

**FROM:** NEW YORK CARES [www.newyorkcares.org](http://www.newyorkcares.org)

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**NEW YORK CARES LAUNCHES ITS 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL COAT DRIVE  
WITH AN EXPANDED FOCUS ON SUPPORTING NYC COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

***Marks Distribution of Two Millionth Coat to Date***

(NEW YORK, NY - November 15, 2018) – New York Cares, the largest volunteer network in New York City, today announced the official launch of its 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Coat Drive and its expanded focus on helping students in temporary housing in NYC Community Schools. New York Cares Executive Director Gary Bagley was joined at The Island School (PS 188) in Manhattan by NYC Chief Service Officer Patricia Eng, NYPD Chief of Community Affairs Nilda Hofman, Office of Community Schools Director of Strategy and Partnerships Michael Hickey, and former NBA player Smush Parker, who attended The Island School, among other supporters. With the rise of homelessness in the NYC school system and an increase in homelessness overall, New York Cares is putting a special emphasis on these students and their families. The launch marked the distribution of the two millionth coat to date – one of tens of thousands of winter coats to go to New York City’s homeless community this year, including 10,000 for Community Schools.

“Tonight, one in 10 students will sleep in a homeless shelter or a relative’s home. The rise in recent years is unprecedented and New York Cares hopes to bring attention to this critical issue and provide the support these students and their families need,” said New York Cares Executive Director Gary Bagley. “As winter approaches and temperatures drop, it is more important than ever for us to help the countless New Yorkers who are without protection from the cold. These coats do more than keep people safe and warm – they allow them to get to their jobs each day and make a living. For the last 30 years, New York Cares has enabled thousands of volunteers to perform acts of warmth – small gestures that have an enormous impact – and will continue to do so to improve the lives of all New Yorkers.”

Along with a rise in homelessness in cities across the country, more than 114,000 New York City students across all five boroughs are homeless or in temporary housing, according to [data](#) from the New York State Education Department. This is more students than ever before, with about 69,000 students reported to have been in temporary housing in 2010. The vast majority of those students reside in doubled up living arrangements. Approximately 15,000 of those students are residing in the Department of Homeless Services shelter system on any given night. In the 2016-17 school year, 16 percent of students in Community Schools were in temporary housing, higher than the citywide rate. These students face extra challenges and vulnerabilities in the classroom and require additional support.

There are currently 245 Community Schools across the City, which are neighborhood hubs that provide services such as vision screenings, mental health supports, after-school and summer programming, family activities, and counseling. From school year 2014-15 through 2016-17, Community Schools have reduced chronic absenteeism by 9.4 percentage points (more than five times the citywide reduction of 1.8%),

and have increased graduation rates by 11.4 percentage points compared to a citywide change of 5.9 percentage points. Citywide STH chronic absenteeism has reduced 1.3 percent in that timeframe.

“The expansion of the Annual Coat Drive this year is great news for thousands of students at community schools and for homeless children and adults citywide. I want to thank New York Cares for bringing millions of coats to New Yorkers for the last thirty years,” said Mayor de Blasio. “With initiatives like these, we ensure the wellbeing of many individuals and families in need in our city, and also continue building a more inclusive and equitable future for all.”

“Community Schools integrate resources such as healthcare and afterschool into the fabric of schools so that families can get the support they need to succeed,” said Office of Community Schools Director of Strategy and Partnerships Michael Hickey. “We thank New York Cares for their generous donation and helping to remove another barrier for student success during the cold months.”

The city has committed to easing this important problem through [programs](#) like rental assistance, rehousing initiatives, and the DOE’s “Bridging the Gap” program which includes approximately 70 social workers at 43 elementary schools with high STH populations, and “Turning the Tide”— a program in partnership with the Department of Social Services, which this summer successfully placed 200 families closer to their schools.

This year, New York Cares aims to collect and distribute more than 130,000 coats, which is estimated to be only a fraction of the total need for coats that exists throughout the city. In order to meet this growing need, and to get coats to New Yorkers more quickly, New Yorkers are encouraged to text the word “COAT” to 41444 to donate \$20, or in increments of \$20, to purchase and deliver new coats. All donations are tax deductible.

From today through December 31, 2018, individuals can also donate new or gently used, freshly laundered coats at hundreds of locations throughout the five boroughs including all NYC Police Precincts, nearly two hundred Greater New York Automobile Dealers Association (GNYADA) locations, and major transit hubs. For a full list of drop-off sites and other ways to keep New Yorkers warm, visit [newyorkcares.org/coat-drive](http://newyorkcares.org/coat-drive).

### **About the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual New York Cares Coat Drive**

The New York Cares Coat Drive is one of the largest of its kind in the United States. Since 1989, New York Cares has collected and distributed more than 2 million coats, with 104,164 collected in 2017. The thousands of donated coats will be counted, sorted and distributed to organizations serving the homeless and other low-income New Yorkers, at an 8,600 square foot temporary warehouse space located at 157 West 31st Street in Midtown Manhattan.

The sponsors for this year’s New York Cares Coat Drive are **Bloomberg Philanthropies, PJT Partners, Ehrenkranz Partners, Bank of America, Sidley, The Amine Family, Delta, Samlyn Capital, and the Mets Foundation.**

### **How to Donate Coats**

New Yorkers can text the word “COAT” to 41444 to donate \$20, or in increments of \$20, to purchase and deliver new coats. All donations are tax deductible. New Yorkers can also donate gently-used, freshly laundered coats at almost 300 public sites around the city, as well as hundreds of private sites hosted by corporations and civic groups.

New Yorkers may donate coats at the following locations through Monday, December 31, 2018. Please visit [newyorkcares.org](http://newyorkcares.org) for exact times and locations, and additional collection sites.

- Every New York City Police Precinct (24 hours a day)
- Select Queens Public Library branches (during open hours)
- The New York Cares Warehouse, 157 West 31st Street between 6th and 7th Avenues (9:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday)
- New York Cares office, 65 Broadway (weekdays, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)
- New York Penn Station - LIRR concourse (weekdays, 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.)
- Grand Central Terminal - Track 16/Graybar Passage (weekdays, 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.)
- Nearly two hundred Greater New York Automobile Dealers Association (GNYADA) locations
- And many more sites citywide.

New Yorkers can make financial donations in support of the Coat Drive and New York Cares' year-round work online, by text or by mail. For more information about the New York Cares Coat Drive, locations, news, or to make a financial donation, the public can visit [newyorkcares.org/coat-drive](http://newyorkcares.org/coat-drive).

#### **About New York Cares**

New York Cares is the largest volunteer network in the city. Last year, nearly 65,000 New Yorkers made the city a better place by volunteering in New York Cares programs at about 1,300 nonprofits and schools – improving education, meeting immediate needs, and revitalizing public spaces. For more information, visit [newyorkcares.org](http://newyorkcares.org).

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