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**There's No Place like the H.O.M.E. Page Café**  
*Project H.O.M.E., Free Library of Philadelphia, Bank of America,  
Open Internet Café with a Social Mission*

PHILADELPHIA, PA, (April 16, 2008) – *Project H.O.M.E.*, *The Free Library of Philadelphia*, and *Bank of America* today announced that they will be holding a grand opening celebration for the H.O.M.E. Page Café, a wireless internet café located in the lobby of the Free Library's Central Branch on 1901 Vine Street in Philadelphia. The H.O.M.E. Page Café is an innovative collaboration that provides employment for formerly homeless individuals and teen students in Project H.O.M.E.'s Harold A. Honickman Youth Entrepreneur Program. Starbucks will provide coffee for the Café, Project H.O.M.E.'s Back Home Café and Catering will offer lunch food, and Metropolitan Bakery will supply baked goods and train employees, helping them to increase their skills. The overall mission of the Café is to enable individuals to improve their self esteem and break the cycle of homelessness and poverty. The Café is financed in part by a \$200,000 grant from the Bank of America Charitable Foundation.

On Wednesday April 16, 2008 at 10:30 AM in the lobby of the free library, several special guests will kick off the grand opening celebration by saying a few words about the importance of the café. Guests will include:

- Mayor Michael Nutter
- Sister Mary Scullion, Executive Director and Co-Founder, Project H.O.M.E.
- William R. Sasso, Esq., Chairman of the Board, Free Library of Philadelphia
- Linda Johnson, Chief Executive Officer, Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation
- Thomas C. Woodward, President, Bank of America Pennsylvania
- Wendy Born, Owner, Metropolitan Bakery
- Harold A. Honickman, Chairman of the Board, Pepsi Cola and Nat'l Brand Bev. Ltd.
- Peak Johnson, Teen Participant in the Harold A. Honickman Entrepreneur Program

- Ronald Wimes, H.O.M.E. Page Café Host and Resident of Project H.O.M.E.

At the conclusion of these opening remarks, the ceremony will move to the front of the café, where the kick-off speakers will join in the ceremonial ribbon cutting, officially marking the opening of the café. All attendees will then be invited to sample the coffee, baked goods sandwiches and salads that the café provides.

“The H.O.M.E. Page Café provides more than a place to enjoy wonderful food and free wireless. It provides a solution to a national crisis,” said Sister Mary Scullion, Executive Director and Co-Founder of Project H.O.M.E. “While libraries throughout the nation are wrestling with ways to bar homeless persons who use their facilities for safe havens and washrooms during the daylight hours, we are providing solutions to homelessness through partnerships like this one. A critical piece of the solution is providing meaningful employment opportunities to men and women who are breaking the cycle of homelessness.”

The H.O.M.E. Page Café provides formerly homeless men and women and teenagers with job skills to ease their transition to the workforce. The Café creates job opportunities for those who are seeking to change their path by providing for themselves and their families.

Ronald Wimes, a full time employee of the H.O.M.E. Page Café, feels the café has helped him to transform his life. “I have been clean and sober for over a year,” said Ronald. “The H.O.M.E. Page Café is a real opportunity for me to continue to turn my life around.”

The resources of the Free Library of Philadelphia have been available to all at no cost since its doors first opened more than 100 years ago. We are so pleased this new collaboration will open more doors for formerly homeless Philadelphians, providing unique employment opportunities for those who most need them,” said Linda Johnson, CEO of the Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation. “We are excited to herald a new era at Parkway Central – an era of possibilities for our more than one million annual customers and the H.O.M.E. Page Café staff.”

The café furthers the library’s efforts to offer its patrons the latest technology, fitted with four computer stations and space for laptops. The entire café affords free wireless service for users with a library card.

Café hours are Monday through Saturday, 8:30am-5:00pm and Sunday 1:00-5:00pm.

#### **ABOUT PROJECT H.O.M.E:**

*Since 1989, Project H.O.M.E. has helped more than 8,000 people break the cycle of homelessness and poverty by providing a continuum of care that includes street outreach, supportive housing and comprehensive services that focus on health care, education and employment. We also work to prevent homelessness and poverty through comprehensive neighborhood revitalization in North Philadelphia. These efforts include the renovation of vacant or deteriorated houses which are then sold to first-time homebuyers, economic reinvestment along the Ridge Avenue Corridor, greening of vacant lots, adult and youth education and enrichment programs at the Honickman Learning Center and Comcast Technology Labs and community-based health care services. For more information go to [www.projecthome.org](http://www.projecthome.org)*

#### **About the Free Library**

*The Free Library of Philadelphia system consists of 49 branches, three regional libraries, the Central Library on the Parkway, and the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. With more than six million visits annually, the Free Library is one of the most widely-used educational and cultural institutions in Philadelphia.*

#### **Bank of America Corporate Philanthropy**

*Building on a long-standing tradition of investing in the communities it serves, Bank of America is in its fourth year of achieving an unprecedented 10-year goal to donate \$1.5 billion to nonprofit organizations engaged in improving the health and vitality of their neighborhoods. Funded by Bank of America, the Bank of America Charitable Foundation will give more than \$225 million in 2008, making the bank the most generous financial institution in the world and the second largest donor of all U.S. corporations in cash contributions. Bank of America approaches giving through a national strategy called "neighborhood excellence" under which it works with local leaders to identify and meet the most pressing needs of individual communities. Through Team Bank of America, bank associate volunteers contributed more than 650,000 hours in 2007 to enhance the quality of life in their communities nationwide. For more information about Bank of America Corporate Philanthropy, please visit [www.bankofamerica.com/foundation](http://www.bankofamerica.com/foundation).*

#### **About Metropolitan Bakery**

*After almost 15 years of baking, Wendy Smith Born and James Barrett's Metropolitan Bakery remains one of Philadelphia's best loved institutions. Not only do they give us old-world-style breads with intense flavor, crackling crusts and complex texture, the Bakery also works to combat poverty and hunger through job training programs, community service and donations. Metropolitan baked goods are available online, in four neighborhood shops, and in 100 of the area's best gourmet markets and restaurants (including Lacroix, White Dog Café, Striped Bass, and the new Rae). Visit [www.metropolitanbakery.com](http://www.metropolitanbakery.com) or call 1.877.41.BREAD for more information.*

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