



Urban League of  
Philadelphia

Empowering Communities.  
Changing Lives.

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**Media Contact:**

Monica Lewis-Wilborn

215-985-3220 ext. 211

[mlewis-wilborn@urbanleaguephila.org](mailto:mlewis-wilborn@urbanleaguephila.org)

**URBAN LEAGUE GUILD OF PHILADELPHIA RECOGNIZED BY  
NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE FOR OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY  
SERVICE**

*Volunteer group's "Shoe Box" project benefits single-parent families living in shelters*

**PHILADELPHIA, PA** – The Urban League Guild of Philadelphia was recognized for its exemplary community outreach during the National Urban League Centennial Conference last week in Washington, D.C. Nearly 50 members of the Urban League of Philadelphia made the trip to participate in the special conference and witness the Guild receive the Outstanding Community Service Award for the Eastern Region during a special luncheon on July 30 at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. The award recognizes the Urban League Guild of Philadelphia as one of the best of the organization's 85 chapters throughout the country.

Angela Simmons-Smith, president of the Urban League Guild of Philadelphia, said receiving the award is an honor.

"Community service is at the core of what Guilders throughout the Urban League movement are all about," said Simmons-Smith, who accepted the award on behalf of the chapter. "I'm just so very proud that our hard work was recognized."

The "Shoe Box" project benefits single parents with limited resources by assisting them in making a positive Christmas experience for their children living in the Interim House West, a residential treatment for women with substance abuse and mental health disorders and their families. Each September, the Shoe Box Committee plans the project by reaching out to the center to receive the names, ages and genders of children at the facility, ranging in age from newborns to 17. Items, ranging from educational toys to clothes are placed in a variety of shoe boxes and then wrapped by committee members and delivered to the facility just in time for a special holiday party.

While the committee members are not allowed to see the parents of the children due to security issues, they feel a bond nonetheless.

"In many cases, these families are homeless due to abuse and financial hardships and we want to ensure that they know that there are people out there who care," Simmons-Smith said. "Our Community Services Committee wants to be a blessing to these families, and especially these children during the holiday season."

The award was given by the National Council of Urban League Guilds, which is comprised of volunteer auxiliaries of the National Urban League. Founded in 1942 by Mollie Moon, the National Council of Guilds is divided into 85 chapters across four regions. Guild members are considered to be the heart and soul of the Urban League movement and contribute thousands of volunteer hours annually.

Guilders help raise funds and the public's awareness of the nation's largest and oldest civil rights organization as well as playing a pivotal role in connecting the Urban League to the community. Locally, the Guild supports Urban League events and raises funds for an annual scholarship presented to a college-bound student at the Empowerment Week Gala.

Patricia Coulter, president & CEO of the Urban League of Philadelphia, said she is proud of the Guild and looks forward to them continuing to support the movement.

"For more than half a century, our Guilders have demonstrated an unyielding commitment to the Urban League movement through giving their time, talent and treasure," Coulter said. "We didn't need this award to know how hard-working and special this group of volunteers are, but it certainly is an honor to be recognized for the work we do."

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*The Urban League of Philadelphia (ULP) is a non-profit, nonpartisan, civil rights and community-based movement that provides direct services, research and policy advocacy to help individuals and communities reach their fullest potential. Primarily working with African-Americans and other emerging ethnic communities, the ULP is an affiliate of the National Urban League. The National Urban League serves over 2 million people through professionally staffed affiliates located in 105 urban areas across the U.S., working to close equality gaps for people at all economic levels and stages of life, and giving residents a chance to give back as volunteers. Visit us at [www.urbanleaguephila.org](http://www.urbanleaguephila.org).*