



ADVANCE
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The Herald News

Local company takes part in missing children program

By Staff reports
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FALL RIVER - Bullock Road's **Advance Air & Heat Co.** will likely feel proud tonight in the fact that it displays magnetic posters of missing children on its service vans. **Advance Air & Heat Co.** belongs to [Mechanical Service Contractors of America](#) and is one of 200 contractors nationally to participate in program that will be recognized nationally on NBC Nightly News on Friday, July 27 at 6:30 p.m.

Project Home Again, a national missing children's program, will be profiled on the final segment of NBC Nightly News' "What Works."

According to MSCA Executive Director Barbara Dolim in a written release, **Project Home Again** began in 1998. Since then, MSCA contractors have displayed more than 6,000 posters of at least 200 different children on service vehicles across the country, and more than 130 children have been found.

The MSCA works with the [National Center for Missing and Exploited Children](#). Dolim said the posters displayed on trucks were likely not the sole factors behind the success rate, but she says, "I'd like to think the posters help."

"It has been proven in the past that the posters do make a difference," Dolim said during a telephone interview.

Advance Air & Heat Co. Inc. Operations Manager Karen DeSousa said her company began displaying the posters in 2004.

DeSousa said it was still a fledgling program three years ago but it has grown to be a success. "It seemed like such a perfect fit for us," she said, adding that the company's service vans travel all over southeastern Massachusetts and Cape Cod and park at various public locations. "It just made perfect sense to us."

DeSousa said the group usually displays the 12-inch by 18-inch posters for approximately one year or until the company receives reports that the child has been found, and then it will display a new poster. And if that is the case, the company is provided with "found stickers."

DeSousa said all 15 company vans have the posters displayed and all the technicians are happy to participate.



The magnetic posters include a photo of the child in addition to biographical and contact information, according to a written release from the MSCA.

In 2001, **Project Home Again** was the recipient of two national American Society of Association Executives awards for a "program that truly embodies the spirit of the Association's Advance America campaign," according to a news release from the MSCA.

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