



CHARITABLE EFFORTS REACH INTO BALTIMORE & BEYOND

People who work at the Port of Baltimore often praise the close-knit "Port Family." Being part of that family goes beyond attending the occasional crab feast or Christmas party; it often involves pulling together and reaching out to provide care to others.

"I believe it is the duty of every individual to help less-fortunate people to grow and develop," said Capt. Lorenzo Di Casagrande, Vice President of Mediterranean Shipping Company (USA) Inc., Baltimore. "That example should be passed on to the younger generations."

Di Casagrande's involvement with charities started when he was a ship's officer "watching the suffering and misery worldwide." He recalled donating condensed and evaporated milk from his ships when he was in India, Indonesia and other countries. "It was the 1960s, when very hungry people, some of them just children, boarded the ships in search of a little food," Di Casagrande said. "Today we see people even in rich countries who need help and we must do our best to assist."

Some of Di Casagrande's efforts have gone into Hands Across America and the Italy-America Chamber of Commerce of Washington DC & Baltimore, MD, Inc., which recently sponsored an event to raise funds for the Maritime Industries Academy, an inner-city public high school.

Di Casagrande also partners often with Mark Montgomery, Senior Vice President of East Coast Operations for Ports America, Inc., and Michael Angelos, president of the Steamship Trade Association of Baltimore, Inc. (STA). The three together have raised approximately \$200,000 for various charities.

Montgomery recalled his early involvement with charitable efforts. "After a heart attack 11 years ago, I began raising money for (prevention of) heart disease," he said, noting that annual fund-raising efforts have grown to the point that more than \$50,000 was raised this past year.

In 2006, Montgomery and Angelos founded the Steamship Trade Association of Baltimore Charitable Legacy, Inc., after a young female Ports America staff member was stricken with a rare form of cancer. The Port community responded to start a college

fund for the woman's two surviving daughters after her death.

The Charitable Legacy group eventually joined forces with Di Casagrande through the Italy-America Chamber "to add causes of youth groups, the Baltimore City maritime academy and other well-needed groups," Montgomery said. One culmination of their efforts was sponsorship of a food and toy drive for struggling

families in communities surrounding the Port. "It has been a pleasure to see our efforts with MSC and the STA legacy trust fund grow and gain maritime community support," Montgomery said.


The generosity and commitment of the Ports America staff in Baltimore has helped advance the work of several agencies combating social issues affecting the community as a whole, including domestic violence and poverty.

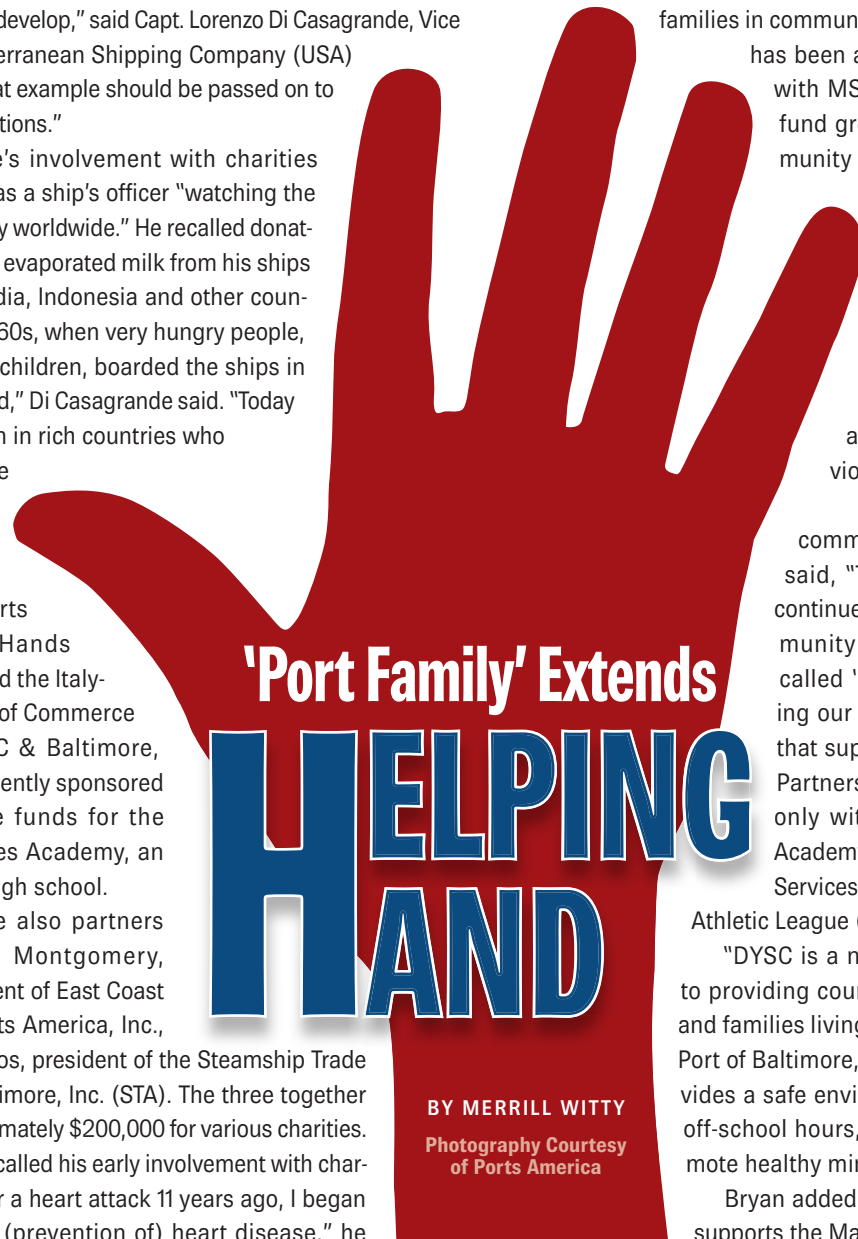
Linda Bryan, Ports America's community outreach coordinator, said, "The Baltimore location will continue its commitment to the community through a new campaign called 'Community Counts,' focusing our efforts on helping agencies that support children and families." Partnerships have been formed not only with the Maritime Industries Academy, but also the Dundalk Youth Services Center (DYSC) and the Police Athletic League (PAL).

"DYSC is a non-profit agency dedicated to providing counseling services to children and families living in communities around the Port of Baltimore," Bryan explained. "PAL provides a safe environment for children during off-school hours, offering activities that promote healthy minds and bodies."

Bryan added that one way Ports America supports the Maritime Industries Academy is by sponsoring an intern, Kenjah Henry, through

the Urban Alliance Foundation, Inc., a mentoring program being piloted in the school in the 2008-2009 academic year.

Meanwhile, the Charitable Legacy's efforts continue to grow. "We look forward to another successful year," Montgomery said. 



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