

## Good company Bartash Printing shows its gratitude to Philadelphians

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Peggy Eagle had a problem. The coordinator of the Lutheran Settlement House after-school program at Moffet Elementary School faced a big hole in the budget. "About \$15,000," she said. The deficit threatened to shut down the Fishtown program, which serves 45 first-through-fifth graders. When Eagle mentioned this to her friend, Sid Simon, chairman of the board of Bartash Printing, a check for \$15,000 was soon in her hands. It posed no problem for Simon or his son, Michael, president of the company. "They needed the help; we could help," Michael Simon, 34, said. "It seemed a no-brainer." To the school it was a lifeline. The program will expand from four to five days, and a significant portion of the four staffers' salaries are covered. When Fishtown's Atonement Lutheran Church needed a copier, a discreet word to Michael Simon brought a new machine. The gifts are part of the commitment that the Simons and their company have to maintaining the best of the city. Bartash is a neighborhood anchor in Southwest Philadelphia. Founded in 1952, it has expanded from 50 employees to 200; the majority live in the same zip code. Many ride bikes or walk to

the plant. "I don't understand why companies say they can't make a go of it in the city," Simon said. "We've grown and prospered. I can't see us ever leaving for the suburbs." The philosophy is simple: "There were years when most of the money we made went right back into the company. We invested in equipment and all the things necessary to grow." And they paid particular attention to the workforce. "We wanted top-notch people in both skilled and unskilled jobs," he said. "We got them right here. We created more jobs and tried to fill them close to home. We wanted to do our part to make sure that we prospered, our employees prospered, and the city prospered." Giving back to the community, Simon said, seems right. The company supports recreation centers and athletic teams in its neighborhood, but its generosity reaches beyond, as the gifts in Fishtown show. "I consider the entire city my community," he said. Once word gets out, the Simons might find themselves swamped with calls for help. "Maybe," Simon said with a shrug. "That's all right." Lucia Herndon's e-mail address is [lherndon@phillynews.com](mailto:lherndon@phillynews.com).

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