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For Immediate Release

Contact Tobi Darrah, Director of Development

Watertown Urban Mission to Hold its Annual Backpack, School Supply Distribution on August 22nd, 23rd & 24th

Program Provides Back-to-School Items to Over 1,000 North Country Students Each Year

WATERTOWN (August 11, 2016) – As summer vacation is coming to a close, the first day of school is right around the corner, and so is the Watertown Urban Mission’s annual back-to-school distribution. The event will be held in the Mission’s community room, located at 247 Factory Street in Watertown. It will be held on August 22nd and 23rd from 9:00 am until 3:00 pm and on August 24th from 10:00 am to 3:00 p.m.

Last August, the Watertown Urban Mission gave backpacks filled with a starter kit of school supplies to about 1,100 students in need in order to start the new school year out right. This year’s school supply distribution is anticipated to help at least the same number of students as in 2015.

“Many students are fortunate enough to start each school year with a new backpack and school supplies, but for thousands of their peers in greater Jefferson County whose families can’t afford these supplies, the start of the school year is a struggle,” said Joanna Loomis, executive director of the Watertown Urban Mission. “During the summer many parents find themselves having to pay extra for day care, and they struggle with feeding their children breakfasts and lunches that they would normally receive during the school year. Each year, your support directly helps children in need receive backpacks with starter kits of supplies, so that they are able to walk into their first day of school ready to learn.”

This year’s distributions will be held on three consecutive days. “Over the last several years, we’ve continued to see the need for school supplies and backpacks grow. With three dates, we hope to help as many families in need as possible,” said Robert Bowen, critical needs coordinator. Parents may simply visit the Watertown Urban Mission during one of the distribution dates, and bring a form of ID or documentation for themselves and the children for whom they are picking up backpacks.

Each backpack is tailored for different age groups so that pre-K and Kindergarten students receive age appropriate supplies, while elementary, middle school and high school students receive supplies appropriate for their needs. During the distribution dates the students have the opportunity just before the school year starts to pick out their favorite backpack, giving each child supplies they need, while also maintaining a sense of dignity for the family.

There is still time to donate your backpack or other school supplies to the Critical Needs Program. Please bring them to the drop off zone behind the Watertown Urban Mission and Impossible Dream Thrift Store at 247 Factory St., Watertown, or contact the Mission offices at 315-782-8440.

Your Watertown Urban Mission News continued...

Items that you can donate to help your neighbors in need include: backpacks (new or gently used), pencils, pens, crayons, markers, highlighters, colored pencils, lined filler paper, spiral notebooks, composition notebooks, index cards, 1" binders, calculators (simple or scientific), pencil boxes, rulers, scissors, glue sticks, pocket folders and hand sanitizer. Thank you for your support.

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