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CHA distributes 5,000 coats to families, children at 15th annual Operation Warm

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CHICAGO (Oct. 25, 2022) – The Chicago Housing Authority partnered with national non-profit Operation Warm for the 15th year Saturday at UIC Forum to give away 5,000 new winter coats to children living in public housing and participants of the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program.

There was also a resource fair with 24 organizations offering services and giveaways, including Molina Healthcare; ComEd, Shea Moisture, T-Mobile, Aetna Better Health, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois, Pepsico, AT&T, Comcast and RSM. The Chicago Department of Public Health also provided free COVID-19 and flu shots.

On hand were Mayor Lori Lightfoot, CHA CEO Tracey Scott, CHA Board Chairwoman Angela Hurlock and Operation Warm Partnership Director Richard Lalley.

Mayor Lightfoot said: “It’s always a great opportunity to be here at Operation Warm. Not only will you get warm coats for all of your kids, there are so many other important resources that are here to take advantage of. What you should know and take away from this event is that your city loves and supports you. I want you to feel that there are people all over the city who are invested in you, so you can live a life that is vibrant, safe and supportive. CHA is one of the most important institutions in our city. I know how committed CHA employees and volunteers are, and I know how much you care about residents, family, and community, so thank you so much for your service and sacrifice.”

CEO Scott thanked Operation Warm for all the great work it does. In 15 years, CHA has distributed 116,000 coats to 33,000 families.

“We’ve given out coats, we’ve given out athletic shoes to families that need them, and it’s been a great partnership. I also want to point out one particular family that really is in need, and that is the family of Lawanda Franklin. She lives in CHA with her children. Talking to Ms. Franklin, she said that this was such a needed service, especially when it gets cold. She says she is blessed to receive any form of help. And we are happy to provide it.”

Chairperson Hurlock said:

“This was the very first CHA event that I attended as Chairperson three years ago. So this is definitely a very special event for me. Thank you to our Mayor, thank you to our staff and thank you to our partners who have made this possible. We can’t do this by ourselves. You might’ve heard a song playing ‘It Takes Two.’ Well, it takes 10, it takes 15, it takes 20 to make sure our 63,000 families are taken care of. Thank you for being part of that group of people to ensure the lives of our residents are quality.”

Lalley of Operation Warm said:

“Op Warm works all over the United States and Canada to provide warmth and confidence and hope to children by giving them brand new winter coats. We like to say a coat from Operation Warm is more than just a coat. Today is an example of how we are connecting.”

Ms. Franklin was thankful for the day.

“I look forward to receiving coats from Operation Warm every year because the event always comes at the time that my kids really need a coat,” she said. “CHA has been a helping hand for resources that help my family and myself. I am truly blessed to be able to receive help in any form from the CHA.”

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ABOUT THE CHICAGO HOUSING AUTHORITY (CHA)

The CHA’s vision is to foster strong, vibrant communities throughout Chicago by increasing affordable housing choices for low-income families. The CHA is also the largest rental housing owner in the City of Chicago. It serves more than 133,000 people in 63,000 households across the city through our Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher, and Project-Based Voucher programs. For more information, visit www.thecha.org.