

For Immediate Release

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RiverRun Bookstore proving that small acts can make big impact with Business Building Community program.

PORTSMOUTH – Now in the 5th month of its innovative giving program, RiverRun Bookstore owner Tom Holbrook couldn't be happier with the way things are going.

"Shoppers at RiverRun are doing more than picking up something to read. Many leave the store with a new understanding of how their simple act of buying a book can ripple out into the community," Holbrook said. "And, they're being exposed to more than just issues or ideas. They're learning about the people and organizations in their community who are on the ground, making a real difference."

Throughout 2008, for two months at a time, RiverRun will feature information about a different local non-profit agency addressing the issue of housing and those affected by the lack of affordable housing in the region. At the conclusion of each two-month period, the featured non-profit will also receive two percent of RiverRun's gross earnings. Customers have the opportunity to learn about the featured non-profits in a brochure updated every two months, through selected books on the issue and events held at the store.

United Way of the Greater Seacoast has partnered with RiverRun to work with the non-profit recipients and help spread the word. "Creating affordable housing in our community begins with educating our community members and inspiring them to participate," said UWGS spokesperson Liza Dube. "This program really shows that if we all do our own small part, we can make a big impact."

Since the program began, \$2000 has been raised for The Housing Partnership; the final total for the contribution to Crossroads House will be released in the coming weeks.

May and June will feature the Seacoast Interfaith Hospitality Network – a network of volunteers from various faith communities demonstrating their strength of compassion and generosity. Through donations of time and funds, Seacoast IHN provides a safe place for families to turn for immediate food, shelter, and social services. Local faith-based institutions open their facilities to serve meals, provide private sleeping arrangements, and distribute personal necessities to up to 14 guests at a time. Professional staff operate the Day Center by day where families receive information and advocacy to services including public housing, employment, training, and education. The Center also provides a kitchen, children's play area, computers, and telephones.

“Seacoast INH is more than just a safety net for community members, we provide a structured path toward self-sufficiency, consistent income, and stable housing. More than eighty percent of Network guests secure permanent housing,” said Network Director Pati Frew-Waters.

“One of the great things about this program is that we’re showing the affects of the need for affordable housing at every level – from crisis support like the kind offered by Seacoast INH to the need for our towns to create more housing for our workforce. We hope to highlight the importance of housing for all,” Holbrook said. “The response from our customers has been very positive. We can’t wait to see where it goes from here.”