



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Wendy's of Michigan Raises Over \$130,000 for Annual Campaign at Helen DeVos Children's Hospital**

GRAND RAPIDS, MI— Meritage Hospitality Group's Wendy's of Michigan completed their Change a Child's Life campaign, raising \$130,000 for Helen DeVos Children's Hospital and other local children's charities. The campaign took place from November 13 to December 31 in 50 west and northern Michigan locations.

"This has been our most successful campaign to date," said Mike Baldwin, North Director of Operations for Meritage Hospitality Group. "Our managers and teammates are the driving force behind this philanthropic cause and each team's hard work to assure awareness is what makes this program so successful each year. The generosity of over one hundred thousand local community members and guests is not overlooked either. By selecting to round up their orders and purchase in-store pin-ups at our restaurants, they are also to thank for this program's success."

Change a Child's Life contributes to the Annual Campaign, which supports 20 programs and services relating to clinical care, patient and family support, and research & innovation. Much of the contribution is focused on research and innovation via the Signatures Program, which is saving lives and changing the future of personalized medicine. These programs would not be possible without philanthropic donations, which account for 50 percent or more of their total funding.

Last year, Wendy's of Michigan donated to the Peter and Joan Secchia CarePartners Program. The CarePartners program provides resources to families of children with complex health needs by coordinating multiple appointments, troubleshooting, and facilitating communication among healthcare partners and the family. Last year, Wendy's of Michigan's support assisted in providing care for over 200 families.

"Our restaurant teams actively promote this program each year," said Jeremy Wood, Michigan Area Director for Meritage Hospitality Group. "All of our managers and teammates are passionate about giving back. They work their hardest to ensure our contribution will make a substantial impact to kids throughout west Michigan."

In addition to the round-up campaign, the restaurants worked with their communities to deck out their dining rooms with holiday décor. Mark Hyzer, General Manager of the Cadillac Wendy's, partnered with local schools for decorations, where students were able to create unique decorations for the restaurant. Additionally, Misty Dishman, General Manager of the Columbia Ave. restaurant in Battle Creek, was able to contribute over \$9,000 in donations to the campaign. Meritage Hospitality's Restaurant Service Center, located downtown Grand Rapids, was also able to raise nearly \$3,000 for this year's campaign.

The Change a Child's Life campaign started over 20 years ago and has raised over \$2.5 million for community organizations in west Michigan. Benefactors include Helen DeVos Children's Hospital, Kid's Food Basket, Feeding America West Michigan, and dozens of other local charities.

For more information regarding Change a Child's Life, please contact Weston Persons, Brand Manager, at [wpersons@mhgi.net](mailto:wpersons@mhgi.net). For more information on Wendy's, visit [www.wendys.com](http://www.wendys.com).

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*Meritage Hospitality Group, OTCQX: MHGU, a progressive, dynamic company, driving strategic growth in the competitive culinary industry. The Company owns and operates 252 restaurants in 12 states with over 7,500 teammates. Meritage is comprised of 5 dynamic concepts – Wendy's, Twisted Rooster, Stan Diego, Freighters Eatery & Taproom, and Wheelhouse. Each concept delivers a distinctive dining experience for their guests, a work environment rich with opportunity for its team members, and optimum results for its stakeholders.*