

# CHRONIC ACTS OF KINDNESS

## Chronic Tacos Partners with Feed the People to Give Back to Vancouver's Homeless Population

Combatting hunger has always been important to Chronic Tacos, a Mexican quick-service restaurant headquartered in California. Recently, the franchise's 30 U.S. locations partnered with No Kid Hungry, a charity that seeks to end child hunger in America. Since expanding into British Columbia in 2012, the company has been looking for similar charities to support in Canada.

That's why when Timika Hogan, General Manager of the franchise's Broadway location in Vancouver, approached the owners about partnering with her friend's charity, Feed the People, they were eager to get on board.

"No Kid Hungry is only in the U.S. so we thought it would be good to do something in Canada," says Dan Mohammed, Vice President, Chronic Tacos. Feed the People, a charity that partners with local businesses in Vancouver to provide food and clothing to those in need, seemed like a perfect fit.

The two organizations teamed up this past September to prepare and hand out over 500 free burritos, as well as bananas and coffee, in downtown Vancouver. The event kicked off at Chronic Tacos' Broadway location, then moved to Pigeon Park in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside neighbourhood, where volunteers were on-site to hand out food. The event also featured live entertainment, including a mariachi band.

"We had a big line-up of people waiting," Mohammed describes. He says staff and volunteers appreciated the opportunity to participate in the event. "Everybody was happy to be involved. It's easy to donate money but in this case, people were actually preparing the food and then had a chance to go downtown to the Eastside, where there's a big homelessness problem, and hand out the food. It was just a nice thing to do."

With one successful event complete, Mohammed says Chronic Tacos is eager to continue their partnership with Feed the People. "It's definitely something we would do at this location again and also reach out to our franchisees to see if they would want to participate."



Over 500 burritos were created at Chronic Tacos and then given out to those in need in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

"Without the support of businesses like Chronic Tacos, Feed the People could not happen," says Ariel Swan, who founded the charity three years ago. "We aim to supply a meal to those in need in the community and inspire others to do the same in a fun and interactive setting. Chronic Tacos supplied the food, a great place to do it, entertainment, and help promoting the event. As a result, we were able to make 500 burritos and give them out with warm coffee and bananas on the streets of our city to those in need."

As Chronic Tacos continues to seek out charities to partner with at the corporate level, Mohammed says the company's franchisees have their own local charities that they support throughout the year. "Everybody reaches out to different charities within their communities," he explains. "We really encourage them to give back on a community level."

In addition to fundraising throughout the year, Chronic Tacos' franchisees also support local charities each time they open a new location by donating a percentage of the grand opening event's sales. Charities they've worked with include Covenant House, Skate for a Cause and Hilarity for Charity. "As we grow, we'll look to reach out to other charities," says Mohammed. "Anything food-related would be a good fit."

Chronic Tacos' community involvement is based on a simple belief that with success comes responsibility. "We're having success as a company so we believe in giving back," says Mohammed. So, as Chronic Tacos expands across British Columbia and eventually all of Canada, so too will its charitable initiatives. 🍌