



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HARRAH'S CHEROKEE DONATES \$30,000 TO MANNA FOODBANK



Harrah's Cherokee donated \$30,000 to MANNA FoodBank's fundraising efforts and was named the 2015 presenting sponsor for MANNA's Blue Jean Ball and Empty Bowls. Harrah's Cherokee Casino Resort Regional VP of HR and External Relations Jo Blaylock (right) presented the \$30,000 check to MANNA FoodBank Chief Development Officer Mary Nesbitt (center) and Legacy Giving Director Donna Ensley (left).

Cherokee, N.C., July 7, 2015

Harrah's Cherokee Casino Resort donated \$30,000 to MANNA FoodBank for the organization's 2015 fundraising efforts. This is the 17th year Harrah's Cherokee has supported MANNA's mission to end hunger.

"When you examine MANNA's more than 30 years in operation, their success is due to their interest and concern for the people they serve and the relationships they build with their corporate sponsors, volunteers, and generous donors," Harrah's Cherokee Casino Resort Regional SVP and GM Brooks Robinson said. "We proudly support MANNA and their commitment to the communities our employees live in."

The \$30,000 donation from Harrah's Cherokee was used to fund the Blue Jean Ball and will also support MANNA's upcoming fundraiser, Empty Bowls in September. The Blue Jean Ball, this year themed "Bowl Full of Soul," raised enough money to provide more than 283,000 meals to WNC families in need. The sold-out event was attended by 900 guests and was held on the MANNA campus along the banks of the Swannanoa River in Asheville on June 6. Empty Bowls, which will be held at the Doubletree by Hilton at Biltmore, celebrates community, art, and collaboration while bringing awareness to the problem of hunger in Western North Carolina.

"While many families are busy planning vacations, too many families in our region are busy trying to figure out how they will keep food on the table once the school year ends. In some of our rural communities this is especially difficult," said MANNA FoodBank Executive Director Cindy Threlkeld. "We are especially grateful to Harrah's for their generous monetary sponsorship and culinary sponsorship of the Blue Jean Ball and Empty Bowls. They bring a large team of culinary professionals to the event each year and provide first-class fare and service."

The Blue Jean Ball is MANNA's largest annual fundraising event. Every dollar raised or donated to the food bank provides enough food for 3 meals. Current estimates in Western North Carolina indicate that 107,600 people in the area sought food assistance last year. MANNA partners with 248 agencies throughout the region to get food to those facing hunger. In 2014, MANNA distributed 15 million pounds, or enough food to provide 34,000 meals a day throughout the 16 counties in Western North Carolina.

MANNA FoodBank is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization serving Western North Carolina since 1982. As an accredited member of Feeding America, the nation's largest domestic hunger relief organization, the mission of MANNA FoodBank is to involve, educate, and unite people in the work of ending hunger in Western North Carolina. MANNA serves over 200 non-profit member agencies in 16 Western North Carolina counties. For more information, please visit MANNAFoodBank.org.



Chef Randy Phillips of Harrah's Cherokee Casino Resort served gourmet food tastings to more than 900 attendees at MANNA FoodBank's 2015 Blue Jean Ball. Harrah's Cherokee was the presenting sponsor of the event.

About Harrah's Cherokee Casino Resort:

An enterprise of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation, Harrah's Cherokee Casino Resort is located in the heart of the Great Smoky Mountains of Western North Carolina. The Casino has 150,000 square feet of gaming space, and offers traditional table games such as black jack, roulette and craps. The property also features over 1,100 hotel rooms, the Le Fu Men gaming area, 10 restaurants, the ESSENCE Lounge, the luxurious 18,000 square feet Mandara Spa and seven retail shops. In addition to the 56-acre property, guests have privileged access to the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation-owned Sequoyah National Golf Club. For complete details please [click here](#).