



## PRESS RELEASE

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## **Merrimack Valley Credit Union & Bridgewater Credit Union Donate \$10,000 and Nearly 4,000 Pairs of Shoes to Two Local Nonprofits**

*MVCU & BCU celebrate recent merger with joint campaign supporting Lazarus House Ministries, Inc. in Lawrence and GiftsToGive in Acushnet*

**Lawrence, Mass.** (May 15, 2019) – With help from members, [Merrimack Valley Credit Union](#) (MVCU) and [Bridgewater Credit Union](#) (BCU), a division of Merrimack Valley Credit Union, recently donated \$10,000 and 3,905 pairs of gently-used shoes to Lazarus House Ministries, Inc. in Lawrence and GiftsToGive in Acushnet. The branches collected gently used shoes from members over the past six weeks, matching each pair of shoes given with a \$5 donation, up to \$10,000.

MVCU and BCU members and staff members turned out in droves, donating double the goal of 2,000 shoes, and amplifying the positive impact to both charitable organizations. MVCU branches in Haverhill, Lawrence, Methuen, North Andover, and Plaistow and Seabrook, N.H. collected 2,953 pairs of shoes and donated \$7,563 to Lazarus House, and BCU branches in Bridgewater, Fairhaven, Plymouth and Quincy collected 952 pairs of shoes and donated \$2,436 to GiftsToGive.

“We cannot thank our members enough for their contributions to Lazarus House Ministries and GiftsToGive,” said John J. Howard, President & CEO of Merrimack Valley Credit Union. “With help from the community, both organizations can continue their meaningful work of transforming lives. Now that Merrimack Valley Credit Union and Bridgewater Credit Union have completed their merger, the

combined organization is looking to spearhead more projects just like this, working with our members to make the communities in which we live and work a better place.”

[Lazarus House Ministries](#) provides physical, emotional and spiritual shelter from life’s hardships, offering guests the opportunity to get back on their feet. The Lawrence-based organization provides food through its soup kitchen and pantry, housing through its emergency shelter, temporary shelter and transitional housing programs, and work preparation training, giving guests a foundation from which to build on their independence. The donated shoes are available through the organization’s thrift stores, which provide clothing and goods at reduced rates for those who struggle to make ends meet. For those who cannot afford to purchase items, or those transitioning from homelessness, the items are free.

“We are overwhelmed by the generosity and support Lazarus House has received through this shoe donation drive,” said Bridget Shaheen, Executive Director, Lazarus House Ministries. “Thousands of families will benefit not only from the wonderful donated shoes that have been available in our thrift stores, but from the monetary donation we received that will help us keep the kitchen stocked and training programs running. Thank you to Merrimack Valley Credit Union and its members who made this incredible gift possible and for the effort and heart put into this project. Thank you especially for caring about and supporting our guests.”

“This brilliant campaign has created quite the buzz of excitement for our guests in all three Thrift Stores,” said J.C. McGuire, Thrift Store Coordinator, Lazarus House Ministries. “The volume and quality of the shoes far exceeded our expectations and as a result, there were many beaming smiles on the faces of the people we serve. Well done and thank you!!”

[GiftsToGive](#) relies on the help of thousands of local kids to transform donated clothes, toys and books into thousands of individual gift packages. Hundreds of local agencies and caregivers can request these gift packages for local homeless and at-risk children. Donated kids’ shoes are being used for gift packages, while adult shoes are available in the organization’s thrift store, which helps offset its operating costs.

“We are extremely grateful for the donations from Bridgewater Credit Union and its members,” said Jim Stevens, CEO and Founder, GiftsToGive. “With more than 50,000 South Coast children living in poverty, the need for donations like this is overwhelming. Thank you to Bridgewater Credit Union for its work and serving as a bright light in our community.”

For more information about Merrimack Valley Credit Union and Bridgewater Credit Union, visit <https://www.mvcu.com> or <https://www.bridgewatercu.com>.



**Caption:** With help from members, Merrimack Valley Credit Union (MVCU) and its branches in Haverhill, Lawrence, Methuen, North Andover, and Plaistow and Seabrook, N.H. collected 2,953 pairs of shoes and donated \$7,563 to Lazarus House Ministries in Lawrence, Mass. Pictured above (L-R), MVCU President & CEO John J. Howard presents a check to Kelley Granahan, Director of Development, and Bridget Shaheen, Executive Director, Lazarus House Ministries.



**Caption:** With help from members, Bridgewater Credit Union (BCU), a division of Merrimack Valley Credit Union (MVCU), and its branches in Bridgewater, Fairhaven, Plymouth and Quincy collected 952 pairs of shoes and donated \$2,436 to GiftsToGive in Acushnet, Mass. Pictured above, the Fairhaven BCU branch and MVCU President & CEO John J. Howard (second from the right) present a check to Jim Stevens, CEO and Founder, GiftsToGive.



**Caption:** With help from members, Merrimack Valley Credit Union (MVCU) and Bridgewater Credit Union (BCU), a division of Merrimack Valley Credit Union, recently donated \$10,000 and 3,905 pairs of gently-used shoes to Lazarus House Ministries, Inc. in Lawrence and GiftsToGive in Acushnet. MVCU branches in Haverhill, Lawrence, Methuen, North Andover, and Plaistow and Seabrook, N.H. collected 2,953 pairs of shoes and donated \$7,563 to Lazarus House, and BCU branches in Bridgewater, Fairhaven, Plymouth and Quincy collected 952 pairs of shoes and donated \$2,436 to GiftsToGive. Pictured above, a donation box full of gently-used shoes is ready for pick up.

### **About Merrimack Valley Credit Union**

Merrimack Valley Credit Union (MVCU) is a state-chartered community credit union with \$1 billion in assets. MVCU serves anyone who lives, works, volunteers, or attends school in the Merrimack Valley region, and through its Bridgewater Credit Union division, Barnstable, Bristol, Norfolk or Plymouth counties. MVCU offers a wide range of savings and loan products to meet the financial needs of its members, and has 10 branch locations in Bridgewater, Fairhaven, Haverhill, Lawrence, Methuen, North Andover, Plymouth, and Quincy Mass., and Plaistow and Seabrook, N.H.

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