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Scottsdale-based Paradise Bakery & Café introduces special line of merchandise to aid local homeless, neglected and abused children

In an effort to help bring the healing power of the arts to Arizona's abused and neglected children, **Paradise Bakery & Café (PB&C)** has begun offering a special line of bottled water and other merchandise for sale in its Valley stores.

The merchandise is part of an innovative new partnership between the Scottsdale-based bakery cafe chain and local non-profit organization **Free Arts of Arizona** called **"Connecting for Kids."**

Under the partnership, PB&C will donate a portion of the profits of the bottled water and 100% of the proceeds of specially designed canvas bags to Free Arts to help bring creative arts to children in local group homes, treatment centers and shelters. Holiday cards, designed by Free Arts children, are also on sale.

Other PB&C and Free Arts of Arizona "Connecting for Kids" merchandise will be offered throughout the year.

"Arizona is our home," said PB&C President David Birzon. "Creativity has been paramount to our success. We want to help share the joy that comes from self-expression with children who can benefit the most."

"Paradise Bakery & Café is a company that really cares about the community and wants to give back," said Free Arts of Arizona Executive Director Stephanie Small. "The generosity Paradise has shown will bring the healing effects of the arts to many, many children in the Valley."

An estimated 12,000 children live in group homes and shelters in Maricopa County alone.

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Paradise and Free Arts Connect for Kids

The “Connecting for Children” bottled water is for sale at all Paradise Bakery and Café locations. It will sell for \$1.75.

Holiday greeting cards featuring children’s art are for sale exclusively at Paradise Bakery & Café under the partnership. The cost is \$9.95 for 12 cards with 100 percent of the sale going to Free Arts of Arizona.

Canvas bags, featuring drawings created by Free Arts children, will be offered in stores beginning next week for \$10.00.

The merchandise will be offered in all Valley stores except the airport.

About Paradise Bakery & Café

Paradise Bakery & Café, one of the pioneers of the fast-casual, bakery/café segment, was founded in 1976 in Long Beach, California. Two of the founders, CEO Dan Patterson and Executive Vice President Mark Patterson, are still with the company today.

The company has been headquartered in Scottsdale since 1988. It is renowned for its fresh menu. Paradise Bakery & Café operates 60 cafes in ten states, including 26 in Arizona. Its menu items are overseen by renowned chef Gregory Casale who gained recognition as executive chef for numerous four and five star restaurants before joining Paradise Bakery & Café two years ago.

Outside its home state, Paradise operates stores in Aspen, Boston, California, Colorado Dallas, Indiana, Omaha, Portland, Utah, and Vancouver, Washington among other markets. The popular restaurants include street locations, office buildings, airports and major mall locations. More information: www.paradisebakery.com.

About Free Arts of Arizona

Free Arts of Arizona is a nonprofit organization with a mission to spark the creative spirit of abused, homeless and at-risk children and their families to inspire and transform their lives through the power of artistic expression. Since 1993, Free Arts of Arizona’s Volunteer Mentors have touched the lives of almost 50,000 young people helping them build self-esteem, improve social skills, renew trust and learn to express emotions in a positive way through the healing effects of the creative arts. For more information: www.freeartsaz.org

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