



Patriots Visit Worcester to Give Coats to the Homeless



L-R: Ilia Jarostchuck, City Manager Ed Augustus and City Councilor Sarai Rivera help Carlos and Mark into their new jackets.

Written by Joshua Lyford 01/22/2015

The New England Patriots organization visited the South Middlesex Opportunity Council's (SMOC) Worcester location at 25 Queen St. to deliver jackets to the homeless population. The Patriots contacted Friendly House, Inc., who put the team in touch with SMOC.

The team's management discovered Detroit's The Empowerment Plan organization, who craft jackets that can be transformed into backpacks as well as sleeping bags, and have been supporting the organization ever since. The Empowerment Plan was founded by Veronika Scott, who designed the jacket based on her own experiences being homeless in the winter.

“It's really wonderful for the community,” said SMOC Director of Resource Development, Heidi Eagles. “It raises awareness and offers comfort for the homeless.”

Patriots alum, Ilia Jarostchuk, who played for the team back in 1990, was at the event to help hand out jackets. 40 were given out to those in need here in Worcester, but the organization has donated 300 throughout New England.

“I think it's wonderful when anyone wants to give back,” said the Director of the Greater Worcester Housing Connection, Jayde Campbell. “These coats are certainly needed, they are essential for those living outside. We're grateful for the Patriots.”

The Patriots management, the Kraft family and players such as Tom Brady and Matthew Slater have donated personal money toward the Empowerment Plan's efforts.

The Empowerment Plan non profit organization aims to help the homeless by providing jobs and exclusively hires single parents struggling with homelessness.

“On behalf of the community, I want to say thank you to the Krafts and the New England Patriots for thinking of Worcester,” said City Manager Ed Augustus. “These generous gifts will make a big difference to the people here.”

“The Patriots always strive to give back to the community,” said Patriots Community Relations Coordinator, Brett Sawin. “We're happy to be able to give back.”