

Stamford Police Association leads back-to-school backpack giveaway on Saturday

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STAMFORD -- In a few weeks, the bells will be ringing in city classrooms, and the Stamford Police Association, along with a few other local organizations, are looking to ensure that students from lower income families have backpacks for their books.

The SPA, together with First County Bank and The Salvation Army, will be hosting their first Back Pack Give Away Day from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Aug. 21, at Stamford Police Headquarters, 805 Bedford Street, and also at The Salvation Army, 198 Selleck Street.

"Many families are under financial pressure, so the give away relieves the pockets of parents who may not have the funds to provide their children with the basics," said Stamford Police Officer Jerry Junes, the lead organizer of the event for the police association.

Backpacks will be provided to students ages 16 and under. One bag will be given to each child present, as long as supplies last.

"Stamford Police officers know how important it is for our local youth to get a good education and start the school year fully prepared with the tools to learn," said Sergeant Joseph Kennedy, president of the SPA. "The stress of entering a new grade with unfamiliar teachers and classmates is compounded for disadvantaged children, who don't have the proper supplies needed to make the most of their educational experience."

"Stamford Police officers place a premium on giving back to the community through programs like the bookbag giveaway, and our Police Athletic League (PAL), which helps keeps kids active in sports and out of trouble," added Kennedy, who also leads the Stamford Police Youth Bureau.

Funding for the project was provided by First County Bank. The event also includes a barbecue where volunteers from the SPA and The Salvation Army will serve hamburgers, hot dogs and soda to children and their parents.