

COATS FOR KIDS

Program launches 15th year of helping children

Anton's Cleaners, which has locations in Tewksbury and Wilmington, announces its 15th annual Coats for Kids winter coat drive begins on Oct. 15, with the goal of collecting 60,000 coats to be distributed to those in need throughout eastern Massachusetts. Now the largest coat drive of its kind in the Northeast, the program runs through Jan. 9.

Over the past 14 years, more than 560,000 adult and children's coats have been collected and cleaned at no charge by Anton's Cleaners, representing \$6.5 million in total donated cleaning costs.

"It's our goal to make sure that everyone who needs a warm winter coat this season has one," said Charles A. Anton, CEO of Anton's Cleaners. "Coats for Kids is a true community event as we continue to see more and more schools, businesses and local residents become involved. We could not have accomplished what we have over the past 14 years without all of their support."

Last year, 64,480 coats were collected, cleaned and donated to those in need through a network of distribution partners.

"We need coats that are in useable condition, free of rips, missing buttons, permanent stains or broken zip-

pers," Anton said. "And along with coats for kids, we are also collecting coats for adults and babies."

Distribution partners include Massachusetts Community Action Programs (MASSCAP), Salvation Army, Cradles to Crayons, Middlesex Human Service Agency, BUMC: Outreach Van Project, Lowell Wish Project, Community Giving Tree, Mental Health Association of Greater Lowell, Strafford County Community Action, Catholic Charities, Dorchester House MSC, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, Carolina Hill Shelter, Taunton State Hospital, South Shore Day Care Services, Codman Square Health Center, Children's Services of Roxbury and Harbour House Family Shelter, to name just a few.

The Coats for Kids drive has the support of a group of promotional partners, including FOX25, KISS-108 & JAM'N-94.5, Comcast Spotlight and Jordan's Furniture, which is opening its four locations — Avon, Natick and Reading, and Nashua, N.H. — as drop-off points for coats. In addition, Jordan's Furniture will donate \$1,200 worth of furniture and a \$250 gift certificate from Paul's TV to the winning elementary and middle schools in the School

Rewards program, as well as tickets to its IMAX theatre for the winning middle school.

The school rewards program promotes the collection in elementary and middle schools. Last year, nearly 300 schools participated in the program. The top three schools collecting the highest number of coats per students enrolled received prizes, including school supply gift certificates, pizza parties, ice cream sundae parties, and visits from a FOX25 meteorologist. Returning as supporting partners this year are Graham Communications and Package Supply Corporation.

To find an Anton's Cleaners near you, to register to become a Corporate or Supporting Partner, or to register an elementary or middle school for participation in the School Rewards competition, visit www.antons.com or call the Coats for Kids hotline at 1-800-659-0069.

Anton's Cleaners is a family-owned, Massachusetts business that first opened its doors in Lowell in 1913. Today, 96 years later, the company has 44 dry cleaning stores throughout Eastern Massachusetts and Southern New Hampshire.

