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## Martha's Table Mission Statement

To help at-risk children, youth, families and individuals in our community improve their lives by providing educational programs, food, clothing and enrichment opportunities.

UW #8445

CFC #29262



## Team McNabb Visits Martha's Table for a Day of Service to the Community



*"Thanksgiving is a special time to be with family and have a great meal...what we try to do each Thanksgiving is to pass out meals to those who might not otherwise be able to enjoy the day."*

*— Donovan McNabb, at Martha's Table  
November 23, 2010*

*"OH MY GOODNESS!!!!!! That's Donovan McNabb!"*

*— Shaw student, age 13*

On the Tuesday before Thanksgiving the quarterback of the Washington Redskins, Donovan McNabb, his family, and several friends (known collectively as Team McNabb) distributed Thanksgiving food baskets to members of the community at Martha's Table.

Overall, the McNabb family and Martha's Table handed out almost 100 Thanksgiving baskets to children and families in need this holiday season. The McNabb family toured the Martha's Table facility and then gave away food baskets and turkeys to Martha's Table families as well as those from Shaw Middle School. Martha's Table runs an after school program at Shaw.

It is particularly fitting that Mr. McNabb and his family helped the Shaw community. Our Satellite program at Shaw is called SPORTS (Studying Paves Our Road to Success).

Students in the program use games and sports to help improve their math skills. This real life application of math through sports helps to change the misconceptions that many young people have about the lack of relevance of education has to "real life." Meeting Donovan McNabb was a huge boost to the student athletes at Shaw.

The Thanksgiving baskets were filled with food from local Martha's Table supporters and produce donated from the Philadelphia Regional Produce Market. Mr. McNabb even received his own surprise from the children in the after-school programs at Martha's Table, who gave him homemade birthday cards and a video birthday wish from the Teen Program for his upcoming 34<sup>th</sup> birthday. He was born on Thanksgiving Day in 1976.

As Lindsey Buss noted during the visit, "it says a lot about Donovan McNabb that upon moving to a new city, he quickly looks to see how he can become involved in the community. His character and class make him an incredible role model for the children and youth in our education programs and we are very grateful and proud to have him here."

All of us at Martha's Table express our gratitude to Mr. McNabb and his family for helping to make this Thanksgiving really special.

### A Letter from Lindsey continued...

have had to adjust our plans for next year accordingly—all while maintaining the integrity of our programs. We recently cut \$100,000 in expenses from our budget for next year, and most likely we will have to make another round of cuts due to substantial decreases in DC government funding that we just found out about. As a result of decreases in funding, and despite our best efforts, we may also have an operating deficit at the end of this year.

Throughout all of this financial adversity, our staff has remained committed to providing the best services possible to all who need them. Our daycare became nationally accredited this past June and now hosts a cutting edge Pre-K classroom as well. Our food program continues to become better and better. Through imaginative partnerships with farms and other donors we now provide fresh fruits and vegetables and we are striving to make all of the meals we serve from scratch and from fresh ingredients—at little or no additional cost to Martha's Table. The children in our after-school programs from kindergarteners to teens continue to thrive and make tremendous strides. Soon, Martha's Outfitters, our clothing distribution center and thrift store, will be extending its hours to make it an even more important community resource.

We are grateful for other help that we receive too. Our Board of Directors have been true leaders helping us to find new sources of funding and increasing their own giving. Volunteers from the community help us every day of the year, allowing a very diverse group of people the chance to live their values, and providing Martha's Table with manpower that it simply could not get any other way. In this Newsletter you will find stories about all of the great work that we have been doing and remain committed to continuing. I am so thankful to all who make our work possible.

During this season of giving thanks, I also want to extend a thank you to all of you. In this time of hardship and great uncertainty the one source income that we have been able to rely on has been that from private sources—people who have consistently dug a bit deeper into their pockets to help those who have even less. I thank you. We could not help anyone without the help you give us.

# Martha's Table

## EDUCATION • FOOD • OPPORTUNITY

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2010  
Holiday  
Newsletter



## President Obama and His Family Return to Martha's Table for Thanksgiving

*"This afternoon, our family will deliver two turkeys, who didn't quite make the cut, to Martha's Table, an organization that does extraordinary work helping folks who are struggling in DC."* — President Barack Obama at the Turkey Pardoning Event, November 24, 2010

*"Mommy, it's Obama!"* — DeLoren, age 3 upon meeting the President

On the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, Martha's Table hosted the first family of the United States and 29 of their family members. President Barack Obama distributed Thanksgiving food baskets to Martha's Table families and staff, while extended family members volunteered with children in our daycare and after-school programs.

All of us at Martha's Table were honored that the First Family chose to spend their Thanksgiving with Martha's Table again this year. As Lindsey Buss remarked at the time: "their example of service and the spotlight they bring to the challenge of hunger and nutrition, especially for children, is a tremendous asset for all of us working to find solutions to poverty."

Thanksgiving baskets given out by the First Family were filled with fresh produce donated from the community; the food was distributed in reusable bags donated and decorated by the River School; turkeys were donated by Poor Roberts Charities, Little Flower Church and the PAX neighborhood association; fresh produce from Philadelphia Regional Produce; and delicious homemade pies were made by Sheila Whitney and volunteers from the National Cathedral.



## A Letter from Lindsey



*Lindsey Buss with Donovan McNabb  
(story on page 4)*

The recent visits by Team McNabb and The President and his family were amazing and we feel greatly honored and humbled by all the attention they generated and continue to generate. They were tremendous morale boosts for the community we serve, but also for the staff of Martha's Table. And our staff could use some good news about now.

It is no secret, of course, that we are living in challenging economic times. When the recession started in the fall of 2008, everyone wondered how deep it was going to be. Two years in, we still wonder how long it will last.

I would imagine that all of us have been touched by the troubled economy in one way or another, and its effects are certainly felt by the people who use Martha's Table's services. In the past two years, the number of people coming to Martha's Table for groceries has quadrupled. We now have more than 200 children on our waiting list for day care. We served more than 1,100 meals during our Community Dinner the Sunday before Thanksgiving, and every week dozens of people come to Martha's Outfitters for free clothing for themselves and their families.

Not surprisingly the bad economy has taken a great toll not only on those we serve but on those who provide the services. For the past several years, our staff has been asked to do more and more with fewer and fewer resources. We have been figuring out our budget for 2011 for a number of weeks now, and it seems like each week we receive some more bad news. We

*Continues on Page 4...*



## Real Ingredients Make Real Food

In keeping with Martha’s Table’s focus on nutrition, our Food Program continues to establish strong partnerships with local area food banks and farms such as Claggett and Buckland Farms for fresh produce. Now that winter has arrived, we are looking to establish similar partnerships with other donors for a consistent supply of fresh fruit and vegetables. The Food Program continues to request fresh fruit and vegetables from the local churches and other food donors that help to operate McKenna’s Wagon, our mobile soup kitchen. Also, we are focused on making our nutrition agenda better known to frequent donors, funders, and to any who inquire about our donation needs.

The Food Program has also significantly reduced the amount of processed food served to the participants in our Children’s Programs by making fresher, home cooked meals every day. “Wholesome is better. Real Ingredients make real food”, says Justin Peregoy, Martha’s Table’s Food Manager. “We’ve already incorporated whole wheat and multi-grain bread into their daily menus and fresh, not frozen vegetables. Our goal is to become more creative in introducing the children to new dishes that they’ll enjoy while still being health conscious.”

In addition to being conscious about the nutritional intake of our children and clients, McKenna’s Wagon, our mobile soup kitchen has been trying new ways of preparing and serving meals on our vans. For the last several months we have been “Pre-Packaging” food on our 1-stop van by making “ready to go” bags filled with several sandwiches, desserts, fruit, and a beaker of soup. We have received positive reviews about the changes from our volunteer and clients.

In the next few months, the Food Program will be rolling out a “Hot Wheels” initiative on McKenna’s Wagon, our mobile soup kitchen that serves food at 3 stops throughout Washington, DC.

The “Hot Wheels” initiative will consist of hot meals being served on the vans once a week. The meals may consist of a one-dish meal like Beef Stew or at other times it will consist of a three-course meal with a starch, vegetable, and meat. We will continue to make the 65 gallons of homemade hot soup that’s served on the vans daily.

## Bridge Kids Sound Off on Bullying

Due to the many recent tragedies, bullying has been at the forefront of the news in almost every city and community across the nation.

At Martha’s Table, the students in our Bridge Program (for children 9-13) addressed the issue of bullying. They expressed their thoughts and feelings through an assignment called “What are some things that you can do about Bullying?”

These were some of their responses:

“Bullying is bad because some people will kill themselves. If I was the person who was being bullied, I would rather stop the bully than cry. If I saw a person being bullied, I would tell the teacher so that they could stop them. Bullying hurts people’s feelings.” (Jeffrey, 9)

“I think bullying should stop because it makes people feel bad about themselves” (Jalen, 9)

“It’s not nice to bully people. No one wants to be friends with a bully” (Heidy, 9)

## Martha’s Table Salutes Our 2010 Volunteers of the Year



Zarinah Hameen presents Volunteer Award to Marie Breslin

Martha’s Table literally could not function without relying on the 10,000 volunteers who help us each year. Last spring, during our annual Volunteer Appreciation event we honored those volunteers who really went above and beyond.

Marie Breslin, 2010 Volunteer of the Year, Food Program

Henri Bretaudeau, 2010 Volunteer of the Year, McKenna’s Wagon

Zachary Molloie, 2010 Volunteer of the Year, Development

Christina Trahan, 2010 Volunteer of the Year, Child Development Center

Erin Sweeney, 2010 Volunteer of the Year, Children and Youth Program

Melissa Pritchard, 2010 Volunteer of the Year, Children and Youth Program

Donovan Anderson, 2010 Volunteer of the Year, Teen Program

Linda Robb, 2010 Volunteer of the Year, Martha’s Outfitters

Martha’s Table thanks them all for their service and dedication.

## Stories from Around the Table...



Mr. O’Connor also conducts workshops for parents on social-emotional development, understanding and working with certain behaviors and other topics. “I learned that a child aged 2-4 needs 11 hours of sleep a day for good brain development”, says Erin who is the parent of a pre-kindergarten student. Dinora, a pre-kindergarten parent and staff member in the infant classroom said, “I really enjoy the parent workshops. I want to keep contact with my son’s teacher more.” Mr. O’Connor also works with Occupational Therapists from DC Early Stages to evaluate children to see if they have any learning disabilities or other special needs. One of the goals of the pre-kindergarten classroom is to continuously provide different levels of support of our families through our partnerships with several non-profit organizations throughout DC.

We are delighted to offer these supports to the children we serve.



## Martha’s Table Opens “Enhanced” Pre-K Classroom

Studies have shown that children who receive an excellent education when very young, obtain benefits from that education that carry them through their entire school careers. As any parent of a young child knows, however, quality pre-schools are often expensive. For families of limited means, such costs can be prohibitive and many decide not to enroll their children in preschool as a result. At Martha’s Table we strive to make sure that all of the children and youth we serve receive the best educational opportunities possible. We believe that high quality programming is essential to combat the deficits caused by poverty. Recently we received some additional help to make our pre-school program even better than before.

Earlier this year, Martha’s Table received a grant from The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) to open its first enhanced pre-kindergarten classroom for 16 children. By opening this classroom, we have been able to provide the children and their families with an array of supports and services on-site that we were unable to before. For example, thanks to this funding we can offer vision, hearing and speech screenings for our pre-schoolers. “Children who receive valuable life changing health, vision, educational, social, and emotional yearly screenings”, says Simone Johnson, the Director of The Child Development Center. “These supports help to ensure that children get the early intervention they need to be as successful as possible in school.”

In addition to the vision, hearing and speech screenings the grant has also allowed us to contract with the DC Department of Mental Health’s “Healthy Futures Program”, providing us with the services of Stephen O’Connor, LMFT, an Early Childhood Metal Health Specialist. Mr. O’Connor has been on-site at the center one day a week providing support to the children, their families and the staff.

## Martha’s Outfitters: More than Just a Place to Shop

Martha’s Outfitters, our community thrift store has become more than just a store but has become a community within itself. There has been an influx of young professionals and hipsters moving into the 14th St. Corridor and many have found their way to Martha’s Outfitters. It’s become a place to donate clothing, shop, hear music, and get good deals on high-quality clothes and brand names such as Ann Taylor, Brooks Brothers, Gap, Ralph Lauren, American Eagle, and Abercrombie and Fitch. There’s also an array of exclusive purses and handbags, books, household items, jewelry, linens, wall hangings and posters.

On any given day you can stop in to shop and receive a free gift with your purchase which might consist of spices, candles, and cooking products. In the last few months, Martha’s Outfitters has extended its store hours so that every third Thursday of the month, the store is open from 9am-7pm giving people time to stop in and shop after work.

So what makes Martha’s Outfitters unique? Besides providing a “coffeehouse” atmosphere and a warm environment, the difference lies in what is being done behind the scenes. In addition to providing high-quality merchandise Martha’s Outfitters also provides the basic clothing needs for low-income families and the homeless community.

On average, Martha’s Outfitters makes over 100 transactions a day and provides free clothing for 2,500 people a year. Clientele ranges from a single man living in a shelter and needing a suit to wear for a job interview to a family of 4, needing baby clothes, blankets and pillows. Martha’s Outfitters can ONLY provide these services through the generosity of donors and customers. Donors include numerous individuals, DC private schools such as Sidwell Friends School and the Maret School as well as great partnerships like that with Crate & Barrel Stores.

Martha’s Outfitters is also very attentive to the quality of the clothes that are donated to the store. Donations must be clean and neatly folded and put in boxes or in paper bags. “In a way we ask our donors to also be volunteers” said Michael Bartscherer, the Director of Martha’s Outfitters. “On their end, we ask that they wash the clothes, sew on buttons, neatly package them and make general repairs and on our end we treat the clothes respectfully. They are organized and hung well.”

Simply put, Martha’s Outfitters has a variety of roles. Staff attend speaking engagements to encourage more schools, friends, and groups of people to support the store through clothing drives and volunteering--our needs vary depending on the time of year. Currently, for example, Martha’s Outfitters can use more men’s clothing, blankets, coats, thermals, and linens. If you are a volunteer, donor, in need of clothing, or just want to spend an hour browsing the racks for a good deal....Martha’s Outfitters has it all.