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COMMUNITY POST

Desi Company serves pizza to NYC homeless

Tuesday, 07.03.2007, 10:15pm (GMT-7)

NEW YORK: Nonprofit multicultural arts company, eyeBLINK has caused a stir in New York City by donating 75 large pizzas per day to a different NYC shelter, every day for a week.

This innovative project ran from June 18 - June 22, where the organizers say, every penny raised for the purpose was spent on the pizzas. Instrumental musicians provided live music while the pizza was served in the shelters. This created a pizza party and a special moment for those that don't have too many special moments.

"The over-arching idea was to show that you can have one good thought, regardless of where it originates, and, because humanity is basically good, people will jump on the bandwagon and that same good thought will become a firestorm of good," said Qurrat Ann Kadwani, eyeBLINK's artistic director. "Even a dollar does make a difference." Pizza Hut came onboard as the grand pizza sponsor for this humanitarian initiative.

They donated a free full house pizza for every pizza that eyeBLINK purchased from them for the cause of the homeless. Among the shelters that were served by eyeBLINK were The Partnership for the Homeless/Peter's Place; Bowery Mission; Bread and Life; Love Gospel Kitchen; and NY Rescue Mission. The project was spearheaded by eyeBLINK's Business Manager, Obaid Kadwani, who is otherwise known in the South Asian community as a news anchor on Namaste America as well as live emceeing work.

"We come from a culture of service," said Obaid. "We have very lofty role models such as Gandhi and Mother Teresa. Caring about others has always been revered by the Indian culture. It was logical to combine the arts with community service. It is important to banish the stigma of hunger from this country just as diseases such as polio and tuberculosis have been." Yemi Oyaname, nutritionist and manager of St. John's Bread and Life, said that eyeBLINK had done something never done before, "In 27 years of existence, nobody has ever thrown a pizza party for our guests. People were dancing, clapping, and everyone was so excited. Having the live music was just amazing." Reverend Steve Sele of Love Gospel Kitchen in the Bronx echoed her sentiments.

"This is so different for us. eyeBLINK and its donors are spreading so much love. We want eyeBLINK to come back every year. Just look around at all these happy faces. This means so much to them." eyeBLINK has helped pick up our spirits too," said Stacy Landau, Volunteer Manager of the Bowery Mission. "We are here everyday fighting the good fight and companies like eyeBLINK remind us that we are not alone." Obaid Kadwani promised that this would become an annual project and would increase in scope every year.

"Our donors have shown us their commitment. The shelters and kitchen have shown us the need. As requested by the shelters, we will be back. However, we need everyone to send us contributions now. Corporations decide to sponsor us when we show them that we have raised funds. So please go to www.eyebblink.org and send money for the Pizzas for the Homeless, and make the world a happier place."

India Post News Service

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