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**Cugino Forno Partners with Samaritan Ministries to**

**Initiate Matching Program that Provides Pizza to Samaritan Guests**

Winston-Salem, NC (OCT. 7, 2024)—Cugino Forno Pizzeria, located in Winston-Salem’s downtown Bailey Power Plant, will partner with Samaritan Ministries beginning Oct. 7 for a program that will provide pizzas to Samaritan guests. Under the program, customers at Cugino Forno will be able to purchase a pizza for Samaritan, and for every pizza purchased, Cugino Forno will contribute another pizza.

Cousins Joseph, Yilmaz, and Adam, the masterminds behind Cugino Forno, discovered the inspiration for their pizzeria while on a family trip to Naples where they dined at an Italian pizzeria. After studying pizza making techniques in Naples for eight months, they brought their specialty pizzeria concept back to the United States.

“The inspiration for our new matching program with Samaritan also came from Italy, where it is a tradition for coffee shops and local bakeries to put free espresso and bread on racks for people in need to take as they walk by,” Joseph Ozbey said. “It’s a beautiful way to give back to the community because the shop owners expect nothing in return.

“While volunteering at Samaritan, I came up with the idea to do something similar to this selfless tradition in Italy by creating a matching program where restaurant customers can purchase a pizza for Samaritan, and we match it with another pizza,” he added. “Life can change in an instant for anyone, and any of us could be in a situation of need tomorrow. I hope our new matching program with Samaritan will inspire others to create their own similar programs.”

The new matching pizza program is not the first time that Cugino Forno has partnered with Samaritan Ministries. For some time, the pizzeria has supplied dinner to Samaritan guests once a month.

“After I saw firsthand the good work that Samaritan does in our community, my perspective on life changed,” Ozbey said. “Helping people in their times of need is nothing short of an act of holiness to me.”

Guests at Samaritan Ministries are enjoying the longstanding and evolving relationship with Cugino Forno.

“We're grateful to our friends at Cugino Forno for providing delicious homemade Neapolitan pizza,” Samaritan Ministries Executive Director Jan Kelly said. “Our guests really look forward to a special meal, and the kindness of others lets them know that they matter and are loved. We hope this new program will serve as an inspiration for others to consider new ways of serving.”

“I truly thank the Cugino Forno for the selflessness and ongoing support of Samaritan by contributing their time and food,” Kelly added. “Like Joseph, Mahmut, Adam, and Yilmaz, I hope this new program will serve as inspiration for others in the community to come up with their own creative ways of providing much-needed support to our guests at Samaritan.”

**About Samaritan Ministries**

Founded in 1981, Samaritan Ministries is an interdenominational, volunteer-based Christian ministry that serves Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. The Samaritan Ministries Soup Kitchen and Samaritan Inn Shelter are open 365 days and nights a year to serve people in need. Samaritan Ministries is located at 414 East Northwest Boulevard near downtown Winston-Salem. For more information about Samaritan Ministries, please visit [samaritanforsyth.org](https://www.samaritanforsyth.org/).

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