

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 29, 2016
MEDIA CONTACT: Laurie Patsalides, PR Coordinator (716) 348-3143;
lpatsalides@buffalocitymission.org



***Buffalo City Mission Launches New Regional Program:
"Mission Possible: Food Drive School Challenge"***

Buffalo, NY – Today, the Buffalo City Mission launched its new regional schoolwide Mission Possible: Food Drive School Challenge.

“According to the Annual Report on Homelessness in Erie County, 30.7% are living below the poverty line in Buffalo, so the need to end hunger is crucial. Through this new program, we will be able to feed more people as hunger is a growing problem. Poverty is the root cause of homelessness and food insecurity here in Buffalo and around our great nation. It is nearly impossible for anyone to excel in life when they are hungry,” said Stuart Harper, Executive Director of the Buffalo City Mission.

“This is why we felt the need to implement this new program called Mission Possible. This year’s goal, to raise over 72,000 canned goods is essential to help us provide over 10,000 meals to our hurting community of WNY during the upcoming holiday season during Thanksgiving and Christmas. This school challenge will also help us meet the practical needs of the community who come to the City Mission seeking free grocery bags of food through our referral program throughout the year,” said Harper.

Program Overview:

During the 12 week challenge period, schools across WNY will compete to collect the most canned goods possible for the Buffalo City Mission and a chance to win the Mission Possible School Drive Challenge Champion Trophy. In doing so, they will establish a vision and strategy of how they will track, measure and accomplish their goals as a team. As they progress towards their goal, each team will accomplish five character milestones, including the importance of being a visionary, having kindness, compassion, generosity, and also being a community changer.

“We believe all five of the character milestones are important in molding the minds of our younger generation to become advocates for those who are less fortunate, and also help develop a positive pathway towards a successful career path,” said Stuart Harper, Executive Director of the Buffalo City Mission.

With 42.5% of adults suffering from poverty in WNY, not having graduated from high school and only 9.6% of them have a college degree. Our goal through Mission Possible is to educate participating students about the importance of continuing their education and securing a strong career path.” Statistics provided by the Annual Report on Homelessness in Erie County.

Through our strong relationship with Erie Community College, our transitional residents today, are having the opportunity of becoming a college student, and are learning the same character milestones we are educating students that are participating within Mission Possible. In addition, Erie Community College has pledged to raise 5,000 canned goods for Mission Possible across all three campuses.

“Erie Community College and the Buffalo City Mission have collaborated on a variety of education-related initiatives over the years, all with the goal of helping our city’s neediest residents toward a brighter path,” said ECC President Jack Quinn. “Working together on Mission Possible is another opportunity to aid our neighbors—together. Year after year, both our organizations work toward establishing a better Buffalo not just for some residents, but for everyone. This fall, ECC and its Student Government Association will look to pursue our goal through this comprehensive food drive.”

The Buffalo City Mission appreciates the support of our key community partners, Rich Products, Citi, and Praxair for making Mission Possible, possible by providing the Winners of the program with a day of discovery provided by their organization to showcase the unique qualities that each organization can offer to students as a potential career path. Also, our corporate partners have provided generously over \$30,000 to support our adult education programs, giving transitional residents an opportunity to achieve their professional goals and giving them a second chance at life.

About Rich Products

For more than 70 years, Rich's has been a leader in the food industry, known for its high-quality products, exceptional customer service and overwhelming commitment to associates, customers and communities. With more than 4,000 products sold across 112 countries, Rich's delicious innovations are found in countless restaurants, bakeries and kitchens around the world. More information can be found at www.rich.com.

About Citi

Citi, the leading global bank, has approximately 200 million customer accounts and does business in more than 160 countries and jurisdictions. Citi provides consumers, corporations, governments and institutions with a broad range of financial products and services, including consumer banking and credit, corporate and investment banking, securities brokerage, transaction services, and wealth management. <http://www.citigroup.com/citi/>

About Praxair

Praxair, Inc., a Fortune 250 company with 2014 sales of \$12.3 billion, is the largest industrial gases company in North and South America and one of the largest worldwide. The company produces, sells and distributes atmospheric, process and specialty gases, and high-performance surface coatings. Praxair products, services and technologies are making our planet more productive by bringing efficiency and environmental benefits to a wide variety of industries, including aerospace, chemicals, food and beverage, electronics, energy, healthcare, manufacturing, primary metals and many others. More information about Praxair, Inc. is available at www.praxair.com.

About Erie Community College

Since 1946, Erie Community College has met the needs of a diverse student body while contributing to the economic vitality of Western New York. As a member of the state's SUNY system, the three-campus college provides flexible, affordable and accessible educational programs in an accommodating academic environment. Equipped with the knowledge of these programs, ECC's faculty, staff and students strive to enrich their host communities through skill, service and partnership <https://www.ecc.edu/>.

About the Buffalo City Mission

The Buffalo City Mission, founded in 1917, is a nonprofit organization that provides preventative, emergency and transitional programs to thousands of people who are homeless and impoverished. The Mission includes a Women and Children's Shelter (Cornerstone Manor); Men's Community Center; and Dick Road Thrift Store to serve the Western New York community. For more information, please visit www.buffalocitymission.org or call (716) 854-8181.

#