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Michael Pineda/The Ardmoreite |

Candlewood Suites General Manager Jamie Beth Smith and Sales Director Drew Butler overlook a table of jams and goodies sole during a bake sale. Proceeds went toward the InterContinental Hotel Group's Shelter in a Storm.

Michael Pineda
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Ardmore
Earlier this summer, employees of Candlewood Suites found out firsthand what the IHG (InterContinental Hotel Group's) Shelter in a Storm program could do for them. Two team members, as employees are called, suffered flood damage during storms this past summer. The Red Cross provided aid, but another flood caused further damage.

With Red Cross unable to help again, the Shelter in a Storm program stepped up and provided each team member with a \$500 gift card. The program also donated \$1,000 to the Carter County Red Cross, Candlewood Suites General Manager Jamie Beth Smith said.

"It was a saving grace," Smith said. "One of the women was a single mother."
It's often been said one good turn deserves another and it was the employees of Candlewood Suites stepping up Monday. A bake sale took place in the lobby in conjunction with a blood drive. Proceeds from the bake sale went to the Shelter in a Storm program.

"Our employees did all the baking and donated items," Smith said. "We had a team meeting and asked everyone to help." Hot dogs were also sold to help reach the goal of \$500.

The Oklahoma Blood Institute Blood Mobile was also on site from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Drew Butler, Candlewood Suite Director of Sales, said the OBI had recently announced it had a low blood supply and said the bake sale also provided a perfect opportunity to donate and help save a life.

By 1 p.m., the bake sale had raised nearly \$300 but both Butler and Smith were optimistic the afternoon surge of customers checking in would help push them over the top. "People from the banks and car dealerships have been by to buy stuff," Smith said. "We are going to do this twice a year."

And in doing to, Candlewood Suites also hopes to fulfill the mission of being a good neighbor. "It is not just about raising money, it's about being active in the community," Smith said.

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