

editor: Leigh Belz

GIVING BACK

Hours Add Up to Free Minutes

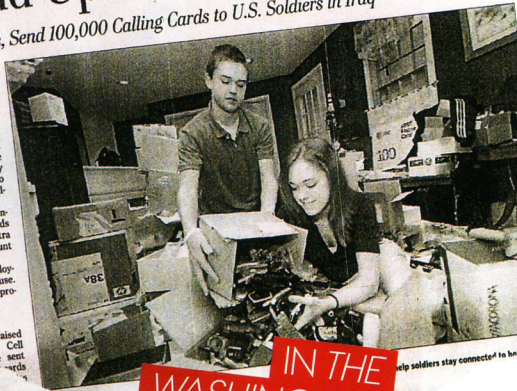
Teens Collect Cellphones, Send 100,000 Calling Cards to U.S. Soldiers in Iraq

How much money is in your piggy bank? Would you give it away to someone who needed it? Brittany and Robbie Bergquist did. They turned \$21 and an idea into a million-dollar charity.

One night three years ago, Brittany and Robbie were watching the news at home in Norwell, Massachusetts. The kids, then 13 and 12, heard a story about an American soldier in Iraq who was struggling to pay his \$8,000 cell-phone bill.

They were surprised that the government didn't help him. So the kids pooled their money and some extra from friends and opened a bank account of \$21 to help the soldier.

Much to their surprise, bank employees jump-started our pro- Robbie, now 15.



IN THE WASHINGTON POST

call of duty

Brittany Bergquist is helping thousands of deployed U.S. soldiers phone home—for free.

CAUSE Three years ago, Brittany Bergquist, now seventeen, from Boston, and her younger brother, Robbie, saw a story on TV about a local deployed soldier who had amassed nearly \$8,000 in cell-phone charges trying to call home from Iraq. The news segment inspired them to create a charity, Cell Phones for Soldiers, to help him pay off his bill and to aid others in similar situations. The Bergquists began by organizing fund-raisers like car washes and bake sales. Then, Brittany says, they discovered that they could raise money by recycling cell phones. So the siblings started collecting old mobiles and used

the funds they generated to buy calling cards to send overseas. Now, Cell Phones for Soldiers has more than 6,000 drop-off locations across the U.S. (look for them in most AT&T stores), as well as sites in Japan, England, and Germany.

EFFECT The Bergquists have shipped more than 400,000 calling cards to soldiers abroad.

GET INVOLVED Go to cellphonesforsoldiers.com to find out where you can donate your old cell phones. —CELIA SHATZMAN



THE CHARITY'S PHONE CARD

GROUP EFFORT CELL PHONES FOR SOLDIERS HAS GAINED SUPPORT FROM AT&T, WHICH MADE A CUSTOM CALLING CARD FOR THE ORGANIZATION. PHOTOGRAPHED BY ALEX HOERNER.



Clockwise from top left: Fashion Editor, Frances Tulk-Hart; hair and makeup, Jillian Chaitin; courtesy of The Washington Post; courtesy of the Bergquist family. Details, see In This Issue.