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Chuhak & Tecson celebrates its 25th anniversary with service initiative

By John Flynn Rooney
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With its 25th anniversary approaching, Chuhak & Tecson P.C. decided to mark the occasion by participation in a service initiative meant to help 25 different nonprofit organizations this year.

“As we talked about ways of celebrating, we wanted to give back to the community that has been so supportive of us,” said Andrew P. Tecson, a principal and president of Chuhak & Tecson. “It’s consistent with the tradition that many of our attorneys have carried on individually by volunteering with not-for-profit” organizations.

Chuhak & Tecson, which turns 25 on June 1, consists of about 140 employees, including 64 lawyers and 75 support staff working in about a dozen practice groups. Those practice groups include corporate transactions, litigation and health care.

Chuhak & Tecson’s 25th anniversary committee comprises 14 employees. The committee members developed the “25 Ways to Give Back” program.

About 70 Chuhak & Tecson employees participated in a program event — a “jeans day” — on Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

The employees paid at least \$5 each to wear jeans to work, said Valerie J. Freireich, a Chuhak & Tecson principal and anniversary committee member who organized the event, which raised \$640.

Freireich said she decided to match that amount and about \$1,280 went to Chicago Legal Clinic Inc.

“It seems to me one of the ways to celebrate our 25 years as a law firm is to provide a contribution to a very worthy ... cause that provides legal services to the working poor,” Freireich said.

Edward I. Grossman, Chicago Legal Clinic’s executive director, said after Chuhak & Tecson’s contribution, he contacted board members with the organization who work at law firms and companies and asked them to make similar donations.

Many of those board members indicated their law firms or companies will raise money for the clinic, Grossman said.

Chuhak & Tecson “started the ball rolling,” Grossman said.

“I think this really has the potential to be a significant source of revenue for the clinic,” Grossman said. “Particularly if I can institutionalize the concept among lots of law firms and large corporations.”

Grossman said he hopes the legal clinic can raise at least \$10,000 through that effort.

This week, Chuhak & Tecson employees started donating shoes to a group called Soles4Souls, a charity that recycles shoes for needy people.

Lisa A. Rothstein, a Chuhak & Tecson principal and member of the 25th anniversary

planning committee, said she donated about 15 pairs of shoes to Soles4Souls.

Chuhak & Tecson employees also work with the American Red Cross of Greater Chicago to collect teddy bears that will go to children who experienced disasters, Rothstein said. Chuhak & Tecson employees plan to participate in a backpack collection drive for elementary school students and a clothing drive for children and adults, she said.

Among other organizations Chuhak & Tecson employees plan to serve are Chicago Volunteer Legal Services, JUF Uptown Cafe, a kosher anti-hunger program for needy people and the Greater Chicago Food Depository.

On the afternoon of Feb. 22, Chuhak & Tecson will close its downtown office, Tecson said. At least 100 employees will board buses and head to the food depository’s facility on Chicago’s Southwest Side.

Chuhak & Tecson employees will work in teams packing food that came from bulk contributions and sort food for delivery, Tecson said.

The food depository feeds about 675,000 people annually, he said.

“While we’re just making a small contribution in terms of our time, they make a huge contribution to a serious problem, which is people who are hungry in our own backyard,” Tecson said.