

**HFA: Kentucky Housing Corporation
Entry Name: Project Help from the Home Front
Management Innovation (Human Resources)**

Introduction/Description

At Kentucky Housing Corporation (KHC), Human Resources is more than just managing benefits and processing employees. It is also about developing employees and creating a caring and supportive place to work. When the economy is booming, this is easy to do by offering raises, training opportunities, and employee recognition.

When the economy is on the decline, and funding is not readily available, this becomes much harder. KHC recognized that the economic difficulty it was facing as a corporation was affecting employees at home and that the holidays would be especially hard for some employees and their families. To ease the financial burden experienced by these employees, KHC created Project Help from the Home Front, which opened two different areas of assistance for KHC staff members and their families: Helping Hands and the KHC Pantry.

Project Help from the Home Front	
Helping Hands	KHC Pantry
<p>Helping Hands offers assistance to any staff member (or family member living in the household who is under 18 years old) who needs assistance during the holidays with gifts and/or other needs. To apply for assistance from Helping Hands, a staff person completes a Helping Hands Request Form, which asks for information, such as gender, size, and wish list, for each of the staff member's family. A member of the Human Resources Department purchases the gifts for the staff member, who discretely picks up the unwrapped gifts, wrapping paper, and bows two weeks prior to KHC's Christmas break.</p>	<p>The KHC Pantry ensures KHC employees and their families have enough food during the holidays and that any children in the household have food during times when school may be out of session. The Human Resources Department accepts financial and nonperishable food donations to maintain the Food Pantry, which is open to all KHC staff during business hours. The pantry is located close to an entry/exit door so staff can discretely access the pantry. KHC staff can also contact a member of the Human Resources Department to arrange to visit the pantry after work hours.</p>

Help from the Home Front is funded solely through monetary and nonperishable-food donations from other KHC staff members. In November 2009, KHC's Human Resources Department began to solicit donations for food, cash, and gift cards through KHC's internal staff e-newsletter. At KHC's Holiday Lunch, which was held in early December 2009, staff donated over \$500.

KHC has a family-oriented culture and believed this program, which did not use any KHC funding, was an excellent way to serve its employees who might otherwise have to request assistance from other public programs.

Results/Accomplishments

Three staff members requested assistance from Helping Hands for their families with a total of six children. Staff spent \$1,222.01 (\$597.71 on toys and \$624.30 on clothes). An average of \$203.66 was spent on each child who received three to five outfits, including shoes and winter

jackets. The remaining money was used to purchase items from the child's "Wish List/Toys." Any money that remained after all the gifts had been purchased was used to stock the pantry.

Due to the immense food and financial donations, the KHC Pantry was open for almost four months (November 2009 to February 2010).

In the current financial crisis that all housing finance agencies are facing, it is easy to forget that employees are facing some of the same difficulties at home. Help from the Home Front is an easily replicated program that does not require any funding from an agency and increases employee morale as it demonstrates their employer's commitment to them and their families.