PHILADELPHIA, PA (November 1, 2018) — Project HOME, the City of Philadelphia and SEPTA held the second benefit for Hub of Hope at Loews Philadelphia Hotel today. The charitable event gathered hundreds of community and business leaders to support Project HOME, the Hub of Hope and a new initiative to provide a safe haven and beds for those suffering with opioid use disorder and homelessness.

In 2017, the more than $864,000 contributed by many generous local companies, organizations and individuals funded the start-up costs for the 11,000-square-foot permanent Hub of Hope in the Center City sub-concourse, as well as upgrades to bathroom and personal care facilities at several local service organizations.

“SEPTA’s business is operating buses, trains and trolleys. But our real mission is moving people and working to improve the quality of life in the communities we serve,” said SEPTA Chairman Pasquale T. Deon, Sr. “The shared challenges and opportunities of the City, the region and our customers have one thing in common – they are made better when we work together. SEPTA and our Board are proud to support the Hub of Hope to help those struggling with homelessness.”

The Hub of Hope, which is operated by Project HOME and provides a gateway to vital services and care for Philadelphia’s homeless, is the first-of-its-kind engagement center for the homeless created via a partnership with a social services agency, a transportation authority and a municipality. In the first six months of operation, the Hub of Hope touched over 2,500 different people through more than 41,000 visits. The Hub of Hope has provided over 1,200 case management visits and facilitated over 1,240 placements into shelters, treatment, safe havens, and other locations. Each day, 350-to-400 people find comfort, care and dignity in the showers, loads of laundry, food and health services available at the Hub of Hope, and dinner is being served on weekends and expanding to five nights a week.

“Solving the complex problems of homelessness and hunger in our city requires collaboration between government, community organizations and businesses. The Hub of Hope is the perfect example of that kind of partnership,” said Philadelphia Mayor James Kenney. “I am proud of what has been accomplished so far and I hope that other institutions will follow SEPTA’s lead so we can help even more people in the years ahead.”

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The 2018 benefit supports the mission of the Hub of Hope. The funds raised will also assist with supportive and transitional housing for homeless individuals who are ready for recovery.

“We know that the rise in opioid addiction is one of the many factors that has contributed to homelessness,” said SEPTA General Manager Jeffrey Knueppel. “This epidemic has impacted SEPTA and its customers, too. We believe that the services provided by this new initiative will help connect those in need with the assistance necessary to break the cycle of addiction and homelessness.”

“We are proud to partner with SEPTA, Project HOME and the City of Philadelphia on Hub of Hope to make a difference in the lives of all citizens through this wonderful resource for our City,” said David Simonetti Sr., Director of Store Operations for Wawa. “We are providing not only coffee to those who come to Hub of Hope but are committed to aiding our partners to address this complex issue. Our purpose of fulfilling lives is about more than just filling orders in our stores – it’s about supporting and improving the communities we serve.”

“We are deeply grateful for the leadership of SEPTA, the City of Philadelphia, Wawa and Bank of America for their willingness to stand in the gap for the most vulnerable among us,” said Sister Mary Scullion, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Project HOME. “With the generosity and cooperation of our partners, we have been able to create critical resources, like the Hub of Hope and our newest initiative, which will enable Hub of Hope visitors to effectively transition into long-term emergency housing and recovery. We are deeply grateful to SEPTA for helping to launch this initiative and provide critical funding through this benefit.”

For more information about Project HOME and the Hub of Hope, visit https://projecthome.org/hubofhope.