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THE SALVATION ARMY TASC, formerly GED PROGRAM RECEIVES GRANT
First Niagara Foundation supports Employment Services Program

BUFFALO, New York (March 18, 2014) -- The Salvation Army is the grateful beneficiary of a \$7,500 grant awarded by the First Niagara Foundation. This grant will cover the expense of an instructor for the NYS Test Assessing Secondary Completion, formerly GED program. These funds will provide an additional 300 hours of classroom time, which allows The Salvation Army to immediately extend the class by an additional two hours each day. This time extension affords the TASC instructor to work with those students who are in the final preparations to take the exam, with the intent to make the client test ready and test confident. It is critical for the instructor to explain the lessons thoroughly and give students more time to practice their reading, writing and math skills. These extra hours have a direct and measurable impact on the client's success.

The Salvation Army expects the First Niagara Foundation's Grant to immediately impact the number of students that are prepared to register for the TASC test. Also, more pre-tests will be given, which will provide better data on the efficiency of the program, affecting the number of students that successfully obtain their high school equivalency diploma, resulting in employment and increased life control. This movement from welfare dependency to economic self sufficiency is the ultimate goal of The Salvation Army's Employment Services program.

"At First Niagara, we believe everyone should have the opportunity to learn, grow and achieve their dreams," said Elizabeth Gurney, Executive Director of the First Niagara Foundation. "We are proud to support The Salvation Army's Employment Services Program as they work to help hundreds of underserved individuals in our community seek and find gainful employment opportunities."

The Employment Services Program provides job readiness training, job placement and support services such as life skills, personal financial literacy and the confidence and self-discipline to not only secure employment but to be successful at their job. "Without a high school diploma, individuals find themselves at a great disadvantage in today's job market. The Salvation Army is committed to this program and we are grateful to the partnership of the First Niagara Foundation. We have witnessed the increase of an individual's employment potential as a direct result of additional instruction," stated Christina Schweitzer, Director of Employment Services at The Salvation Army.

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About The Salvation Army of Buffalo

Since 1884, The Salvation Army has been a vital link within Western New York's human services network. We provide individuals, regardless of age, gender, education, ethnicity or religion with food, clothing and shelter, as well as social and spiritual support. The mission of The Salvation Army- Buffalo Area Services is to offer hope for a better life by meeting basic human needs.

About The First Niagara Foundation

First Niagara Foundation is a not for profit corporation founded in 1998. The Foundation is committed to supporting organizations in the communities in which we live and work with specific focus on youth and education, community development and neighborhood revitalization. In 2012 the Foundation contributed more than \$10 million in charitable grants to community partners. For more information, visit www.firstniagara.com/community.

About First Niagara

First Niagara, through its wholly owned subsidiary, First Niagara Bank, N.A., is a multi-state community-oriented bank with approximately 420 branches, approximately \$38 billion in assets, \$27 billion in deposits, and approximately 5,800 employees providing financial services to individuals, families and businesses across Upstate New York, Pennsylvania, Connecticut and Massachusetts. For more information, visit www.firstniagara.com. For more information, visit www.firstniagara.com.