

Tourism Partners “Sleigh Hunger” at Tourism Bureau’s Annual Community Giving Event at Hershey Lodge

Event donated 1,000 lbs of food for Central PA Food Bank = 800 meals for needy families in Central PA



HARRISBURG, PA (Dec. 10, 2015) — The Hershey Harrisburg Regional Visitors Bureau (HHRVB) today hosted their 3rd Annual Partners In Tourism Community Giving Event that collected 1,000 pounds of non-perishable food for the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank. Event organizers calculated the amount of food collected from the bureau and their 70 participating tourism partners today would produce 800 meals for needy families in Central PA. This year’s event was held at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center.

Since the bureau began this charitable tradition in 2013, the gathering of tourism stakeholders from the Hershey Harrisburg Region has grown considerably, according to Penny Brady, Meetings & Conventions Sales Manager for HHRVB and co-organizer of this annual event. Participants from the bureau’s regional partner organizations included hotels, restaurants, attractions, meeting and special event venues, and service providers.

“While the idea of gathering our sales partners around the holidays may have originated simply to celebrate another year of selling our region for meetings, conventions, groups, and special events – it quickly became more,” said Brady. “Our partners loved that there was a larger mission behind the gathering. They like the idea of coming together as peers within the tourism industry to help a charitable organization and support some worthy causes that impact our region.”

In 2013 the bureau organized the first collection of supplies to be used in personal hygiene kits for the YMCA. The bags consisted of shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, toothbrush, soap, deodorant, and other supplies that are used to promote hygiene and improve self-esteem for those who may not have access to bathing supplies or facilities. In 2014 the bureau again organized a collection of hygienic supplies to benefit Veteran Homes.



The winning team created a Santa Claus sleigh with tiny reindeer to represent how they could "Sleigh Hunger" in the region.

This year the HHRVB worked with the Central PA Food Bank to collect non-perishable food items. Attendees were asked to bring food donations to the annual holiday gathering. Following a brief video presentation on the mission of the Pennsylvania Food Bank by Megan Roby, Special Events and Promotions Coordinator for Central PA Food Bank, the partners were divided into seven groups and instructed to build something from the food packages and containers that each team member contributed that represented a way to fight hunger. Teams could also earn additional assembly tools by answering trivia questions.

“We were really impressed by the creativity and enthusiasm that everyone showed,” said Mary Smith, President & CEO of HHRVB who served as one of the judges for the day’s friendly competition. “It was fun to see how everyone worked together and never lost sight of the purpose for the day. There was great comradery and spirit even among those who may compete the rest of the year for lodging or meeting and convention business. Today was about having fun as peers within the tourism industry and helping those who need the services provided by the PA Food Bank.”

If you would like to organize an event to benefit the Central PA Food Bank, please contact Megan Roby, Special Events and Promotions Coordinator at 717-564-1700 ex 3199.