ACME Foundation Awards $25,000 to Lifting Up Westchester to Help Feed Homeless Children

White Plains, NY — August 2020 — Lifting Up Westchester received a Nourishing Neighbors Community Relief grant of $25,000 from the ACME Foundation to provide food for its Brighter Futures summer camp for homeless children. The grant was part of $15 million pledged by Albertsons Companies to help feed kids and families during the summer of Covid-19. ACME is one of 20 Albertson Companies brands.

The Nourishing Neighbors funding provided nutritious breakfasts, hot lunches and snacks for 40 campers and their counselors during the four-week camp in July. The Brighter Futures Day Camp has operated in Westchester for thirty years and is the only county camp that targets homeless children.

“Most of the children who attended our camp live at local family homeless shelters. It has been difficult for them being isolated in close quarters since March and the kids were thrilled to have the freedom to participate in our outdoor camp activities,” said Anahaita Kotval, CEO of Lifting Up Westchester. “The delicious food we were able to provide because of the Nourishing Neighbors grant made this one of our best camps ever. We are very grateful to the ACME Foundation and Albertsons Companies for their support.”

Kotval added that the Brighter Futures Camp was run in a modified fashion this year to ensure the maximum safety of campers and staff. Camp size was reduced from 95 to 40 to enable social distancing. Campers were divided into small groups based on their age and groups remained isolated from one another. Each group had their own supplies and dedicated space.

Director of Youth Services, Eileen Torres said that one of the results of school closings during the pandemic was a significant decline in camper reading skills.

“Our camp curriculum always includes an educational element to prevent academic slide and this year we hired two Reading Specialists to run a program called KidzLit,” said Torres. “They used educational games to get kids interested and combined the
games with a variety of reading activities. At the end of camp, most kids were back to their pre-Covid reading levels.”

“It’s an honor to support the work of Lifting Up Westchester because they’ve always been on the frontlines providing hunger relief and homeless services to those in need,” said Anjana Bhattarai, Albertsons Companies Foundation Program Officer. “In the midst of the COVID-19 crisis, it’s good to know that there are community partners like Lifting Up Westchester who are making sure that homeless children and their families don’t go hungry.”

**About Lifting Up Westchester**

Lifting Up Westchester (www.liftingupwestchester.org) is a 501 (c )(3) organization whose mission is to restore hope to Westchester County’s men, women and children in need by providing them with food, shelter and support- lifting them to greater self-sufficiency with dignity and respect. It is one of the largest social services agencies in Westchester County and has been fulfilling its mission since 1979 through the operation of eight community-based programs. The agency serves 3,500 men, women and children each year providing almost 100,000 meals to the hungry and 20,000 nights of shelter to the homeless.

For more information about Lifting Up Westchester, visit www.liftingupwestchester.org or contact Chris Schwartz at cschwartz@liftingupwestchester.org or (914) 949-3098.

**About Albertsons Companies**

Locally great and nationally strong, Albertsons Companies is one of the largest food and drug retailers in the United States. Albertsons Cos. operates stores across 34 states and the District of Columbia under 20 well-known banners including Albertsons, Safeway, Vons, Jewel-Osco, Shaw’s, Acme, Tom Thumb, Randalls, United Supermarkets, Pavilions, Star Market, Haggen, and Carrs. Albertsons Cos. is committed to helping people across the country live better lives by making a meaningful difference, neighborhood by neighborhood. In 2019 alone, along with the Albertsons Companies Foundation, the Company gave nearly $225 million in food and financial support. These efforts helped millions of people in the areas of hunger relief, education, cancer research and treatment, programs for people with disabilities and veterans outreach.

ACME is a member of the Albertsons Family of stores. As an extension of Albertsons Companies Nourishing Neighbors program – a program to support hunger relief organizations, with a particular focus on breakfast programs for kids – the **Help Feed Families In Need During This Crisis** initiative, supports neighborhood COVID-19
response efforts, including providing support to regional food banks to support emergency food distribution programs at schools, senior centers and related food support programming. Nourishing Neighbors is an initiative of the Albertsons Companies Foundation.

In addition, we are proud of our program: Nourishing Neighbors, a proprietary program formerly named Hunger Is, working to eradicate childhood hunger in America. With 1 in 7 children in America, in our neighborhoods, not knowing where their next meal will come from, it is a big problem and we are well positioned to create a ground swelling of support to ensure that no child will go hungry.

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