

In spirit of Thanksgiving, American Airlines and DHL partner to support Phoenix area foster children

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With the holiday season approaching, American Airlines and corporate partners DHL team up to bring joy to 100 Phoenix-area foster children. Kem Browning, Daniel “Lee” Kuhn and Elizabeth Pond from the American Airlines Western Division Sales Team helped lead the effort to give back to their local Phoenix community.

In collaboration with DHL, the team landed on the idea to donate 100 new rolling duffle bags to Child Crisis Arizona, an organization that provides emergency shelter, foster care, adoption, counseling, early education and more to Arizona’s most vulnerable children and families.

“After talking with our partners at DHL, we felt that we could really make a difference in the lives of foster children in our community this holiday season,” Elizabeth said

The bags will be distributed to children currently in Child Crisis Arizona’s emergency shelter, as well as those currently in foster homes. Last year, the organization provided 78,116 safe nights of sleep to 656 children.

The bags included American luggage tags and amenity kits, along with handwritten notes from the DHL team members.

“With American’s mission to care for people on life’s journey, I couldn’t think of a better way to demonstrate that by caring for those in our own community,” Kem said.

According to the Arizona Department of Child Safety, there are more than 13,000 children in foster care in Arizona today. While in foster care, children are moved an average of three times.

“Often, children enter our shelter with their very few belongings in a trash bag,” said Torrie Taj, CEO of Child Crisis Arizona. “Regardless of how these children come to us, we are always working to make sure they leave our care with dignity. This donation will help us do that. We are so grateful to American Airlines and DHL for believing every single child matters and for supporting our vision of safe kids, strong families.”

Donating to Child Crisis Arizona held special importance to Kuhn who is currently working with the organization to adopt a new member of his family.

“We wanted to make sure these children know that they are loved, they do matter and they are cared for,” Lee said. “If we can deliver that message, it will go a long way for them in their lives.”

The bags were delivered to Child Crisis Arizona on November 21 by DHL after being assembled by American team members at their Rio Campus in Tempe, AZ.

“DHL is committed to strengthening the communities we serve, and that starts with supporting children and families in need,” said Greg Hewitt, CEO of DHL Express. “This holiday giving season, we’re grateful to be able to combine efforts with American Airlines to impact the lives of dozens of kids across Arizona, while spreading a bit of holiday cheer in the community.”

Kem, Lee and Elizabeth hope others in the Phoenix community join the effort in the future.

“Our goal is to expand this program and to inspire others in the Phoenix area to help even more children,” Elizabeth said. “We turned an idea into action, and we hope it is really going to make a difference in these children’s lives.”

Daniel “Lee” Kuhn loads boxes containing donated luggage into a DHL van for transport to Child Crisis Arizona.

American Airlines and DHL team members deliver the donations to Child Crisis Arizona.