



## Mission Kicks Off Mission Possible Round 2: Focuses on STEM Education



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**BUFFALO, NY—October 3, 2017—** Today, the Buffalo City Mission launched its Mission Possible Program with a focus on STEM education.

Recognizing that STEM education (science, mathematics, and the integration of technology and engineering) helps the student to use innovative problem-solving skills and real-world concepts to make meaningful connections between school, community, work, and the global enterprise, the Buffalo City Mission added a STEM component in Mission Possible this year. The students compete in a “CANstruction Challenge” to create a construction with the can goods they collect using STEM. The winners receive \$1,000 for their school. “We are in a new period where all schools are using STEM education, and CANstruction uses the building blocks of STEM understanding for students. “Providing students the chance to participate in a STEM Challenge like this gives them the foundation for becoming better thinkers, and that’s our goal,” said Aubrey Calhoun, Associate Executive Director of the Buffalo City Mission.

The purpose of the Mission Possible Program is to uplift individuals and families experiencing hunger in the Buffalo area. “It is nearly impossible for anyone to excel in life when they are hungry,” said Calhoun. According to the US Census Bureau in 2016, 31.4% of people were living below the poverty line in Buffalo. Poor families are at high risk for homelessness and hunger, often having to go without eating. Deepening poverty is linked with rising levels of homelessness, and food insecurity/hunger for many Buffalonians and children are particularly affected by these conditions. The Home Alliance of Western New York (HAWNY) shares in their 2016 Annual Report, “Twenty-five percent of people who experienced homelessness in Erie County were children, and seventy-five percent of those homeless in

rural areas are members of families,” so the need to help people experiencing hunger is critical and increasing.

Last year through this unique program, the Mission provided more than 6,000 meals to hurting people in our community, including feeding many families from participating schools and raised over 24,000 canned goods. The canned goods are needed to stock the Mission’s food pantry to help provide free groceries to the community through the Mission’s referral program, and for the annual Thanksgiving and Christmas meals, where the Mission preps and serves over 10,000 meals during holiday time. With homelessness increasing by 9% and expected to go higher next year, according to HAWNY, the Mission expects to collect 30,000 canned goods to cover this growing need through Mission Possible. School participation has increased by 36%, and sponsor participation doubled from last year. This food drive challenge is extraordinary, because it involves students of all socioeconomic backgrounds, with one common purpose, to care for their neighbors. More so now than ever, students are stepping up to serve their communities, and kids and their families are realizing that hunger is a reality in every town, not only in our most challenged communities.

The City Mission is also proud to announce that five major corporations, Citi, Rich Products, Windsong Radiology Group, GEICO, and Clover Group are sponsoring the Mission Possible Food Drive Challenge, pledging a total of \$55,000 to support the Mission’s 2017-2018 education programs for children.

The children’s programming at the Mission encompasses a broad range of focus areas including academic support, mentoring, youth development, arts, and recreation for students, improving grades and test scores, classroom behavior, and health and nutrition. “These excellent programs run year-round to teach, tutor, and mentor children each day help them avoid poverty, which is the leading cause of homelessness and hunger,” said Calhoun.

“Citi is pleased to once again sponsor the Mission Possible School Food Drive Challenge of the Buffalo City Mission. Our corporate global citizenship mission, as one of the worlds’ leading financial services organizations, is to help address societal challenges such as affordable housing, employment, entrepreneurship and access to city services. We partner with strong community organizations like the Buffalo City Mission to develop ideas that drive progress and strengthen communities,” stated Robin L. Wolfgang, Communications Officer, Citigroup.

### **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); the Men’s Community Center; and Dick Road thrift store to serve the Western New York community. For more information, please visit [www.buffalocitymission.org](http://www.buffalocitymission.org) or call (716) 854-8181.

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### **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 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](http://www.rich.com).

### **About GEICO**

GEICO (Government Employees Insurance Company) is a member of the Berkshire Hathaway family of companies and is the second-largest private passenger auto insurance company in the United States. GEICO, which was founded in 1936, provides millions of auto insurance quotes to U.S. drivers annually. The company is pleased to serve more than 15 million private passenger customers, insuring more than 24 million vehicles (auto & cycle). For more information, go to [www.geico.com](http://www.geico.com).

### **About Clover Group**

Clover Group, one of Western New York's largest developers and managers of independent senior living has filled a much needed void in the housing market across the United States. With over 2,500 apartments in their senior living portfolio, they have perfected the niche. Clover Group President, Michael Joseph stated: "We're proud we've been able to make such a difference in the Senior Community." Clover Group's portfolio includes local and out of state residential and senior apartments, commercial property, as well as management of condominium associations. Clover Construction Management performs ongoing construction for the growing portfolio. For more information on Clover Group please visit [www.clovergroupinc.com](http://www.clovergroupinc.com).

### **About Windsong Radiology Group**

Windsong Radiology Group, PC is the largest free standing radiology facility in Western New York and one of the busiest in the nation. It is a full-service diagnostic imaging practice staffed by 18 Board Certified and Fellowship trained radiologists who deliver cutting edge service. It was the first center in the area to be recognized as a Breast Center of Excellence by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers and has the reputation of pursuing and acquiring the most advanced technology available. The Group works closely to ensure the least invasive and most medically appropriate procedures.

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