

For Immediate Release:

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Builders Honor Paul Blanco as Philanthropist of the Year

Shelton, Ct. [January 22, 2008]-The Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Fairfield County honored Paul Blanco, Managing Director of Barnum Financial Group, MetLife's no. one sales office, as its 2007 Philanthropist of the Year. Each year the Association's Vision Fund recognizes those who have demonstrated extraordinary generosity to the community.

When Extreme Makeover: Home Edition came to Connecticut to help a local family with a new home, it was Blanco, on behalf of MetLife Bank, that offered to pay the remaining mortgage. "Achieving the American Dream is part of our philanthropic goals," said Blanco, and "what better way to accomplish this for a family than by helping them start fresh without home debt?"

Blanco encourages his 375 employees to get involved in the firm's charitable events. Last year the firm raised over \$15,000 and purchased 300 bikes and helmets and gave them to needy children in Bridgeport, the Valley and Hartford. The firm supports Junior Achievement, Toys for Tots, Kaboom, United Way, Bridgeport and Shoreline YMCAs, and holds several fundraising events throughout the year that supports local non-profit organizations.

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