

## The Salvation Army

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# SCHOOL DAYS!

## Salvation Army helps 500 students get a good start!



The sound of the hit song “Happy” filled the air as volunteers prepared for the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Back to School Stamford Backpack Party. The popcorn was popping, the grill was cooking, and parents and kids lined up to receive a backpack provided by The Salvation Army.

successful and rewarding school year.”

One of the happy children is Nicky - a 7 year old Stamford student. He sat on the grass looking at all his supplies with his mother and grandmother. When asked what he thought about his news school supplies, Nicky said: “I love my backpack and I can’t wait to use my new crayons.”

The Salvation Army is moved to help families during these difficult economical times. School supplies come at a price and the reality is that most parents have to make difficult financial choices. The backpacks and supplies – provided by The Salvation Army – are a major help to families facing the high start-up cost of another school year, including new clothes and shoes. Without proper school supplies and backpacks, students may be challenged in completing homework assignments and producing school projects. These difficulties often contribute to lower grades, which promote low self esteem and can lead to attendance issues. “We hope that these backpacks and supplies can help offset some of the cost to these families. Some of our families have up to 5 kids attending school. It’s the kids that suffer, if they do not have the supplies they need,” said Lt. Lila Droz, commanding officer. Jennifer, the mother of backpack recipients said, “I have three kids in school and to buy all these supplies plus clothes and shoes, well, let’s just say it’s a bit overwhelming. Thank God for The Salvation Army.”



The Salvation Army has been hosting this event for 14 years with the generosity of its donors and its main contributor The First County Bank Foundation. “The First County Bank Foundation is proud to be a long- time supporter of the Salvation Army’s Back to School Back Pack Program. We value the importance of education and programs that support the livelihood of children. These are key to the Foundation’s mission,”

said Karen M. Kelly, Vice President, First County Bank Foundation.

The Salvation Army knows that we alone cannot meet all the needs of all the city’s young people. We are so honored to have developed new partnerships with other great agencies in the Stamford Community like the Stamford Police Department. This is the third year the event has been hosted together by The Salvation Army and the Stamford Police.

For this year’s party, the Youth Lead organization Kids Helping Kids partnered with The Salvation Army for this event. The mission of Kids Helping Kids is to develop leadership skills through youth – led service projects. “When the opportunity arose for The Salvation Army and Kids Helping Kids to work together, I jumped at the chance!” said Lt. Droz. “The youth of this group was so amazing, passionate and compassionate for the kids that came to get the backpacks. I believe the future is bright with this partnership”. Kids helping Kids provided the event with music by DJ Bucko, and volunteers to help the kids with arts and crafts projects.



## CAMP CONNRI

### STAMFORD YOUTH ATTEND ARMY SUMMER CAMP

Jaydin Hernandez, a 10 year old Stamford native, and one of the 34 campers that attended The Salvation Army’s Summer Camp CONNRI. Jaydin’s mom, a single mother whose hours have been cut from her job, came to The Salvation Army to find something for her son to do during the summer. Camp CONNRI was the answer for Jaydin to be in a safe environment and well taken care of.

Camp CONNRI is situated on 272 acres of rolling hills, overlooking a pristine 50 acre lake in Ashford, Connecticut. Campers enjoy a wide variety of activities including: swimming, hiking, fishing, kayaking, baseball, softball, basketball, volleyball, nature studies, arts and crafts, low ropes, and much more.

“The kids attend this sleep away camp for a week and when they get back we see that the experiences they have had are life changing.” said Lt. Lila Droz. When asked what his favorite part of Camp was Jaydin said “Swimming and Rock Climbing”.

During his time at camp, Jaydin learned that he had value and that he was special.; He could be anything he wanted to be He can’t wait for next summer!



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THE SALVATION ARMY IS LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS THAT CAN HELP CHANGE LIVES.  
IF YOU ARE INTERESTED, PLEASE CONTACT US AT 203-359-2320.