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LOAVES & FISHES EXCEEDS GIVING TUESDAY EXPECTATIONS DESPITE TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES

NAPERVILLE, Ill., December 4, 2014 – What began as an exciting Giving Tuesday at Loaves & Fishes Community Services was soon complicated when its online donation portal, handled by a third party vendor, continuously crashed, resulting in delays and frustration for many people interested in donating. Despite the complications, donors raised \$115,414.30, which smashed the original \$60,000 goal set by the organization.

Following on the heels of Black Friday and Cyber Monday, Giving Tuesday started in 2012 as a new holiday tradition on the east coast and has quickly grown in popularity among non-profit organizations across the country. As its name suggests, Giving Tuesday celebrates and encourages philanthropy to kick off the holiday season.

Last year, Loaves & Fishes supporters raised \$72,147.89 for the organization around Giving Tuesday. When combined with a \$25,000 match from an anonymous donor, the total was nearly \$100,000. This year, Loaves & Fishes secured \$60,000 in donations from two sources, raising the earning potential to \$120,000 because each dollar donated would be matched.

By 10:00 am on Tuesday, December 2nd, donations had exceeded \$20,000; however, the organization was soon flooded with calls regarding the donation portal crash, and all staff members were fielding phone calls about the problem. Donors made donations via the phone, and the organization set up an account on a different platform to accept donations while the third-party vendor resolved the portal crash. After speaking with the matching donors, the organization decided to extend Giving Tuesday efforts into Wednesday, calling the day “Giving Twos-day,” since many donors who were interested in giving were unable to on Tuesday due to the crash.

Loaves & Fishes is excited to report that \$115,414.30 was raised, and with the \$60,000 match, Giving Tuesday and Giving Twos-day efforts totaled \$175,414.30. This funding will be used to expand nutrition options for children age 0-18. The organization anticipates serving 10,000 local children in 2015, and with this funding, it will be able to purchase milk, eggs and other healthy food items for families with children. These products are supplemental to the grocery assistance that Loaves & Fishes’ clients already receive, which includes fresh produce, lean meats, grains and other shelf-stable products.

“The outpouring of generosity over the past two days has been inspiring,” said Charles P. McLimans, Loaves & Fishes’ President & CEO. “Even with technical delays, donors were determined to give; I am so thankful for their patience and for the staff and volunteers who jumped in to take calls and find alternate solutions. I also want to thank our matching donors, The J.R. Albert Foundation and our anonymous donor, for allowing us to extend the deadline into ‘Giving Twos-day’ and allow more supporters to get involved. This effort will greatly benefit local kids in our community by providing them with the nutrition they need to grow and learn.”

Loaves & Fishes is located at 1871 High Grove Lane, Naperville and provides multi-faceted programs, such as job search support, food assistance, skill-based classes and public benefit assistance, to low-income, west suburban residents. Learn more about getting help, making a donation, or volunteering at <http://www.loaves-fishes.org>.

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