has given me the opportunity to be accepted in the community, so I say to those seeking a career despite your disability, Hope Services is the best place to do so."

To support the wide array of services Hope Services provides to its local clients, the County of Santa Clara recently awarded \$285,000 in grants to the organization.

"Vans and laptops seem like such basic items, but for Hope Services these items will allow more clients to participate in classes, training, and employment opportunities, and have access to telehealth mental health services, out in the community, out in the mainstream," explains Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian. "Hope Services has the programs and services in place to support those in our community with intellectual and developmental disabilities. But they needed a bit of help from the County to expand their efforts, particularly in the North County and West Valley. I'm glad our County could do our part."

Fellow County Supervisor Cindy Chavez adds, "Hope Services is literally a world-class operation

whether lifting up and equipping people living in the Silicon Valley, or in Ukraine with everything they need to live productive lives. Hope Services certainly delivers on its promise to make the world a better place."

County Supervisor Otto Lee adds, "Hope Services continues to be an outstanding community partner. You are doing so much for our community beyond caring for our friends and family members with developmental disabilities. You stepped up during the pandemic and I want to recognize the critical support you provided to Ukraine. I am honored to stand with my colleagues supporting Hope Services, and I am so deeply grateful for your service."

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