



For Immediate Release

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## **Watertown Urban Mission Opens House to Celebrate Renovations**

Public Celebration and Support Shows Community's Concern for Your Neighbors in Need

Project Funded by \$2.1 Million Capital Campaign Nearly Complete, Donors Celebrated for Generosity

WATERTOWN (October 29, 2014) – The Watertown Urban Mission opened its doors to the public today to share in an Open House to celebrate the community's generous support and its love for the people served by the Mission each day.

“Every supporter, donor, volunteer and worker involved in this campaign and project will forever be remembered and honored within this building,” said Erika F. Flint, executive director. “It will serve as a constant reminder that when a community cares about everyone, big and small, first and last, great and least, great things can be accomplished.”

Renovations started in March, nearly a year ahead of schedule. The “Mission: Possible – Renew, Restore, Revitalize” campaign started with a \$200,000 pledge from the Northern New York Community Foundation and reached its goal of raising more than \$2 million with the announcement of a gift of about \$200,000 from Knorr Bremse Global Care, the parent company of New York Air Brake. The renovations funded by the campaign have made the organization's facilities safer, more efficient and better suited to serve thousands of families in need.

“Everything is in the right place now,” said Rev. Fred Garry, who with Kathy, his wife, and John & Mary Jo Deans, served as co-chair of the campaign. “When we moved here from Franklin Street about a decade ago, we were excited just to be in a building where every program could be in one place. We had space. We didn't know how to use it, but we had space and room to grow. Now, this building uses that space well now and is a safer, more dignified place to serve the community.”

Under the leadership of the campaign co-chairs, a team of more than 50 volunteers has worked for more than two years with the Mission's executive director and development office to successfully raise the funds needed. The project was overseen by Bernie Brown, former CEO of Bernier, Carr & Associates with Continental Construction of Gouverneur as the general contractor and Aubertine & Currier as architects. In addition, generous additional work was done by Empire Northeast, Hyde-Stone Mechanicals, Cota Flooring, Independent Commercial Contractors, ABJ Fire Protection and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 910.

“This is a new day for this organization, as we celebrate a remarkable achievement but with all the change you see today, your Mission remains the same,” said Fr. Steven Murray, president of the Mission's Board of Directors. “We stand united today in this capital campaign to send a great message. Like the Mission itself, the people served by your generosity can rise from humble roots to make a major impact on our community. By our collective support for this project, we send a tremendous word of encouragement to those who are struggling: This project says that this community came together for you, we want you to succeed and we are here to help you make your life better.”

The Mission: Possible capital campaign is intended provide long term sustainability and stability to the Mission, which helps individuals and families in need more than 35,000 each year.

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