



www.foodbankst.org

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A Regional Agency of
Catholic Charities

A Member of
FEEDING AMERICA™

TO: News Editors
DATE: July 31, 2009
CONTACT: Melissa Smith, Community & Public Relations Manager
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RE: *The United Way of Tompkins County Provides Grant to Assist with Funding for the Food Bank of the Southern Tier's Backpack Program™ in Tompkins County*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Southern Tier, NY – The Food Bank of the Southern Tier announces that a grant in the amount of \$7,500 was received from the United Way of Tompkins County. These funds will be used to support the Backpack Program™ in Tompkins County during the 2009– 2010 school year.

The Backpack Program's purpose is to fill the gap left on weekends and holidays when children do not have access to free or reduced price school meals. The program provides bags of nutritious, child-friendly, easy to prepare food to students at risk of hunger on Fridays for the weekends and before holiday breaks during the school year. Launched in 2005, the Food Bank's Backpack program now serves more than 1,200 children across 18 school districts throughout our six-county service region. The program serves two school districts in Tompkins County, reaching about 140 children.

"It is a great opportunity for United Way of Tompkins County to be able to support the Backpack Program," said Vicki Taylor, UWTC Board Member and Chair of the UWTC Fund Distribution & Evaluation Committee. "Providing youth with food items to go home with, and more importantly, to alleviate the fear associated with food insecurity is what Living United is all about – being a part of our caring community whether giving or receiving," added Taylor.

To learn more about the Food Bank of the Southern Tier and how you can support local hunger-relief efforts, visit the Food Bank's website at www.foodbankst.org or call 607-796-6061.

About the Food Bank

In operation since 1981, the Food Bank of the Southern Tier distributes food and food-related products to people in need through a network of more than 180 hunger-relief agencies including food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters and other non-profit organizations. The Food Bank also has a number of programs that fight hunger including the Backpack Program™ and Mobile Food Pantry. Located in Elmira, NY it is a regional agency of Catholic Charities and an affiliate of Feeding America serving the six counties of Broome, Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, Tioga and Tompkins.

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