Partners in Philanthropy – Blackbaud and the Charleston Battery

Blackbaud's HQ operation and the Charleston Battery professional soccer team share more than a parking lot. Founded by the same person, the two organizations have a shared passion for giving back. Although our shared history began in 1996 — when Tony Bakker founded the pro team while serving as CEO of the growing technology company — the relationship more recently took on a new focus. In 2010, Blackbaud and the Charleston Battery joined forces as philanthropy partners, committing to use the combined presence of their brands to champion local nonprofits.

The mainstay of the partnership is the Blackbaud Nonprofit of the Match, which highlights a different community organization at each home game. Blackbaud and the Charleston Battery collaborate to select the nonprofits that will be featured, working together before the season begins to map out a schedule. The fun begins when we call ask the organizations to join us in celebrating their work in front of what could be thousands of loyal fans.

Being the Blackbaud Nonprofit of the Match comes with some great benefits:

- Free tickets to the game
- Public service announcements before, during, and after the game
- A promotional stand within the stadium
- An ad on the front page of the match program
- An on-field photo and highlight during half-time

It's tremendous fun to meet representatives from the nonprofits who do such good work in our local community and to help them broaden their reach, potentially securing new volunteers, advocates and donors.

"Our philanthropy partnership with Blackbaud has become a vital part of the Charleston Battery game-day experience. Over the course of our 20-year history, we have always tried to be fully invested in our community. This partnership has allowed us to increase our involvement with local nonprofits and acknowledge their work in front of our fans. We look forward to continuing the partnership and bringing as much exposure as possible to many more philanthropic groups," said Andrew Bell, president of the Charleston Battery.

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— Andrew Bell,
President,
Charleston Battery

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Nonprofits featured in 2012 included — Goodwill Industries of Lower South Carolina, Crisis Ministries, Carolina Youth Development Center, Journey House, Share Our Suzy, Make-A-Wish Foundation of SC, the Sustainability Institute, Toys for Tots, SC Advocates for Epilepsy, Operation R&R Charleston, Trident Area Agency on Aging, South Carolina Special Olympics and Darkness to Light.

"Being selected as the Nonprofit of the Match was such a blessing for Operation R&R Charleston," said Cassie Jaffe, an Operation R&R Charleston board member. "We are a relatively new organization in the Charleston area, and the Battery game was the perfect venue to connect with the community and increase awareness of our program. We made so many valuable connections and had more than 25 people sign up to volunteer. The support we received from the Battery fans was overwhelming and encouraging. We really can't thank Blackbaud enough for selecting us for this honor. Our night as the Nonprofit of the Match was a huge success, with a direct impact toward achieving our mission of helping military families reconnect after a deployment. Thank you!"

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