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COLUMBIA BANK LAUNCHES THE 2016 WARM HEARTS WINTER DRIVE *Wintertime Campaign Benefits Homeless Shelters Across The Northwest*

Tacoma, Wash. – Nov. 21, 2016 – Today [Columbia Bank](#) launches the annual Warm Hearts Winter Drive to benefit homeless shelters in communities across the Northwest. Now through December 31, 2016, Columbia Bank will be accepting cash donations and new winter wear attire as it aims to raise \$160,000 for people in the Northwest impacted by homelessness. Donations can be submitted at [WarmHeartsWinterDrive.com](#) and both cash and warm winter attire can be donated within all Columbia Bank [branch locations](#) across Washington, Oregon and Idaho.

According to the [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development](#), the number of people experiencing homelessness in the Northwest has increased six percent since 2015. As a result there are 34,000 people struggling to receive essential services and stay off the street as they face overcrowded and underfunded shelters during the cold winter months. Columbia Bank established the Warm Hearts Winter Drive in 2015 to help aid nonprofit organizations in providing warmth to individuals, families and children in need.

“Thousands of families in our communities are homeless this winter, and those living on the streets have a much higher risk of exposure when it is cold and wet outside. We are proud to continue the Warm Hearts Winter Drive to help those around us who are truly in need,” said Melanie Dressel, President & CEO of Columbia Bank. “The purpose of the Warm Hearts Winter Drive is to continue to raise awareness of this growing issue, and we are hopeful that our customers and employees will join together again to help these deserving organizations and the people they support.”

During the inaugural year of the Warm Hearts Winter Drive, Columbia Bank employees and local communities collected nearly 12,000 items of winter wear and raised more than \$150,000 to benefit 53 homeless shelters in the Northwest, including the Portland Rescue Mission, Seattle Gospel Union Mission and Tacoma Rescue Mission. Just as during its initial year, one hundred percent of the clothing and funds collected during

the 2016 Warm Hearts Winter Drive will be donated directly back to 49 shelters and relief organizations in the communities where the collections originated.

"We are overwhelmed by the support of Columbia bank, their customers and staff," said Mike Johnson, Executive Director of Tacoma Rescue Mission. "Now, more families and children are able to overcome homelessness. The need is real and broad; this help is essential."

"For nearly 70 years Portland Rescue Mission has existed with one specific purpose; to give hope and restore life to men, women and children in our community suffering from hunger, homelessness and addiction. This would not be possible without the compassionate support from community partners like our friends at Columbia Bank," said Mike Deckon, Director of Marketing for Portland Rescue Mission. "Last year alone Columbia Bank's Warm Heart Campaign provided meals, shelter and care for 9,375 people in our community. On behalf of those we serve, we want to say thank you to the entire Columbia Bank family. We're very grateful to be partnering with you once again this year."

"January is often our slowest month for donations, yet it is among the coldest, wettest months for our homeless neighbors," said President of Seattle Union Gospel Mission, Jeff Lilley. "It means the world to us when community members like Columbia Bank proactively reach out and help those in need survive cold nights. We appreciate Columbia Bank and its community members for stepping up and setting an example."

"As the holidays approach our thoughts turn to family, blessings and gratitude. But for many men, women and children in our community that are experiencing homelessness, the holidays can be a time of loneliness and difficulty," said Executive Director, Tri-City Union Gospel Mission, Andrew J. Porter. "But because of the thoughtful donations from community partners we will be able to give hope to countless individuals and families by providing a joyous holiday season."

Philanthropy and community engagement lie at the heart of what it means to be a community bank, and is why Columbia Bank is committed to programs such as the Warm Hearts Winter Drive. After launching the Warm Hearts Winter Drive in 2015, Columbia Bank received various regional and national honors, including the [American Bankers Association Foundation's George Bailey Distinguished Service Award](#) and a [Community Impact Award from Seattle Business Magazine](#).

For more information or to make a cash donation, please visit WarmHeartsWinterDrive.com.

Columbia Bank has been serving the Northwest since 1993. For branch locations and more information, visit www.columbiabank.com.

About Columbia Bank

Headquartered in Tacoma, Washington, Columbia Banking System, Inc. is the holding company of Columbia Bank, a Washington state-chartered full-service commercial bank with locations throughout Washington, Oregon and Idaho. For the tenth consecutive year, the bank was named in 2016 as one of Puget Sound Business Journal's "Washington's Best Workplaces." Columbia ranked in the top 20 on the 2016 Forbes list of best banks in the country for the fifth year in a row.

Columbia Bank operates more than 140 banking offices and branches throughout Washington, Oregon and Idaho. More information about Columbia can be found on its website at www.columbiabank.com.

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