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**GRAND CASINO MILLE LACS VOLUNTEERS ASSIST CONFIDENCE
LEARNING CENTER
WITH OUTDOOR AUCTION**

BRAINERD, Minn. – Twenty-one Grand Casino Mille Lacs Associates visited the Confidence Learning Center on September 16 to assist in the preparation of its annual fundraising auction through the casino’s fifth annual Lend a Hand program.

The Lend a Hand program took a different approach this year. A program that normally awards one-day home makeovers to individuals or families who meet criteria based on income, physical limitations, medical issues, and other challenges, deployed its resources to assist a local organization that, in turn, helps a broader reach of people.

“These days, local organizations’ resources are limited, and yet the need for philanthropic support has increased,” said Lon Burr, vice president of facilities for Grand Casino Mille Lacs. “We chose the Confidence Learning Center based on its needs and long history of building confidence and self-worth for deserving people. Each year, the organization helps more than 12,000 individuals – and that was the broader reach we were searching for.”

On Saturday, September 19, the Confidence Learning Center will host its annual outdoor auction. Proceeds from that fundraiser will go to benefit the year-round programs that are offered to campers.

“What normally takes our staff several days and the need to temporarily close down the camp was accomplished in six hours, thanks to volunteers from the Lend a Hand program at Grand Casino Mille Lacs,” said Jeff Olson, executive director for the Confidence Learning Center. “Our camp is grateful for the help from these volunteers today.”

Half of the Lend a Hand volunteers spent their day setting up and organizing the auction, cleaning items, and detailing cars, while the rest of the volunteers hauled items and cleaned up the storage units for next year’s auction.

Not only did the casino Associates donate their time, but the Lend a Hand volunteers brought more than 400 in-kind donation items with them to the Confidence Learning Center. The donations were gathered as part of a “stuff the truck” drive that was held at Grand Casino Mille Lacs on Tuesday, September 15. The casino challenged its Associates and Guests to help stuff the truck full of in-kind donations. The response was overwhelming.

The casino received valuable assistance and donations from local companies including Jim's Mille Lacs Disposal, Inc., Hillyard, Advantage/Staples/Eagle Rock, Cole Paper, Dalco Enterprises, Inc., and Grand Casino Mille Lacs' own facilities, food and beverage, marketing, and security departments.

“We are proud to team with the Confidence Learning Center as the organization teaches, nourishes, motivates and inspires people,” said Burr. “Now it can continue to ‘lend a hand’ to the many individuals it helps each year. We are grateful for the chance to give back and for the generous donations from our local community.”

The Lend a Hand committee includes the following Grand Casino Mille Lacs Associates: Arlene Bently, Lon Burr, Corey Wind, Todd Christopherson, Juliet Curtis, Jim Hutchinson, Ray Kegg, and Sarah Barten.

Additional Associates who volunteered their time to help the Confidence Learning Center included: Leo Roufs, Art Johnson, Steve Meredith, Darwin Hatch, Robinn Bruckhoff, George Dambowy, Brian Barnett, Greg Kellerman, Collin Tenbruin, Marlon Hirdler, Ernie Hanson, Sandy Lenzen, Teresa Wind, Deb Steiner, and Jim Meister.

About Grand Casino Mille Lacs

Grand Casino Mille Lacs and Grand Casino Hinckley, which are owned by the Corporate Commission of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians, are two of Minnesota's premier entertainment facilities, offering gaming, accommodations, dining, conference and banquet facilities, live entertainment, and the Grand Harmony Spa at Grand Casino Hinckley.

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