

Toyota and Babson College Partner with the Greater Boston Food Bank to Provide Students with Real World Experience and Help Deliver More Food Faster

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Wellesley, Mass. (May 21, 2014) – Toyota and Babson College’s [Social Innovation Lab](#) today announced they have partnered with [The Greater Boston Food Bank](#) (GBFB) to help expedite the distribution of food to those in need. The partnership aims to enhance productivity, and inventory control practices at GBFB while teaching Babson students a real-world lesson in how Toyota’s manufacturing know-how can enhance the work of nonprofits.

Babson faculty have developed curriculum that allows students working with GBFB’s operations experts to bring Toyota’s manufacturing know-how, also known as the Toyota Production System (TPS), into the nonprofit sector. The students worked on a specific GBFB service called the Marketplace. A small food mart within GBFB’s 117,000 square foot warehouse and distribution center, the Marketplace allows member agencies from 190 eastern Massachusetts cities and towns to obtain fresh food prior to picking up their regular

weekly order. A Babson [Management Consulting Field Experience](#) (MCFE) Pilot Team of four to five undergraduate students, supported by an MBA student and [Professor Wiljeana Glover](#), worked this spring with GBFB's Warehouse and Distribution experts and the Toyota team on an ongoing review of systems, policies and practices.

Project Focus and Impact

The GBFB Marketplace exists solely as a vehicle for placing short-dated and/or perishable foods, including produce, dairy and lean meats, quickly and efficiently into the hands of its 550 agency partners, so that clients have access to the freshest food possible. GBFB's Inventory, Warehousing and Distribution groups have made improvements over the past two years to increase the efficiency of Marketplace processes and have a state-of-the-art inventory system that supports its operations. To achieve GBFB's strategic objective of providing one meal a day to those in need in eastern Massachusetts, more food must be acquired and distributed to the 550 partner agencies within GBFB's service area.

"We are committed to feeding those who don't know if or when their next meal is coming, and the numbers are growing," said Greater Boston Food Bank's President and CEO Catherine D'Amato. "Last year alone we distributed 48-million pounds of food to the senior citizens, working adults, children, college students and veterans in our service area. Purchasing, collecting and distributing food on such a large scale is always a challenge and our work with Babson College and Toyota will help us make our practices as streamlined and cost-effective as possible."

"The future of business education is being designed by both higher education and the innovations and processes of world class companies willing to co-create curriculum that is real, relevant and immediately impactful. Our students are honored to be part of a curriculum that is so dynamic. They love working on real-world problems and being exposed to the methodologies of a world class company like Toyota that has influenced so many organizations with its production processes for decades," said Babson Professor Wiljeana Glover.

"Our growing partnership with Babson College allows us to extend our reach of helping nonprofits and their ability to do good," said Mike Goss, vice president of external affairs for Toyota Motor Engineering & Manufacturing North America, Inc. "We share what we know so others can benefit from it and in this case we have the opportunity to do so collaboratively with eager future leaders."

"This program brings Babson students into a building that is on par with facilities owned and managed by major grocery store chains and manufacturers. We hope that working in a real world setting has enhanced their experience," said D'Amato.

For more than 20 years, Toyota has shared its manufacturing knowledge with nonprofits and other manufacturers to help them improve their operations, stay competitive and help more people in need.

Because much of the food reaching the Marketplace is often perishable, GBFB will encourage the Babson MCFE team to use operational skills and entrepreneurial thinking and action to explore and test ideas for improvement, using analysis to support the testing process. At the end of the project, Babson faculty anticipate at least a test version to be implemented and assessment tools put in place to support Food Bank staff in monitoring these improvements over time.

14-Week Learn by Doing Undergraduate Course on Lean

Target Audience: Third- and fourth-year undergraduate students with an interest in operations and/or nonprofit organizations.

Approach: Learn by doing. Each course session will give feedback on students' most recent implementation attempts and provide instruction on the next tasks. Assessment factors include teamwork, team implementation of TPS, individual continuous improvement implementation, sponsor evaluations and final presentation.

Logistics: The fourteen-week, project-based elective course will include weekly in-class activities as well as weekly site visits. The course will be capped at 20 students.

About the Partnership

In 2010, Toyota provided funding to Babson College, the #1 School in Entrepreneurship, located in Wellesley, Massachusetts, to create The Babson Social Innovation Lab, an "action tank" that brings together a global, interdisciplinary community of students, mentors and business partners dedicated to building a better world.

The Lab is designed to bring Babson's methodology of Entrepreneurial Thought & Action® (ET&A) and TPS together as a powerful collaborative force in addressing societal dilemmas and assisting the social sector in creating greater economic and social impact.