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LOCAL BUSINESS LEADERS COME TOGETHER IN SUPPORT OF THE LITTLE BIT FOUNDATION'S FEEDING HOPE PROGRAM

Program Delivering Thousands of Meals to Food Insecure Homes during Coronavirus Crisis

ST. LOUIS, MO, May 19, 2020. The Little Bit Foundation (Little Bit), a St. Louis-based nonprofit working to empower under-resourced students to succeed in the classroom and beyond, announced that it is receiving support for its Feeding Hope program from a newly formed coalition of business leaders. Together, Ameren Missouri, St. Louis-based Ascension, Kwame Building Group and an anonymous donor have donated \$105,000 to the program and are encouraging the community to match their investment. In its first six weeks, Feeding Hope has reached 600 individuals with 37,000 meals.

Created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect on families already dealing with food insecurity, the Little Bit Feeding Hope program brings fresh and shelf-stable groceries, along with hot meals, directly to their doorsteps. For families identified as the highest risk, Little Bit assesses needs on an ongoing basis and connects them with organizations that can assist them with other resources.

“COVID left many of the students we serve without the lifeline of support they receive in school each day, including school meals,” said Rosemary Hanley, CEO and Co-Founder of The Little Bit Foundation. “While schools and food providers have done an outstanding job of setting up food distributions, we realize there are many families – for various reasons – unable to access these sites. Through a courageous team of staff, volunteers, and both new and existing partners, we have been able to step in to fill a critical gap and continue to serve our students and families where they are, when they need us the most.”

“Families in our community have a lot to manage right now, and the Feeding Hope program from The Little Bit Foundation helps ease some of their burden by providing groceries and other essential household items,” said Marty Lyons, chairman and president of Ameren Missouri. “Our goal with this grant is to inspire others to join us and help make a collective impact on hunger in the St. Louis region.”

Nick Ragone, Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer for Ascension, added: “I’ve been inspired by how our community, and communities across the country, have come together to support those in need during this pandemic. The Feeding Hope program is addressing a critical need for impacted families in our St. Louis community. Hopefully, other committed partners will join this effort to ensure all of our citizens have food security.”

“We are deeply grateful to each of our philanthropic partners for their incredible support and leadership,” said Hanley. “Our intent is not only to sustain this program for as long as needed, but to continue to build on it in order to reach many more families we know are struggling with hunger.”

About The Little Bit Foundation

Founded in 2001, The Little Bit Foundation (www.thelittlebitfoundation.org) works to eliminate barriers to learning by addressing the basic needs of students living in poverty in the St. Louis region. In area schools, Little Bit works one-on-one with students and brings partnerships and programs that provide for the needs of the whole child and enrich the learning environment. Additionally, through our high school programming, we help students stay focused on learning and on track for graduation, as well as plan beyond graduation. The results are positive personal growth and increased self-esteem in students impacted by poverty, leading to improved attendance, behavior and academic success. Follow The Little Bit Foundation online at www.thelittlebitfoundation.org , on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

About the Coalition

Ameren Missouri: Ameren Missouri has been providing electric and gas service for more than 100 years, and the company’s electric rates are among the lowest in the nation. Ameren Missouri’s mission is to power the quality of life for its 1.2 million electric and 132,000 natural gas customers in central and eastern Missouri. The company’s service area covers 64 counties and more than 500 communities, including the greater St. Louis area. For more information, visit Ameren.com/Missouri or follow us on Twitter at [@AmerenMissouri](#) or [Facebook.com/AmerenMissouri](https://www.facebook.com/AmerenMissouri).

Ascension: Ascension (www.ascension.org) is a faith-based healthcare organization dedicated to transformation through innovation across the continuum of care. As one of the leading nonprofit and Catholic health systems in the U.S., Ascension is committed to delivering compassionate, personalized care to all, with special attention to persons living in poverty and those most vulnerable. In FY2019, Ascension provided \$2 billion in care of persons living in poverty and other community benefit programs. Ascension includes approximately 156,000 associates and 34,000 aligned providers. The national health system operates more than 2,600 sites of care – including 150 hospitals and more than 50 senior living facilities – in 20 states and the District of Columbia, while providing a variety of services including physician practice management, venture capital investing, investment management, biomedical engineering, facilities management, clinical care management, information services, risk management, and contracting through Ascension’s own group purchasing organization.

Kwame Building Group: For more than 28 years, [KWAME Building Group](#) has excelled in construction management, focused on providing detailed project leadership and unparalleled service to clients. One of the principles upon which KWAME Building Group was founded was to provide opportunities for growth, development and leadership to young professionals. As an extension of that principle – and in alignment with our holistic approach to sustainability – KWAME supports various education and mentorship-focused organizations.