

Hub City students receive free backpacks, supplies at Back-to-School celebration

From staff reports

COMPTON — More than 1,500 Compton students received free backpacks and school supplies at the third annual Back-to-School Celebration held on Aug. 20 at El Camino College Compton Center, 1111 Artesia Blvd..

The event was sponsored by Project IMPACT, the Compton Unified School District and World Vision.

In addition to receiving brand new backpacks, students in grades K through 12 received free school uniforms, pencils, pens, paper, notebooks and binders.

Students also accessed free information regarding local services such as tutoring, community service groups, health clinics and after-school programs from event sponsors including Best Start LA, South Central Los Angeles Regional Center and California State University Dominguez Hills.

Grace Lubwama, executive director, US Domestic Programs, World Vision, praised the collaborative efforts of the event's sponsors. "This is our third year and it's amazing to be here, knowing we're still able to support Compton families," she said. "It's so important to do whatever we can to serve families right now. Many people have fallen on hard times and can't afford to buy new backpacks, school uniforms, and pencils for their children. We're here to relieve that financial burden."



Photo courtesy of the Compton School District

More than 1,500 Compton students and their families received free backpacks and school supplies on Saturday, Aug. 20, at the third annual Back-to-School Celebration. In addition to receiving brand new backpacks, the students received school uniforms, pencils, pens, paper, notebooks and binders.

Project IMPACT founder and Executive Director, the Rev. Matthew Harris of Christian Church Disciples of Christ, said he was happy to see this year's event continue in the midst of a struggling economy. "It's fantastic to be

able to give back to the community again, but it's also very encouraging for us to see so many families here because it shows they are willing to do what is necessary to ensure their kids are ready to learn,"

he said. "We know there are lots of people who need school supplies but can't afford them right now. In the past we've had lots of families thank us for the many resources provided at this event. It's good to know we're making such a

huge difference."

Harris also credited Project IMPACT's partners for the event's success. "If it weren't for the contributions of organizations like World Vision we would not have been able to provide these supplies to the

people who need them the most, Compton's children," he said.

Parent Sheryl Hilt said she was grateful to save money on her daughter's school supplies. "I came here last year and I'm here again because it really helps me out," she said. "My daughter is about to start eighth grade at Davis Middle School, and she needs more notebooks, pens, and other things so she can do well."

For Griselda Alvarez, mother of a Mayo Elementary fifth-grader and a Davis Middle School sixth-grader, the free backpacks provide her children with much-needed support for the coming school year. "It's good to know there are good people who want to help out the parents and their children. These supplies are very expensive," she said. "College should be their goal. These free backpacks and materials help them stay focused."

Yolanda Washington, whose children attend Roosevelt Elementary and Dominguez High School, said she saved more than \$90 at this year's Back-to-School Celebration. She thanked the event's sponsors for their continuing generosity. "There are lots of cities that don't do this," she said. "The kids need this so they know there are people who truly care about them. Most of all, this really helps parents save money that we can use on our bills or groceries."

IN RETROSPECT



Photo by Shon Smith of D'Angelo's Photos

The Dominguez High School horn section struts through the streets of Compton during the city's Mardi Gras celebration in March.

Compton students combine fun with learning



Centennial High School students Anthony Rivera and Margarita Uribe won Compton Unified School District's Science Fair's Earth Science category with their project, "Using a Digital Camera to Measure Sky Glow." The Science Fair was held in April.



Photos courtesy of Compton Unified School District

Compton High School's Solar Cup team members stand proudly next to their solar-powered boat before leaving for Lake Skinner, where they competed against more than 800 students representing over 70 school districts. The three-day competition, which ran May 13 through 15, included a race and an endurance challenge.