

Community News

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Leominster Credit Union contributes to back-to-school backpack program

Thanks to contributions from Leominster Credit Union (LCU) and other generous donors, 326 area students headed back to class with new backpacks filled with all the necessary supplies to get the new school year off to a promising start.

"We're pleased to do our part to support WHEAT Community Services and their Back-to-School Backpack and Supply Program," said Jennie Gray, manager of LCU's Clinton branch. "It's wonderful that so many students received these important tools to help them with their studies."

Wachusett Health Education Action Team (WHEAT) is currently celebrating its 25 year as a social and emergency service agency, assisting low-to-moderate income residents of Berlin, Bolton, Clinton, Lancaster and Sterling. Last year, more than 9,000 individuals were affected by the non-profit's efforts.

"For some of the families that we serve, the expenses associated with a new school year can be a real financial challenge," said Linda Hughes, who chaired the drive's planning committee and coordinates the Clinton and Nashoba Parent Child Home Program for literacy. "The program really helps a lot, and it was so rewarding to see the children's smiling faces when we distributed the backpacks. They couldn't wait for school to start."

To make sure each student received useful supplies, the backpacks were filled with age- and grade-appropriate

items.

"For example, younger students' supplies included things like glue, crayons, scissors and construction paper," said Jodi Breidel, executive director of WHEAT. "Older students received dictionaries, binders, notebooks, pens and pencils. We made sure that the supplies were ones the students would use."

The Back-to-School Backpack and Supply Program has been growing annually. In its first year, WHEAT distributed 176 backpacks. In 2006, the number grew to 226. This year, the total was 326.

"It's very gratifying to receive such support from the public," said Breidel. "Without contributions from organizations like the LCU and our other corporate, civic and individual donors, we wouldn't be able to help so many children start their school year ready and equipped to learn."

Founded in 1954, Leominster Credit Union (LCU) is a member-owned, not-for-profit financial cooperative with a full range of deposit, lending and other financial services. Headquartered in Leominster, LCU is proud to claim more than 33,000 members and \$355 million in assets. LCU has six branch locations in Leominster, Worcester, Clinton, Holden, Sterling and North Leominster with ATM services at all branch locations, and 24-hour online banking services are available at leominster-cu.com and by telephone at 800-649-4646.