



Media Contacts:

Dawn Ratté
401-453-4748 (W); 401-580-9597
dratte@addventures.com

Elizabeth B. Eckel
401-348-1309 (W)
ebeckel@washtrust.com

Washington Trust Launches 11th Annual PB Xpress

Regional peanut butter drive is the largest product-specific food drive to benefit the Rhode Island Community Food Bank

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (March 1, 2011) – For the 11th consecutive year, Washington Trust has launched its annual regional peanut butter drive – the *PB Xpress* – and is calling upon members of the community to join its efforts to reverse Rhode Island’s hunger rate. This year’s *PB Xpress* comes at a time when hunger in Rhode Island has reached an all time high over the last decade with 13.7 percent (one out of every seven) of Rhode Islanders unable to meet their basic food needs.

Through the *PB Xpress*, Washington Trust mobilizes schools, businesses, organizations and individuals across the region to collect as many tons of nutritious peanut butter as possible for the Rhode Island Community Food Bank. Over the course of the last 10 years, Washington Trust’s *PB Xpress* campaign has collected 87 tons of peanut butter for the Rhode Island Community Food Bank. The *PB Xpress* runs from March 1 through April 30.

“Sadly, Rhode Island’s hunger needs are even greater than last year, which means hunger in Rhode Island is affecting far too many of our neighbors,” said Washington Trust Chairman, President and CEO Joseph MarcAurele. “We have planned a number of community events to not only generate awareness of the hunger issue in our State, but to attract a record number of peanut butter donations to help fill the need.”

Washington Trust focuses on this product-specific food drive to help reverse Rhode Island’s hunger rate rather than a general food drive because peanut butter is high in protein and popular for both children and families, but expensive for struggling families. Also, peanut butter is one of the most in-demand items of the Rhode Island Community Food Bank.

Andrew Schiff, CEO of the Rhode Island Community Food Bank, said, “Year after year, Washington Trust comes through for us with this incredible initiative that mobilizes our community and provides the food bank with, literally, *tons* of peanut butter for struggling families.” Schiff added, “What I’ve always appreciated about the *PB Xpress* is that it affords people with the opportunity to make a difference by contributing one jar or multiple jars.”

To put the spotlight on Rhode Island’s hunger issue and engage the community in donating peanut butter to the *PB Xpress*, Washington Trust is holding the following events:

March 12: PB Xpress Sports Fun Day at the Warwick Mall from noon to 2 p.m.

Anyone who brings a jar of peanut butter to center court at the mall can meet Pawtucket Red Sox Mascot “Paws,” Providence Bruins Mascot “Samboni,” Cox Communications Mascot “Digi,” Mike Adams from the “Planet Mikey Show” on the WEEI Sports Radio Network and the WEEI-FM Waterboys & Girls. Attendees can also enter to win a pair of “Boston” baseball tickets! Those planning to attend should bring a camera for some fun photos.

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March 18: Providence Bruins PB Xpress Night

Every person who brings a jar of peanut butter to the Providence Bruins game will be given a raffle ticket for each jar donated and entered to win a Providence Bruins prize pack at the game (autographed stick, tickets, etc.). Washington Trust volunteers and “Star Mascots” will be on hand to collect peanut butter from fans. The collection bins will remain out for the game on Sunday, March 20.

In addition, for the month of March, Roger Williams Park Zoo will offer a free child’s admission to anyone who brings a jar of peanut butter (minimum 16 oz. Size) for the *PB Xpress* to Zoo Admissions. This offer is one per family and not valid in combination with any other promotions.

Washington Trust is planning additional community-focused events for the month of April to generate donations for the *PB Xpress*. Details of those events will be announced at a later date.

Donations to the *PB Xpress* can be made from now through the end of April at any of the previously mentioned *PB Xpress* events, at any Washington Trust branch location or at any school, business or organization that has signed on to collect peanut butter for the *PB Xpress*. (See list of Washington Trust branch locations and participants.) Donations can also be made by visiting peanutbutterbank.com and clicking on the “Donate Online” button.

The *PB Xpress* is the largest product-specific food drive to benefit the Rhode Island Community Food Bank and makes an impact by capturing the philanthropic spirit of its employees and of Rhode Islanders across the state.

For more information about the 11th annual *PB Xpress* campaign, find *PB Xpress* on Facebook or visit www.peanutbutterbank.com. Both sites provide campaign donation information and facts about hunger in Rhode Island.

About Washington Trust:

The Washington Trust Company is a subsidiary of [Washington Trust Bancorp, Inc.](http://WashingtonTrustBancorp.com), a \$2.9 billion corporation headquartered in Westerly, Rhode Island. Founded in 1800, [Washington Trust](http://WashingtonTrust.com) is the oldest community bank in the nation and is the largest independent bank headquartered in Rhode Island. A state-chartered bank, Washington Trust offers a full range of financial services, including [commercial banking](#), [small business banking](#), [personal banking](#), and [wealth management](#) and trust services through its offices located in Rhode Island, southeastern Connecticut and Massachusetts. The Corporation’s common stock trades on The NASDAQ Global Select® Stock Market under the symbol WASH. Web site address: www.washtrust.com.

About the Rhode Island Community Food Bank:

The Rhode Island Community Food Bank is a non-profit organization located in Providence, RI. The Food Bank solicits, stores and distributes food products donated by supermarkets, wholesalers, food processors, local farmers and community food drives. The food is then distributed to the Food Bank’s network of more than 250 member agency programs. In the past fiscal year, the Food Bank distributed 9.7 million pounds of food. For more information about the Food Bank, please visit www.rifoodbank.org.

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