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These tsunami survivors are among hundreds of thousands left homeless and living in refugee camps across Aceh province in northern Sumatra, Indonesia.



Photo: Yoshi Shimizu / ©International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



HEARTFELT GIVING FOR TSUNAMI SURVIVORS

In an outpouring of compassion, First Data and our employees joined together to help the estimated 2.4 million people affected by the December 26, 2004, tsunami. First Data's magnanimity in response to the tsunami tragedy was unprecedented as corporate and gift-matched donations surpassed (US) \$1.8 million.

Photo: Tili Mayer / ©International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



A displaced man receives a family pack, containing life-sustaining food and supplies, from the Sri Lanka Red Cross.

"From Sri Lanka to Somalia, the compassionate contributions of our company, employees, Western Union Agents and suppliers extended a lifeline to survivors," says Luella Chavez D'Angelo, president, First Data Western Union Foundation. "In addition to helping to provide food, safe drinking water, shelter and medical supplies, the First Data family sent something priceless – hope for life after the tsunami."

In December, First Data donated (US) \$1 million for immediate, life-sustaining relief. The Foundation will make a second donation totaling more than \$850,000 for reconstruction and rebuilding – combining employee, Western Union Agent and vendor gifts with the company's gift-match funds.

Matching gifts multiplied donations

For two months, employees flooded the Foundation's office with checks, credit card debits, wired funds and even cash for the tsunami relief effort. More than 1,200 employees globally contributed \$200,000, generating \$600,000 for tsunami survivors through First Data's historic \$2 for \$1 employee gift match for disaster relief. Western Union Agents and the company's vendors contributed more than \$125,000 that the company matched \$1 for \$1, resulting in a \$250,000 charitable impact.

"I'm truly sorry for the reason for the generosity extended by First Data, but this is a wonderful, wonderful thing that is being done," says Ann-Marie Polsley of First Data Debit Services/STAR Systems, Columbia, South Carolina, U.S.A. "Thank you for matching employee donations 2-1. That is just unbelievably generous."

To deliver aid to people who not only lost homes, but also family members, friends and even entire villages, the Foundation gave all tsunami relief funds to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

For more about TSUNAMI RELIEF, see page 2



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COMPANYWIDE TSUNAMI RESPONSE

FIRST DATA *Gives*

Presented by

FIRST DATA FOUNDATION
WESTERN UNION

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Photo: ©International Federation of Red Cross
and Red Crescent Societies

First Data is
committed to
acting with
compassion and
purpose in the
global community
to make needed
change happen.



Sri Lanka Red Cross Society volunteers
help to distribute relief assistance.

Photo: Tili Mayer / ©International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

TSUNAMI RELIEF, Continued from Page 1

Delivering tsunami relief immediately: "The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) was the logical choice to administer the tsunami relief funds," says Rexford Brown, chairman of the Foundation's fund distribution committee. "Not only is it the world's largest humanitarian organization, with millions of volunteers to provide direct assistance, the International Federation also dispenses needed aid with respect for local cultures and governments."

As of April 1, the International Federation mobilized more than 9,000 volunteers and nearly 300 international staff to assist over 800,000 tsunami survivors around the Indian Ocean rim. The International Federation continues to deliver food and hot drinks, clean water, health care, psychological support and shelter materials, as well as household and hygiene items for those struggling to survive. IFRC's sister organization, the International Committee of the Red Cross, has helped more than 35,000 survivors to locate family members and friends. And where colossal tidal waves pounded coastal communities, the International Federation is helping devastated populations to rebuild and implement disaster preparedness programs.

*"The response to the tsunami gave us
a glimpse of the power of humanity."*

— Markku Niskala, IFRC Secretary General

A woman and
child in Banda
Aceh, Indonesia,
find shelter on
a university
campus along
with other
displaced
people after
the tsunami
destroyed
their homes.



Photo: Yoshi Shimizu / ©International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

"This was the worst natural catastrophe in modern times," says International Federation Secretary General Markku Niskala. "Without the incredibly generous support of donors such as First Data and Western Union, we would not presently be in the position to say that the International Federation has enough funding to continue our tsunami recovery programme for the next ten years. The response to the tsunami gave us a glimpse of the power of humanity." For more information about tsunami relief, go to www.ifrc.org.



A child's
perspective:
Drawings by
children in
the Maldives
Islands express
their tsunami
experiences.

DECEMBER 26, 2004 TSUNAMI IMPACT





EMPLOYEES AND WESTERN UNION AGENTS WORLDWIDE SUPPORT TSUNAMI RELIEF

First Data employees and Agents from 26 nations pitched in to help tsunami survivors with creative fundraising events and generous donations, making the most of the company's matching gift funds for tsunami relief.

Aruba	France	Morocco
Australia	Germany	Poland
Austria	Greece	Qatar
Bahamas	Grenada	South Africa
Brazil	Hong Kong	Spain
Canada	Hungary	Turkey
China	Ireland	Ukraine
Costa Rica	Italy	U.S.A.
Dominican Republic	Mexico	



Donations help fund relief operations: Here, an Indonesian volunteer helps to deliver clean water to 4,000 families daily in Aceh Province, Sumatra.

Photo: Craig Wood / ©International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Auctioning Artwork for Fishing Nets – Goa, India

At the January Western Union Agent Conference in Goa, India, Western Union employees in South Asia held an art auction for Sri Lankans who lost their livelihoods when nets and other fishing gear, boats and motors – as well as entire coastal villages – were swept away in the tsunami. Local Indian artists supplied paintings, and in just one night, the auction raised more than (US) \$16,000 to buy new fishing nets as part of the rehabilitation effort in Sri Lanka.



After the tsunami, a Belgian Red Cross delegate looks at boats stranded on the beach at Galle, Sri Lanka.

Photo: Tim Mayer / ©International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Creating Artwork for Tsunami Relief – Summerville, South Carolina, U.S.A.

Employees at First Data's Customer Care Services Group (CSC) rallied to help tsunami survivors by selling raffle tickets for original artwork and other donated items. "When I saw that the Foundation would match employee contributions for the tsunami victims, the raffle was a natural," explains Kevin Mondron, workforce manager – CSC. "Our employees generously contributed their time and talents to the companywide effort."

Sherri Ginn, workforce scheduling analyst, donated to the raffle a stained glass window; Paula Erskine, workforce traffic analyst, gave jewelry and a gift basket; and Richard French, customer service representative, contributed two handmade afghans. The call center's 150 employees raised over \$400 through weekly raffles in January, resulting in a total donation of more than \$1,200 with the company's \$2 for \$1 matching funds for tsunami relief.

Customer Care Services Group employees Sherri Ginn, on left, and Paula Erskine display a stained glass window created by Ginn to raise money for First Data's tsunami relief fund.



Cutting Hair for Charity – Dublin, Ireland

It started as a dare, and by the time Western Union International's Dublin office held their Charity Haircut on January 10, all 50 employees pitched in to see two colleagues give up their usual hairstyles to raise 1,000 Euros for tsunami relief.

Joe Rodgers, senior systems engineer, bet Thierry Auger, network control centre engineer, that he would cut his long, pony-tailed hair. To prove his point, Rodgers offered Auger 50 Euros to do so. Other colleagues eagerly joined in the wager, and Auger agreed on the condition that Rodgers would shave his head, too.

The lunchtime event raised 500 Euros per head of hair for a total of 1,000 Euros. When the funds were donated through Allied Irish Banks, the financial institution made an additional contribution for a total impact of 4,000 Euros to aid tsunami survivors. "Everyone enjoyed seeing us get our heads shaved," says Rodgers. "And we were happy to do it for a good cause – to alleviate a bit of the suffering from the tsunami."

Western Union International employees in Dublin, Ireland, participated in a head-shaving event to raise money for tsunami relief. Here, Sarah McNamara takes a razor to Joe Rodgers' hair.



Sending Money to Survivors at Reduced Fees

From January 10 to February 10, Western Union offered reduced fees on money transfers sent to specific areas impacted by the disaster. Western Union also offered no-fee Quick Collect® transactions at Western Union Agent locations until January 30 for individuals wishing to donate to the American Red Cross or Red Cross Canada. "We care about the people living in these communities and we wanted to lend a hand," says Western Union President Christina Gold.

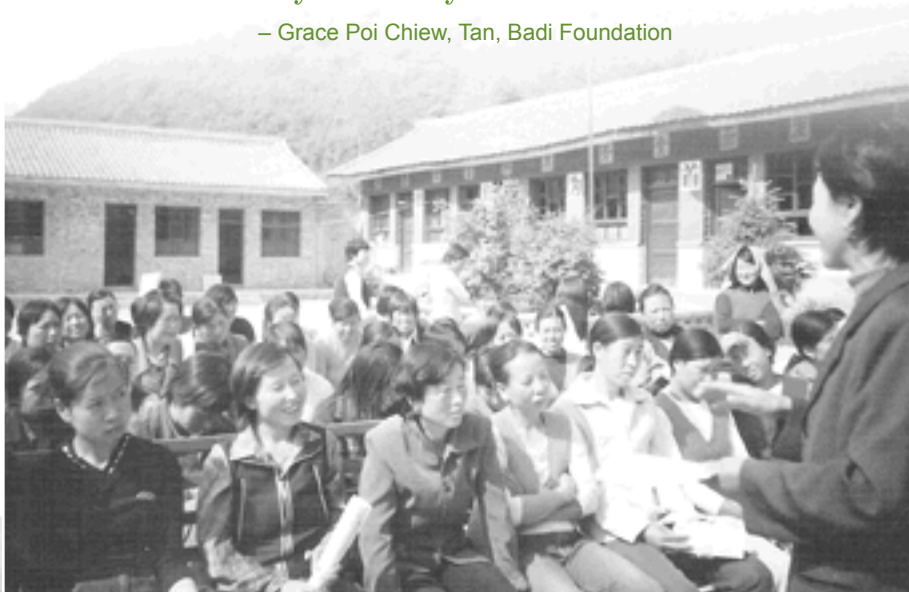


GRANTS AROUND THE WORLD

While epic hurricanes and colossal tidal waves captured our attention and our hearts in 2004 and early 2005, the Foundation continued to make grants around the globe to relieve human suffering and improve health, education and human services for those most in need.

“This is truly a victory for the rural women.”

– Grace Poi Chiew, Tan, Badi Foundation



Training Women in Economic Self-Sufficiency – China

Imagine living without the power to change your life. Then imagine that you are given the tools to make life better – socially and economically – for yourself and your entire community. The Badi Foundation brings this vision of hope and useful change to women in rural China.

Through a grant from our Foundation, women are learning sustainable farming, animal husbandry and environmental management skills as part of the Badi Foundation’s Environmental Action Program for Rural Women in Gansu and Shaanxi Province, Western China. “Your donation is making a great impact on the lives of many rural people,” says Grace Poi Chiew, Tan, chief representative – Badi Foundation. “Our program empowers these people to be independent and eventually to take sustainable development into their own hands.”

Badi begins with workshops that teach women a new mindset so they can gain the confidence and skills to make needed changes. Before learning scientific aspects of raising crops and animals, participants get a practical course on building relationships and cooperation to reach mutual goals. The women also learn how to evaluate their choices for having a positive effect on their environment.

When Badi officials followed up with workshop participants, all had gained self-confidence and subsequently shared their knowledge with more than 500 others. Seventy-four percent of those visited built a biogas system for their farm to convert organic waste into fuel and fertilizer, and 64 percent began animal husbandry ventures. Through its success, the Badi development program has earned the support of local officials. “This is truly a victory for the rural women,” says Tan. To learn more, go to: www.bcca.org/services/lists/noble-creation/badi.html.



A Badi Foundation workshop participant raises goats – just one of the sustainable development methods taught in Badi’s community programs.

Educating Low-Income Children – Nicaragua

Growing up in Nicaragua by no means guarantees even a basic education. In communities served by the Fabretto Children’s Foundation, over 90 percent of children drop out before finishing primary school. Children from the most disadvantaged families usually receive two to three years of schooling, which is not sufficient to learn basic reading, writing and math skills.

Now, through a First Data Western Union Foundation grant, Fabretto can offer more Nicaraguan children the nutrition, health, education and personal development support they need to escape poverty and become productive citizens and community leaders.

“First Data Western Union Foundation’s generous support helps make a better life possible for many children and their families who otherwise would have no chance to obtain an education and the opportunities it can bring,” says Fabretto Children’s Foundation President Francis Rienzo.

Fabretto’s five community centers take care of the basic necessities for low-income children so they will not be forced to leave school to work or beg on the streets. Fabretto provides school uniforms and



The Fabretto Children’s Foundation supports Nicaraguan children so they can get an education instead of dropping out of school to work.

supplies; a daily lunch; basic health care; and personal development activities such as tutoring, mentoring, sports, the arts and music.

In return, students and their families pledge that the children will work hard in school and take personal responsibility for their success. Fabretto also offers scholarships for vocational, technical or college training. To learn more, visit www.fabretto.org.



School children in Cau Mau Province, Vietnam, draw pictures about protecting their environment as part of a CARE International water and sanitation project.



School and government officials at a CARE International workshop explore problems and propose solutions for improving their schools' water and sanitation environments.

Supporting Education for Orphans – Rwanda

“Now, at Christmas time, the First Data Western Union Foundation comes like a giant Santa Claus for our kids,” says Amahoro Foundation CEO Stefan Stec. “Your generous grant will help tremendously with our education program and allow our partner, Les Enfants de Dieu, to expand the curriculum.”

Amahoro focuses on Rwanda's ubiquitous orphan population created by the 1994 genocide and the pervasive problem of HIV/AIDS. To support Amahoro in its mission to help orphans, advance education and relieve poverty, our Foundation granted \$10,000 for teachers' salaries, school uniforms and stationery. Western Union Agents Banque Commerciale du Rwanda and Banque de Kigali also purchased \$10,000 worth of furniture for the Amahoro and Les Enfants de Dieu orphan rehabilitation center in Kigali.

“Now, at Christmas time, the First Data Western Union Foundation comes like a giant Santa Claus for our kids.”

– Stefan Stec, Amahoro Foundation

Most Rwandan children remember the genocide, making rehabilitation critical to relieve trauma and overcome the bad habits of street life, according to Stec. “By partnering with the Rwandan nonprofit organization Les Enfants de Dieu, Amahoro is helping street children to eventually reenter society through adoption or jobs,” says Stec.

Smiles all Around: To make a difference in the children's lives, Paul Foster, Western Union's vice president marketing – EMEA and South Asia, sent 20 basketballs, two footballs, backpacks, pens, pencils, notepads and T-shirts to the Kigali center. “We wanted to do something for the children, pure and simple,” says Foster. “We wanted to put smiles on their faces.”

Bringing Water and Sanitation to Schools – Vietnam

At any given moment, half of the world's poor are sick from water-related illness, according to the Water Supply and Sanitation Council, Geneva, Switzerland. To help protect more than 5,000 school children in southern Vietnam from water-related disease, the Foundation recently made a \$10,000 grant to Water for People. This worldwide humanitarian organization is partnering with CARE International to support its “Clean Water for Schools in Cau Mau” project in the Mekong Delta. CARE's assessment shows that most illnesses suffered by area schoolchildren – such as stomachaches, diarrhea and headaches – are water and sanitation-related.

“Your generous gift is helping to preserve children's health and educate entire communities about disease prevention,” says Carol Sherman, country director – CARE International in Vietnam. CARE chose 10 of the most disadvantaged schools that had an urgent need for water sanitation and hygiene facilities. By working closely with government and school officials, CARE is ensuring that the facilities are built, utilized and maintained effectively.

To learn about Water for People, go to: www.waterforpeople.org. For information about CARE International, please visit: www.careinternational.org.



Students in Kigali, Rwanda, celebrate the surprise arrival of gifts donated by Western Union to the Amahoro Foundation and Les Enfants de Dieu's community center dedicated to the rehabilitation of street children.

From the photos of the children with their new gear, Foster succeeded. “A big thank you to Western Union for making this a sunny day!” says Stec. Building on Western Union's gifts, the center is constructing a basketball court to encourage physical fitness for its protégés. “This is why I come to work every day,” adds Foster. “Amahoro means peace.”

For information about Amahoro, go to www.amahoro.nl. To learn about Les Enfants de Dieu, visit: www.enfantsdedieu.org.



EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERS

Highly focused teams in Melville, New York, and Omaha, Nebraska, are bringing First Data's spirit of giving to their communities in a big way. Employee volunteers form a network of compassion reaching out to those in need.

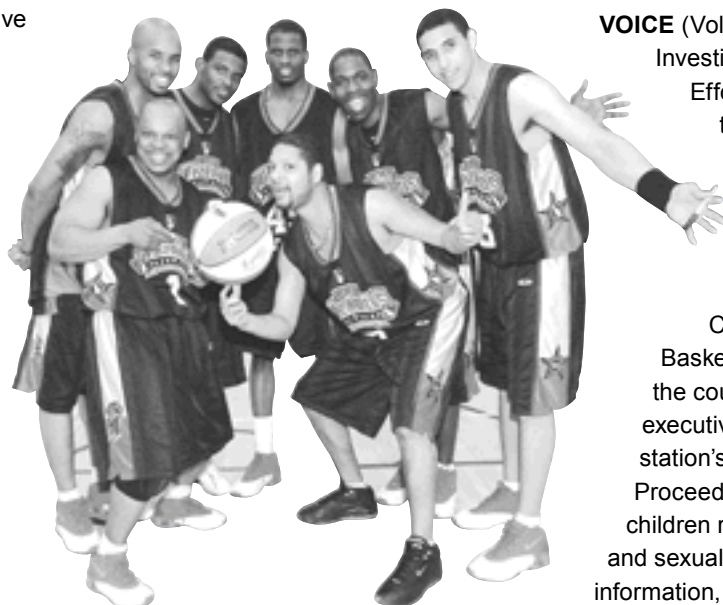
Melville Team Challenge – Melville, New York, U.S.A.

When First Data Merchant Services (FDMS) opened its Melville, New York, facility in July 2004, employees' passion for community service found a creative outlet in a new volunteer program, the Melville Team Challenge. "I am very proud of the Melville Team Challenge participants," says FDMS President John Shlonsky. "They have successfully leveraged their collective skills and expertise into community projects that are having a positive, tangible impact on people's lives." Four employee teams and their senior leadership mentors are working to benefit local charities while building leadership skills and camaraderie.

Charlie's Angels filled First Data gift bags with donated hygiene products and delivered the care packages to the Interfaith Nutrition Network (INN), an organization dedicated to alleviating hunger and homelessness on Long Island. Charlie's Angels also renovated an INN shelter, creating space for eight additional men to rebuild their lives. For more about INN, go to: www.the-inn.org.

Colleagues 4 Community (C4C) sponsored a well-attended casino night to benefit Little Flower Children's Services of New York. The charity aims to improve children's lives through adoption and foster care services, residential treatment facilities, and day care for nearly 3,000 children and developmentally disabled adults. For more information, please see: www.littleflowerny.org.

FDCares (First Data Community Advocates Ready and Engaged for Service) supported Helping Hand Rescue Mission (HHRM) by sponsoring a clothing drive, a pool tournament and a Literacy Day to benefit children in the community. FDCares also persuaded Dell Corporation to donate a desktop computer to the charity. HHRM provides food, clothing and furniture to needy families, and cares for the elderly. To find out more, visit: www.hhrm.net.



The Harlem Wizards are poised to entertain FDMS employees during a special family night event to raise money for the Education & Assistance Corporation, a nonprofit community outreach organization.

VOICE (Volunteer Organization Investing in Community Efforts) sold tickets to the Harlem Wizards – an entertainment basketball team – to benefit the Education & Assistance Corporation (EAC). Basketball pros shared the court with First Data executives, a local radio station's team, and fans. Proceeds will help Long Island children recover from physical and sexual abuse. For EAC information, go to: www.eacinc.org.

In March, The Foundation supplemented Melville employees' volunteer efforts by awarding \$5,000 to HHRM and \$10,000 to EAC to support their community programs.

First Connections Team – Omaha, Nebraska, U.S.A.

For 2005, First Data employees in Omaha, Nebraska, chose to support some of the nation's most respected charities: American Diabetes Association, Alzheimer's Association, Child Saving Institute, Habitat for Humanity and Ronald McDonald House. Omaha's First Connections Team (FTC) has created a 12-month calendar of volunteer events that will improve thousands of lives.

In February, Omaha employees gave time, money and household linens to Ronald McDonald House where families of hospitalized children can find respite. Employees also raised funds for Ronald McDonald's Care Mobile bus providing free dental care for children who lack dental insurance.

"We are grateful to our employees who do so much to make First Data's philanthropic presence felt in our community."

– Lisa Olson, First Data Corporate Relations

In March, employees donated swimming gear for children under the protection of the Child Saving Institute. "These children have only the clothes on their backs," says Kris Howery, marketing assistant, Communications Department – First Data. "We put portable swimming pools in each building to collect swimsuits, towels, sunglasses, hair products – anything to make a fun summer day for a child who may have to go to foster care." To learn about the Child Saving Institute, go to: <http://childsaving.org>.



"We are grateful to our employees who do so much to make First Data's philanthropic presence felt in our community," says Lisa Olson, senior vice president – First Data Corporate Relations.

Volunteers Rick Paden, client business manager – First Data International, Canada, and Renee Green, executive assistant, Corporate Communications – First Data, display part of the Omaha team's donation to Ronald McDonald House's Linen Closet.

SAVING POP TABS FOR THE 'THANKS A MILLION CLUB'

All First Data employees are invited to help donate 1 million beverage-can pop tabs in 2005 for Ronald McDonald House. Pop tabs contribute approximately \$11,000 annually to support Ronald McDonald facilities. Pop tabs can be sent to: Kris Howery, Corporate Communications Department, First Data Corporation, 6902 Pine Street, Stop Code PS-20, Omaha, NE 68106. For Ronald McDonald House information, visit: <http://ronaldmcdonaldhouse.org>.



CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS

First Data and Western Union sponsor community programs throughout the United States to foster economic empowerment. “We are proud to support programs that have been recognized for their value to immigrant and underserved communities,” says Fred Niehaus, senior vice president, Public Affairs – First Data. “Everyone benefits when we strengthen all segments of society.”

Vietnamese Lunar New Year ‘Tet’ Festival – February 5, 2005

First Data and Western Union helped usher in the Lunar New Year, Vietnamese style, by sponsoring the Ninth Annual San Francisco Tet Festival attended by an estimated 20,000 people. “Western Union’s support means a great deal to the Festival and to our city,” says Thuc Khuong, director – Vietnamese Community Center of San Francisco, and festival organizer. “Having Western Union as a major sponsor adds tremendously to the event’s credibility and success.”

By supporting San Francisco’s cultural diversity, Western Union is helping to attract tourism while contributing to the economic revitalization of the inner city area where Vietnamese immigrants originally settled, according to Khuong. One of San Francisco’s most popular events, the festival celebrates Vietnamese heritage with dragon and lion dances, Vietnamese celebrity musicians, traditional ceremonies, carnival games, arts and crafts, *li xi* (pronounced “lee see”) money envelope giveaways, and an abundance of food.

The Vietnamese Community Center of San Francisco assists low-income Vietnamese immigrants and refugees. For more information, go to: www.vietccsf.org.

Good Citizen Community Award – February 5, 2005

On behalf of First Data Chairman and CEO Charlie Fote, Fred Niehaus, senior vice president, Public Affairs, accepted the Good Citizen Community Award at the “Latinos Forging the Future Policy Forum,” presented by Latino/a Research and Policy Center (LRPC) at the University of Colorado at Denver, U.S.A. The Latin American Research and Service Agency (LARASA) and LRPC cosponsored Mr. Fote’s award.

“We want to honor First Data for its courage and the incredible work that it has done in the community,” says Polly Baca, executive director – LARASA. The award recognized First Data’s efforts to promote a positive and bipartisan dialogue on immigration reform.

“First Data has started a critical discussion about finding appropriate ways to resolve immigration issues,” says Estevan Flores, Ph.D., executive director – LRPC. “First Data’s leadership under Charlie Fote has brought constructive immigration reform ideas into the national spotlight.” Fote called for “an enlightened debate” of immigration issues when he spoke at the 2004 American Press Club forum: “Immigration: What Reform Will Bring to the Nation.”

To learn about LARASA, go to: www.larasa.org. For information about LRPC, please visit: www.lrpc.cudenver.edu.



Crowds fill downtown San Francisco streets for a celebration of Vietnamese culture.



Traditional lion dancers and fireworks set the stage at San Francisco’s Lunar New Year Tet festivities.

Greater Philadelphia Martin Luther King Day of Service – January 17, 2005

First Data and Western Union supported the 10th Annual Greater Philadelphia Martin Luther King Day of Service that attracted a record 45,000 volunteers for one spectacular day of community involvement.

“It’s corporate citizenship like Western Union’s that enables us to reach as far and wide into the community as we have for 10 years,” says Todd Bernstein, founder and director – Greater Philadelphia Martin Luther King Day of Service.

Diverse volunteers, businesses and community organizations collaborated on more than 600 community projects celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s life of promoting social justice and helping others. Events included: painting a civil rights mural at a local high school, sponsoring a health and wellness fair, launching a program to reduce violence, training children’s reading coaches and chess mentors, presenting an “I Have a Dream” mobile-making workshop, teaching future voters how to use voting booths, beautifying recreation centers, and performing plays about Dr. King and his principles of non-violent social change and racial equality. For more details, go to: <http://www.mlkdayofservice.org>.

As a part of the Martin Luther King Day of Service, Philadelphia Mayor John Street operates a super-sized mixer to help MANNA, a local non-profit organization, prepare meals for people living with HIV/AIDS.





WESTERN UNION AGENTS GIVING TO THEIR COMMUNITIES

Sending tsunami relief: Agents in South Asia, Indonesia, Africa and other tsunami-affected areas generously supported local humanitarian efforts. Agents worldwide also contributed more than (US) \$125,000 to the Foundation where the gifts were matched dollar-for-dollar, resulting in a total impact of \$250,000 to help survivors rebuild their lives. All tsunami relief funds will be sent directly to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). Agents also continued to make important gift-matched donations to charitable programs around the globe.

Great Orchestra for Christmas Charity – Poland

It's called the Great Finale of the Great Orchestra for Christmas Charity, and it's all about saving children's lives. This giant party with millions of participants across Poland raises money to purchase medical equipment for the pediatric divisions of the nation's hospitals. "We are delighted to be helping one of the most important children's charities in Poland," says Konrad Olszaniecki, Western Union's regional director, Central Eastern Europe. "Our support of the Great Orchestra for Christmas Charity highlights Western Union's commitment to the people of Poland."

Four Western Union Agents in Poland – Bank Zachodni WBK, Bank BPH, Bank Millennium and Mazowiecki Bank Regionalny – donated (US) \$100,000 to the charity, resulting in a total contribution of \$200,000 with the Foundation's matching gift. Since 1993, the Great Orchestra for Christmas Charity has raised more than (US) \$50 million to equip hospitals to care for children. For information, visit: www.wosp.org.pl/en/foundation.php.



Jerzy Owsiak of the Great Orchestra for Christmas Charity and Konrad Olszaniecki, Western Union's regional director for Central Europe, tell the crowd about the progress of the fundraising event, while Katarzyna Haider, European marketing director, and EMEA Vice President Paul Foster, help with the festivities.



A performer from the Great Orchestra for Christmas Charity collects donations during the January 9 Great Finale.

Families like this little girl's in rural Ecuador are getting an income boost through sustainable farming initiatives from CARE International.



FININT – Milan, Italy

Bringing hope to families in Ecuador and Romania: Western Union Agent FININT, headquartered in Milan, Italy, made gift-matched donations to help families in very different parts of the globe.

In rural Ecuador, families living below poverty level are learning self-sufficient, sustainable agriculture methods and establishing community finance systems sponsored by CARE International. "Access to credit in the rural areas of Ecuador's southern Amazon region is virtually impossible to obtain, especially for the Shuar indigenous people," says Peter Buijs, director – CARE International in Ecuador. "Without micro financing, it is extremely hard for families to initiate and expand productive activities that are sustainable and friendly to the environment so as to overcome poverty and live in dignity."

With support from FININT and the Foundation, remote communities are establishing savings and loan associations that improve livelihoods while helping to ensure the survival of the Amazon forests, according to Buijs.

Alexandru and his foster sister Emese share a moment in their home in a village near Cluj, Romania. Alexandru receives health and education services for disabled children through a World Vision community program.

An average (US) \$90 loan for six months can improve a family's life dramatically. With micro financing and training in money and agricultural management, families can produce a crop, repay the loan, save money and generate enough income to feed themselves for one year. For information, visit: www.care.org.

In Romania, families with disabled children traditionally have been outcasts. Romania's orphanages house 15,000 disabled children, and 3,200 more live in state-owned hospitals. A gift-matched grant from FININT supports World Vision in its advocacy for physically and mentally disabled children and its work to reintegrate them into families.

"I can't begin to tell you how important this grant is for Romania's large population of disabled children," says Rowin Floth, executive director – World Vision. The organization helps children who have Down Syndrome, Spina Bifida, premature birth or disabilities from other causes to get medical treatment and education, as well as respect as human beings with the same rights as other children. To learn how World Vision supports sustainable development to assist children worldwide, go to: www.worldvision.org.



How the Agent Gift-Match Program Works

Funds donated by an Agent to an approved nonprofit or NGO (non-governmental organization) can be matched, dollar-for-dollar, by the Foundation. For program details, please call (303) 967-6606.

