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Hill Realty helps teen center

'Honor' parking system provides \$35,000 gift

By Nicole Young
THE TENNESSEAN

The H.G. Hill Realty Co. recently presented \$35,000 to the Frist Teen Center at Green Hills YMCA, which serves area teenagers — including those with special needs.

Green Hills YMCA officials said the gift was the largest annual support gift to their facility to date.



COURTESY OF JESSICA FAIN
Jimmy Granbery, CEO of H.G. Hill Realty Co., and Jackson Blake, president of the Green Hills Family YMCA Leaders Club, which meets in the Frist Teen Center, unveil H.G. Hill Co.'s donation check for \$35,000.

H.G. Hill Realty Co. Chief Executive Officer Jimmy Granbery said the funds are proceeds from parking meters in about 60 selected parking spaces at Hill Center. The meters were installed along the main roadway through the Hill Center in February. More were installed in select parking lots in July. The rate for parking is \$2 per hour, and money from the meters was collected from February to November.

The Hill Center does not police the meters or hand out tickets for customers who don't pay.

"This is more or less an honor system," said Brian Harkness, a spokesman for H.G. Hill. "We ask for donations for these premium spots, and so far people have complied."

Granbery said the meters were originally installed to create turnover in parking spaces.

"What began as a functional strategy to ... calm traffic flow and provide a safer environment for pedestrians has become an exciting, positive, collaborative effort among our company and Hill Center tenants and patrons to raise funds and generate exposure for an organization that is providing vitally important benefits to our community," he said.

Harkness said the money was always earmarked for charity.

"The YMCA was picked initially because of the relationship between it and our company," he added.

According to Carol Carter, executive director of the Green Hills YMCA, H.G. Hill has a long history of philanthropic giving to the YMCA of Middle Tennessee.

"Over 40 years ago, they gave the YMCA the land for the Green Hills YMCA and have continued this wonderful support," she said. "This type of community partnership is vital to the success of our young people and our community."

Carter said the donation would be used to provide programs for youth and teens as well as provide scholarships for young people who cannot afford to be members of the YMCA Teen Center.

The money will also be used to provide scholarships for young people to go to Leaders School and Values Conference, both in North Carolina.

"We were surprised and thrilled by the amount" donated, she said. "The greatest thing that one can do for our future is to bless the life of a young person. This gift will provide young people in our community of all races, abilities, religions and economic background a fun, safe place to learn, grow and develop to be great leaders of our community."

The Frist Teen Center at the Green Hills YMCA offers music lessons for teens and a variety of after-school activities.

Harkness said donations in the parking meters at the Hill Center are continuing to come in. He said officials have not indicated which charities would be benefited in the future.

"Right now, we're still collecting for the YMCA," he said. "I know that no matter what the company wants to keep this money in the Green Hills neighborhood."
