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PRESS RELEASE

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Tzedakah House donations to New Haven Home Recovery hit the \$100,000 mark

New Haven, CT, August 26, 2008 – Steve Greenberg launched Tzedakah House, LLC, an insurance agency in Woodbridge, in 2004, with the generous intention of giving 10 percent of commissions to charity. He decided to earmark half of that money for New Haven Home Recovery (NHHR), an agency that provides emergency shelter and supportive housing for women and children impacted by poverty and AIDS. Four years later, donations from Tzedakah House to NHHR have hit the \$100,000 mark.

For Greenberg, combining a career with a cause was a clear choice. As escalating food prices, the increased cost of utilities and the exorbitant price of gas impact more people, he would like to see more businesses follow suit.

“The profit world needs to take stock and help the nonprofits,” Greenberg said. “With recent cuts in government funding, we’re going to see nonprofits fumbling and stumbling and going by the wayside. Clothing drives are always very helpful, but money is crucial, because if the city and state don’t give us more funding for our operating costs and other expenses, we need to raise private dollars to cover the deficits.”

New Haven’s budget for the fiscal year that began on July 1 includes a \$350,000 cut in homeless services, which eliminates most of the funding for the city’s winter overflow shelters and includes 9 percent reductions in operating shelter budgets.

Greenberg had spent 23 years in the insurance field, working for Metropolitan and Travelers, and creating another independent agency called Insurance Concepts of CT, Inc., before retiring in 2003. NHHR Executive Director Kellyann Day invited him to a shelter luncheon where he met a resident who defied the stereotype of homelessness.

Brought up in Madison, she had attended private schools and college, married and had a baby. She'd also been drinking since the age of 14, and her addiction ruined her marriage. Without financial support from her husband, she had ended up on the streets of New Haven, addicted to crack.

“She was someone who needed a break, and NHHR gave it to her,” Greenberg said. When she was finally ready to move into supportive housing, he helped her move and gave her a box spring, a mattress and a lamp, which turned out to be just about all she had. “It was sad – happy and sad at the same time,” he said.

One day he found himself raising money for NHHR at a tag sale where the money was trickling in. “That was like the epiphany,” he said. “I realized there had to be a more intelligent way to make money for NHHR.”

Greenberg, who later became president of the board of directors at NHHR, named his agency Tzedakah after a biblical term for charitable giving. Four years later, he has more than 100 clients. Greenberg gives his clients a voice in half of his charitable giving, which ranges in donations to such charities as Make a Wish Foundation, Ronald McDonald House and the Boy Scouts. The results have been gratifying. “This venture has given me a very good appreciation for what I have, and it’s sending a clear message to my kids and people we know that we should all be grateful for our success and share what we have with others,” Greenberg said.

New Haven Home Recovery (NHHR) Inc. was established in 1990 to provide emergency shelter for families, and is working in the New Haven area to address the housing and support service needs of women with children. NHHR provides services to families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. NHHR has developed its programs to include emergency shelter, supportive housing, children’s programs and The Furniture Co-op. For more information, visit the Web site at www.nhhr.org.

Tzedakah House, LLC, is an independent insurance agency specializing in the design, implementation and service of employment benefit plans for businesses of all sizes and non-profit organizations throughout Connecticut. For more information, contact Steve Greenberg at 203-387-2266 or at SGreenberg@Tzedakah-House.com.

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