

January 1, 2026

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www.clothingourkids.org



Dear Volunteers, Donors, Sponsors, and Friends,

The New Year reminds us of how grateful we are for all of you. Your compassion brings a feeling of optimism to students needing it most. More children have a chance to dream a hopeful dream, laugh with peers, and learn without the distraction of insufficient clothes. While something as simple as shoes or a winter coat might sound trivial, it is really about dignity, safety, and opportunity. Proper clothing helps children fit in with fellow students, influencing social connections. COK believes every student deserves the essentials required to thrive and succeed.

COK is a community of kind people whose generosity makes a profound difference in a student's life. Due to the thoughtfulness of COK Supporters, we will meet our goal of serving every High School student in need through the 2025/2026 School Year in addition to clothing insecure school kids from Pre K and Head Start to Elementary and Middle Schools. With the support of Sponsors, Donors and a Volunteer army of liaisons, order takers, shoppers, packers, deliverers, event planners, a marketing team, and administrative folks behind the scenes, COK now serves over sixty schools in Sussex County.

In 2025, COK launched a Community Ambassador Program to spread the word about the charity in their neighborhoods. Most of the COK Ambassadors have hosted Clothing Drives building on the inventory at the Volunteer Center. Also, we have been able to recruit Buyers/Liaisons for all High Schools. Headed by Committee Chair Marilyn Kray, these Volunteers have established close relationships with school representatives, filled closets, and purchased clothing as requested. The Volunteer Center under Board Member Karen Borges filled over one hundred clothing orders prior to school opening in September.

Coordinated through the Grant Committee Chaired by Board Member Peter Thomas, SHOES THAT FIT, a nationally recognized non-profit who believes a new pair of shoes can be life changing, transported 1,000 pairs of quality sneakers to the Center in November. Before the Christmas Holidays, nearly half were delivered to the schools. COK was fortunate to obtain much County-wide media coverage in 2025 thanks in part to Board Member Craig Jahelka. In addition, credit goes to Board Member Merrill Cohen for leading a team who managed a successful Golf Tournament.

Now in our fourteenth year, the need for school clothing assistance in Sussex County remains considerable. Recent data shows significant low-income populations in our County with overall poverty around 10-12% and some school districts are struggling. A Homeless Liaison advised: "We have emergency funds for food and shelter, but we have **none** for clothing". That is where COK comes in. At the end of our thirteenth year, COK has provided more than 264,000 articles of clothing to over 41,000 children and is able to meet that demand with your continued support of our Mission.

We are lucky to have a dedicated and experienced group serving on our Board of Directors. We are grateful for your trust and proud of the work we do. From the students we serve, deep appreciation for helping us help them.

With sincere gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Blouin".

Bob Blouin, President
It's all about the Kids!