

giving thanks every day

IF YOU LIVE IN FLORIDA, YOU'VE GOT TO BE AWFULLY HAPPY to flip your calendar to November. Though there's no guarantee that Mother Nature won't unleash yet another tropical storm, this month marks the meteorological end to the hurricane season.



And what a season it was. Residents of the Sunshine State saw their little slice of paradise slammed not once, not twice, not three times, but four times. As always, the logistics industry was quick to respond to the disaster. As we reported last month, logistics service providers and their customers quickly mobilized to join the relief effort, sending a steady stream of food staples, medical equipment and construction materials down Interstates 95 and 75 from as far away as Michigan and New England.

Once the goods arrived in Florida, DCs across the state swung into action to get the supplies to those most severely affected by the likes of Ivan and Frances. Some DCs distributed goods right from their sites, in many cases handing out such necessities as water, bread and ice for free.

Though logistics operations receive plenty of public attention for their role in relief efforts in times of crisis, it's important to note that the logistics community is also there 365 days a year working quietly behind the scenes to help those in need. November being the month in which Americans typically give thanks in a ritual nearly four centuries old, it's appropriate to acknowledge them now.

Consider, for instance, the example set by Greg Sevinsky, the head of a Wal-Mart DC in New Hampshire. Over the past four years, Sevinsky has spearheaded a program to donate supplies to financially strapped public schools. Since 1999, needy students have received shoes, backpacks, bicycles, pencils, paper and computers.

Then there's Roadway Express and its tireless support of Christina's Smile, a program that makes dental care available to children in inner cities, in homeless shelters, and from uninsured families among the working poor. By sending specially outfitted trucks out to some 20 communities across the country annually, Christina's Smile has provided more than \$10 million in free dental care to 32,000 children since 1990. Roadway Express has donated two 48-foot trailers that have been transformed into mobile clinics, each equipped with dental treatment stations, X-ray equipment and an instrument sterilization area. Roadway maintains and moves the trailers from city to city at no charge.

Others in the logistics community are fighting hunger both at home and abroad. Accenture recently donated \$1 million to support the development of a non-profit Global Relief Network. That contribution represents just a small part of Accenture's broader commitment to global hunger relief efforts.

The employees of TNT Logistics North America devote considerable time and resources each year to support the United Nations' World Food Program (WFP). TNT has made a longterm commitment to WFP to support its programs via its annual Walk for Hunger campaigns throughout the United States.

DC VELOCITY's own Cliff Lynch, a well-known veteran of the logistics field (and a gourmet cook to boot), has worked tirelessly in support of the Memphis food bank for years. Last year, he published a cookbook, [*The Gourmet Logistician: An Oxymoron*](#), and donated a portion of the proceeds to the Memphis program.

We've even heard of companies that structure their organizations to ensure that they give back to the community. Richard Sharpe, head of Competitive Logistics LLC of Georgia, reports that from the day they start work, all employees are required to devote 5 percent of their billable hours to nonprofit service projects. One such project helps nonprofits fighting hunger apply best logistics practices so they can devote more of their resources to feeding the hungry and less to paying freight bills.

As you sit down with your family and friends this Thanksgiving, give thanks not only for the bounty before you, but also for the kind souls in the logistics community who help so many others throughout the year.

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