

NEWS

Making dreams come true*First Tennessee gifts total \$15,000*[Print Page](#)By **ROBERT LEE LONG**
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Monetary gifts to deserving non-profits are sound financial investments said Mackey Moore, Regional President of First Tennessee for North Mississippi.

It pays to help others, according to Moore who, along with the Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi, handed out a total of \$15,000 Tuesday on behalf of the First Tennessee Foundation to several non-profits, including five area food pantries.

First Tennessee Bank officials said despite difficult economic times, investing in the community is a wise choice.

"We try to give to the needy," First Tennessee Bank President Greg Gough said. "It's hard when you have somebody knocking on your door every day."

Elizabeth Pekaar, executive director of the Samaritans, a food network and community outreach organization for economically-challenged individuals and families based in Southaven, said the \$200 her organization received could not have come at a more opportune time.

"Our cupboards are just bare," Pekaar said. Her trips to food pantries in Memphis and other places have found many food items are scarce with staples in short supply or more expensive than they were previously.

"We used to get around 8,000 pounds and now we're getting about 1,000 pounds," Pekaar said.

Last year, the Samaritans served more than 6,844 people out of its food pantry, not to mention helping defray utility bills, gasoline purchases, medical prescriptions, and paying for emergency housing.

Other area food pantries receiving funds from First Tennessee through the Community Foundation's donor-advised fund, in addition to the Samaritans, are Olive Branch Emergency Food Ministry, Sacred Heart Southern Missions, Hernando/Nesbit Interfaith Council on Poverty and Heartland Hands Food Pantry.

Additionally, the Y-CAP, the Youth Community Action Agency Program, which seeks to help set young people on the right path in life, received a \$500 donation.

Kris Crim, regional executive director for Y-CAP, said the \$500 his organization received will help in the effort to assist troubled youth and their families.

"We've had some reductions in state funding from the Mississippi Department of Human Services," Crim said. "As the state makes reductions, we have to offset those expenses such as rising fuel costs, insurance, and other things which are constantly going up. That's why we are out in the community trying to raise dollars. We provide this program at no cost to the community. We pay for all the transportation costs, home visits and other costs associated with the program with help from agencies like United Way."

Crim said while he can't speak for all the other organizations, the funds received from the First Tennessee Foundation will definitely make an impact in the community.

"It was great to look around the room and see all the folks who are trying to make a difference in the community," Crim said.

Dollars do help put hopes and dreams into action, according to Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi officials.

"Without First Tennessee, none of us would be here today," Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi President and CEO Tom Pittman said. "We appreciate their smart giving and generous giving."

Other agencies receiving funds Tuesday were the DeSoto Health and Wellness Center, the Junior Auxilliary of DeSoto County, the House of Grace and the Palmer Home for Children, which each received \$1,000.

The Olive Branch Family YMCA received \$500 as did Y-CAP.

In Tate County, the Baddour Center received \$3,000, the Tate County Economic Development Foundation received \$1,000; the Sycamore Arts Council received \$500 and the Tate County Literacy Council received \$500.

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