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CONTACT:

Ruthann Varosi
Extra Credit Union
Phone: 586.276.3151
Email: rvarosi@extracreditunion.org

Extra Credit Union collects \$1,840 and 500 winter/personal care items for homeless students in Macomb County amid pandemic

WARREN, Mich. – COVID-19 has changed life as we know it. That’s especially true for hundreds of homeless students and their families in Macomb County.

Every year, Extra Credit Union hosts a Mittens for Kids drive to collect cold-weather items and toiletries for homeless students and their families in Macomb County. This year, the financial institution collected \$1,840, which includes \$140 in gift cards, and 510 personal care items including hats, gloves, scarves, socks, toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap and other items.

The annual effort supports the [Macomb Intermediate School District’s \(MISD\) Homeless Education Project](#), which provides registered homeless students and their families in Macomb County with community resources, as well as personal care items and even food. There are currently 735 registered homeless students in Macomb County. The number typically increases throughout the school year. Last school year ended with 1,104 registered homeless students in the county.

But Jackie Chase of the MISD Homeless Education Project says there are likely more students that need help than those who are registered. COVID-19 and remote learning has made it more difficult to identify homeless students in the county. She said she “expects the number to increase as the districts return to in-person classes.”

This is the 10th Mittens for Kids drive the credit union has hosted annually to benefit the project. And most years, the donations greatly increase. Last year, the credit union donated \$1,500 and more than 400 personal care items.

Deidra Williams, President and CEO of Extra Credit Union, said she is greatly pleased with the credit union’s efforts to help these homeless students and their families year after year—an effort that also supports the credit union’s legacy of having been started by a group of local teachers 65 years ago.

“We know these donations are important every year, but most especially during this pandemic when many have lost their jobs or aren’t able to work due to COVID-19. We are so glad we are able to help the community with our financial literacy efforts and products and services such as those that help to keep the heat on or an auto loan to help someone get to and from work. But efforts like these are particularly close to our hearts,” said Deidra Williams, CEO and President

of Extra Credit Union. “We know COVID has affected all of us in one way or another and it’s so wonderful to see that despite their own personal struggles during this challenging time, our staff and members want to help those in their community as much as possible. I’m so proud to have a staff and membership that is so giving.”

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Extra Credit Union (www.extracreditunion.org) was founded in 1954 by a group of educators with \$856 in assets. Today, with a full-service branch in Warren, Mich., Extra Credit Union (ECU) has nearly 20,000 members and \$290 million in assets. Extra Credit Union works with the local community and educators to provide hands-on learning, financial fundamentals, and customized services to help students and educators make good financial decisions. In addition, ECU provides solution-based lending and credit education programs to open lending possibilities to people of all credit backgrounds in the state of Michigan. Deidra M. Williams serves as President/CEO, leading the credit union in its mission.