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Artists, bank associates turning affordable housing into homes

Volunteers teaming up with Homeless Solutions to build, decorate furniture for needy

Fourteen U.S. Trust Bank of America Private Wealth Management associates on Friday built and decorated furniture for working families living in Homeless Solutions Inc. affordable-housing developments.

Led by Jumpstart, Morris County's expressive-arts consulting firm, the volunteers built three coffee tables with shelves and crafted glass mosaic tiles to cover each tabletop.

Tamala Reynolds, volunteer coordinator for Homeless Solutions, launched the day with a tour of the Homeless Solutions shelter at 540 W. Hanover Ave., Morris Township, and a description of the families who would receive each table. Jumpstart artists Karen Titterton and Mike Karlak explained each step of the table-making process.

While several associates wielded hammers to build the furniture, the rest designed artwork and set rainbow-hued bits of glass onto grout-covered 6-inch wood tiles.

"I have absolutely no talent," said one associate setting glass bits in place, "but this is really fun."

Senior Vice President Robert K. Ward said the group chose to mark National Volunteer Week by helping local families in need. The associates also contributed cartons of paper goods to Homeless Solutions families.

To learn more about linking a company with a nonprofit agency through "creative connections," call Jumpstart President Susie Schub at (973) 540-1142 or e-mail jumpstartss@aol.com.

For more information about Homeless Solutions, contact Pamela Palumbo at (973) 993-0900, ext. 20 or pampalumbo@homelessolutions.org.
