

# Woodstock Community Unit School District 200

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**For Immediate Release**

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## WACM makes donation for D 200 Kindness Closets

Woodstock schools' Kindness Closets will be more full thanks to full hearts at Woodstock Area Community Ministries.

WACM hosted a series of children's magic shows and Broadway presentations last winter and spring at the Woodstock Opera House and Stage Left Cafe to raise money for Woodstock Community Unit School District 200 programs for students facing financial challenges at home.

Each district school houses a Kindness Closet where students can get free clothing such as a winter coat or shoes, basic food items, school supplies or toiletries. Different grade level schools have different needs, but school staff do the best they can to provide the most needed items.

Bruce Weiss, a WACM representative, approached District 200 a few years ago about how area churches could help fill the need. The fundraising productions were put on hold during COVID-19, but resumed in early 2022.

Earlier this month, WACM presented District 200 with a check for \$2,400, which was divided among the schools to purchase items needed for their individual Kindness Closets.

Cristina Mazzanti, a parent educator at Verda Dierzen Early Learning Center, said the productions were wonderful community events in addition to raising funds.

"VDELIC plans to purchase some winter gear items for our October 20th Campus Connection event. Some of the money will also be used to buy toiletries and household cleaning supplies," she said.

Mazzanti said Weiss also made a key connection between District 200's age 0-3 program and the Diaper Bank of Northern Illinois, which has been of great benefit to families.

"At Verda Dierzen, we teach our students to be bucket fillers. This means to be kind to others through actions and words. Bruce is definitely a bucket filler. We thank him and the WACM organization for having such big hearts," she said.

Julie Smith, principal of Greenwood Elementary School, said the WACM donation will go a long way toward helping expand her school's Kindness Closet offerings.

Art Vallicelli, principal of Woodstock High School, said he was also impressed with WACM's efforts. "They have gone above and beyond to try and help our Kindness Closet through highly creative fundraising events and asking our advisors for any particular needs that we have. People like Mr. Weiss are the reason that we have been able to reorganize our KC and provide a wider array of services."