

# FURNITURE TODAY

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INDUSTRY NEWS

## DFB celebrates Freed's donations

BY THOMAS LESTER

DALLAS — As the Dallas Furniture Bank celebrated Freed's Homefurnishings' major donations in 2013, it got 2014 off to a great start.

Last month, the DFB held its ninth annual Chairity Friendraiser luncheon at the historic Belo Mansion with keynote speaker Roger Staubach and special guests Emmitt and Pat Smith. Staubach and Emmitt Smith were Hall of Fame players for the NFL's Dallas Cowboys.

Howard and Debbie Freed of Freed's were honored for their 41 bulk donations of furniture, which helped 53 families in the Dallas-Fort Worth area at a cost savings of around \$25,000 to the furniture bank.

As of late February, donations from the DFB luncheon had totaled around \$115,000 with more to come.

"I'm humbled and grateful for the support that was given that day. We're all about helping families and I think we're on our way to continue to serve and to be able to serve more families with leverage to help," said Aliah Henry, executive director of the Dallas Furniture Bank.

Henry said 384 guests, many of whom were representing furniture retailers or manufacturers, attended the luncheon and heard the DFB's message. She said the Freed's made it a point to get involved with the furniture bank and to spread the word to manufacturers.

"What Howard was able to do was bring it out in the forefront to the manufacturers that it is a win-win," she said. "Just the whole marketing and explanation of what a furniture bank does, that was what they were able to do; be cheerleaders and advocates of our mission work, and to get manufacturers excited about giving back."

Staubach spoke about the importance of finding balance in life that includes giving back.

"He talked about giving in the community and being able to pay it forward. It was interesting to see on Facebook that people had pulled that quote and that's what resonated with our guests, which was really exciting," Henry said.

Randy Lavercombe, senior marketing specialist for Ashley's stationary upholstery and leather upholstery division and a member of the DFB board of directors, said many in the industry offered to assist the bank after hearing of the Freed's altruism.

"The day brought awareness to the furniture community in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Not only were we honoring (Freed's Homefurnishings) but other retailers were there and asked to help out with donations and helping in different events," Lavercombe said. "I'm guessing we had more than 50 manufacturers' sales reps in the room. There's a new spirit of helping and people wanting to give their time and help find furniture for people in need."



Hall of Fame quarterback Roger Staubach, left, joined Debbie and Howard Freed of Freed's Homefurnishings during the Dallas Furniture Bank's ninth annual charity luncheon. The Freed's were recognized for their donations of furniture.