



August 5, 2009

Goodwill Industries of Northern Michigan's is honored to be a recipient of the Art Van Million Dollar Charity Challenge. In 50 hours, Founder and Chairman of the company that bears his name, Art Van Elslander crossed the state of Michigan celebrating Art Van Furniture Stores, 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, by announcing \$1 million dollars in challenge grants to 50 organizations supporting programs serving children as well as health and human services.

Goodwill's Holiday Needs program was awarded a \$15,000 challenge grant.

The mission of the Holiday Needs program is to ensure that no child, family or homeless person is left out of the wonders of the holidays because they are poor, homeless or otherwise in need. Our goal is to provide the true spirit of the holiday season to disadvantaged and homeless families in our area. In recent years, we have served over 800 individuals annually through our Holiday Needs program.

The program is unique in that it not only addresses basic needs, such as clothing and personal items, but allows participating families to experience the joy of giving by providing them an opportunity to shop for gifts in our holiday store with the assistance of volunteers.

The program is made possible through the generous financial and merchandise donations from the community, businesses and foundations; partnerships with other social service agencies; as well as being a Toys for Tots distribution partner.

This challenge grant will allow Goodwill step up to the challenge of filling the anticipated increased Holiday Needs program requests.

Much like his business tenacity, Mr. Van Elslander's capacity for giving seems to have no boundaries. Giving back has always been a priority for Mr. Van Elslander—one he has strived to instill in his family and his employees. He believes that everyone has a role to play when it comes to helping—that it only takes a little effort to make a big impact. It is a philosophy that has served him well in life and in business. And it is one that he will continue to live out and entrust the next generation to uphold.

For more information and winners of the Art Van Million Dollar Charity Challenge of visit:

[http://www.artvan.com/Furniture/Store/Content\\_Million-Dollar-Grant-Challenge-winners\\_10001\\_10052\\_-1\\_N?icid=MDGC-winners](http://www.artvan.com/Furniture/Store/Content_Million-Dollar-Grant-Challenge-winners_10001_10052_-1_N?icid=MDGC-winners)