



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Community Currency Exchange Association, YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago Help More Than 6,000 Kids Prepare for New School Year

Fifth annual Back 2 School Drive donates thousands of school supplies kits to needy children across the city and suburbs

CHICAGO – Today the Community Currency Exchange Association of Illinois joined the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago, along with Western Union and dozens of volunteers, at the South Side YMCA to unload, sort and distribute thousands of “Kits for Kidz” school supplies boxes purchased with funds raised during their fifth annual *Back 2 School* drive. A partnership between the Currency Exchange Association and the YMCA, this year’s *Back 2 School* campaign raised more than \$110,000 from corporate sponsors and online donations from the public. The boxes, which have been distributed to children at YMCAs across the city and suburbs, will help to ensure that more than 6,000 needy YMCA children and their families have all the necessary supplies to start the school year on the right foot.

“In this time of economic uncertainty and when a foundational education is critical for future success, now, more than ever, Illinois families are in need of help to ensure their children have the tools necessary for a successful school year,” said John Iberl, president of the Community Currency Exchange Association. “Our members recognize our shared responsibility to contribute to the communities we serve and as such, we set an ambitious goal to double the number of children we help this year. I am pleased to report that we more than tripled our goal and want to thank everyone that made a contribution.”

“Kits for Kidz,” Western Union, Legoland Discovery Center and I.C.E. Visa Debit Card served as official sponsors of this year’s *Back 2 School* campaign. Contributions included a \$50,000 donation from Western Union and a matching \$50,000 gift from an anonymous currency exchange owner. In 2008, the *Back 2 School* drive benefited more than 1,800 YMCA children and their families.

“2009 has been a very difficult year, not only for YMCA families, but also for the many school districts affected by the economy,” said Steve Dahlin, interim president and CEO of the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago. “Campaigns such as this *Back 2 School* effort have taken on even greater importance in these difficult times. We are fortunate to be able to partner with the Currency Exchanges to make certain struggling families have the necessary resources so their children can return to school with all the supplies they need to start off the school year.”

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Customized for four different age categories, the “Kits for Kidz” school supplies boxes being distributed as a result of the *Back 2 School* campaign, include items such as notebooks, calculators, dictionaries, tissues, pens, pencils, paper, glue, erasers, protractors, rulers and much more.

The commitment to helping Illinois residents in their pursuit of education is nothing new to Currency Exchanges. For the past 20 years they have participated in a scholarship program run by the Financial Service Centers of America (FISCA), the national Association that represents the 7500 neighborhood check cashing and financial service centers throughout the country. Currency Exchanges also have a long history of supporting fire safety education in communities across Illinois.

The Community Currency Exchange Association of Illinois was formed in 1937. The Association oversees the marketing, advertising and community outreach programs for the state’s more than 500 Currency Exchanges. Through the years, the Association has worked to provide a variety of business, government and financial services to the citizens of Illinois.

Through its 65 locations and more than 100 extension sites, the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago helps children learn and grow, teaches young people to lead, brings families closer, and encourages individual health and well-being. The fourth largest non-profit in Chicago and one of the largest human services organizations in the nation, YMCA programs impact hundreds of thousands of lives annually, helping to strengthen neighborhoods and respond to community needs across Chicagoland. To learn more, visit www.ymcachgo.org

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