COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Calgary Food Bank

Calgary Food Bank Receives Help from BLG Associates and Partners

Introduction

Our BLG Calgary lawyers have raised over $8,000 for the Calgary Food Bank, as part of a fundraising initiative started by BLG Calgary associates.

The Calgary Food Bank offers food support for families, individuals, and organizations in need. They rely exclusively on the support of the community.

With this contribution, and because of their relationships with local suppliers, the Calgary Food Bank was able to purchase five dollars worth of food for every dollar that was donated.

We spoke with Alan Ross, QC (pictured right), BLG Calgary Regional Managing Partner, about this initiative.

Questions

1. Can you tell us how this initiative came about?

There are really two parts to the story.

First, the BLG Calgary office is especially active with respect to charitable giving, volunteering, and non-for-profit board participations. We have a wonderful tradition with respect to community investment.

Therefore, when earlier in the year we migrated to iManage (a new Cloud-based document management solution), our project team responsible for the migration had an idea. Instead of using paper signs which would create waste, they suggested using canned peas and tomatoes (green for “I’m good” and red for “I need help”) as part of tech support for our members, with the purpose of donating the cans to our local food banks at the end of the iManage implantation.

This was before the COVID-19 pandemic even started. Locally, we were already involved with the Calgary Food Bank.

The second part of the story is that we have many socially minded associates at BLG who, when the pandemic hit, thought: how can we engage with our community? The Calgary Food Bank came to mind, as an organisation that could offer immediate help in the community.

2. Can you let us know the specifics of the fundraising campaign?

The Calgary associates started this initiative internally — communicating it widely across our office — and raised about $3000 with their online fundraiser. They in turn challenged the partners, who almost tripled the associates’ contribution, raising the total to over $8000. We are still on track to raise that amount even further.

3. What attracted BLG to this particular cause?

This initiative came from our associates because they saw how our broader community was impacted with the rise of the pandemic and the current economic challenges in Alberta.

4. Did you face any challenges with the fundraiser, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Not really, as we worked with the online platform of the Calgary Food Bank. We chose to fundraise online, because of the nature of events. We could not necessarily volunteer in-person during COVID-19, so fundraising made the most sense.

5. What do you think others should know about the Calgary Food Bank Society?

People should be aware of the tremendous work that Calgary Food Bank does. They have a long-standing tradition in the city and are exceptionally important in our communities. They play a critical role as an organisation.

6. How do you think community investment will evolve, moving forward?

Given the COVID-19 crisis, it is more important than ever to reach out to our communities. I believe that law firms have a significant role to play by building strong engagement.

7. Have you reached your goal, and, if so, how did you feel about it?

I’m very proud that this initiative came from our associates. We didn’t really have a monetary goal in mind, as we sometimes do with fundraisers. We simply hoped to be impactful with our contributions.

8. What inspires you about giving back to the community?

Our firm has a tremendous history — and will have an impactful future — respecting community investment. I am especially inspired by my colleagues. The outreach of all of our BLG team is truly inspiring.