TABLE OF CONTENTS

Motivation ....................................................... 4
Mission .......................................................... 5
Programs .......................................................... 6
Drive ............................................................... 7
Impact .............................................................. 8
Financials .......................................................... 12
Leadership ......................................................... 13
MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

For Operation Warm, 2020-2021 was a year of profound change. The COVID-19 pandemic coincided with a series of planned transitions that touched every corner of our organization – diversifying our supply chain, a new warehouse, and the launch of our Warm Soles program.

2020 also ushered in challenges that resulted in a transition to remote work, and programmatic pivots to replace in-person coat celebration events that ensured the safety of our donors and beneficiaries, but called on us to restructure our long-standing methods and tactics. We’ve always prided ourselves on effectiveness and agility. Our response to crisis has been to focus on our impact and value, but the combination of record levels of need and so much uncertainty motivated us to new levels of program innovation.

As a result, we served more children than ever before. In 2021, 526,000 children received brand-new winter coats and, as part of our new Warm Soles program, nearly 30,000 children received a brand-new pair of athletic-style shoes.

After a year of success through the hardship of unprecedented social challenges, we are driven to uphold the progress achieved.

Sincerely,

Grace Sica
Executive Director | Operation Warm
M O T I V A T I O N

Each year Operation Warm receives requests for coats and shoes on behalf of children in need across the U.S. and Canada—children in foster care, homeless shelters, and urgent need situations.

During the Fall and Winter of 2020, we received the largest number of requests to the Wish List in our history. Over 3x the average number of annual requests for coats; from organizations that support children in need.

A new coat would mean the most to our students. Many of our students are walkers. Some come through the school doors shivering on these recent cold days. They don’t want to admit that they do not have a coat at home, so we hear many stories of what happened to their coats. We have many siblings in our school and I have witnessed a rotation of the same coat to each different sibling in a week. We have been asked by teachers for coat donations because they watch their students spend their breakfast time warming up instead of eating.

A warm winter jacket for our children would mean so much to them and their families. It would mean an easier transition for our new comers into our harsh Canadian winters. It would ensure a smile on their faces while playing during breaks, while walking to and from school, and allow their families to put the cost of a winter coat towards something else like food and shelter. As I mentioned above, I am just the Custodian here, but it breaks my heart seeing them hesitate to go outside during breaks because it’s too cold, instead of running out those doors to go build a snowman, or make snow angels.

- Wish List applicant, 2019

A new coat would help the children to see themselves in a new light when they put on their new stylish coats and be proud to wear them. I also want the children to be uplifted and feel important by wearing a new coat and not feel like they stand out anymore because they are wearing hand me downs; and they feel like they ‘fit in’ with everyone else. It is also my belief that a new coat would help a child to maintain a sense of dignity help to give them the determination to do anything.

- Wish List applicant, 2020

- Wish List applicant, 2019

- Wish List applicant, 2020
MISSION

Operation Warm’s mission has always been focused on the whole child. Our tagline, ‘more than a coat’ means that our programs don’t just provide physical warmth, but also emotional warmth, the confidence to socialize and succeed, and hope of a brighter future. We’re proud to say that over the last 22 years, the coat has become a bridge between our partners and families in need to access critical resources.

Our mission statement captures the spirit of holistic service.

Operation Warm provides warmth, confidence, and hope through basic need programs that connect underserved children to community resources they need to thrive.
**PROGRAMS**

**COATS:** Our coats are made with durable materials and feature deep pockets, detachable hoods, and are produced in a variety of stylish colors and styles that change annually. All our coats include an inner label that reads “Made Especially for You!” with a place for the child’s name to be written.

**SHOES:** With the launch of our Warm Soles initiative, we now offer high-quality, athletic-style shoes that inspire confidence and outdoor play, to serve grade school aged children. The addition of shoes gives us the opportunity to make an impact on the lives of children in need all year round.

**Why Shoes?**

Our 2019 survey data told us that in addition to coats, shoes were an essential need for the children we serve. We responded with a pilot program and the responses from teachers, parents, and the kids was resoundingly positive. In 2020, we further invested in shoes and have tripled the size of the program.

Between the ages of 4 to 14, children outgrow their shoe size every 4-8 months on average.

Families living in poverty spend more than 80% of their income on essential needs—food, shelter, childcare, and healthcare.

The gift of brand-new shoes in their fit and preference empowers children in need by sparking confidence and self-pride.

U.S. Census Bureau’s American Housing Survey
DRIVE

VISION

Our vision is to inspire and empower local communities to support underserved children by using the gift of a coat or a pair of shoes as a catalyst for connection. With this gift, our partners can either build national impact programs or activate highly-focused programs in their own communities. These relationships are the springboard that can give children access to a host of life-sustaining resources and services. Since our inception, we’ve used these gifts to connect underserved children with everything from library books to flu shots.

CORE VALUES

1. INTEGRITY
   Transparency, honesty, and morality in what we do and how we act.

2. INNOVATION
   Focus on new ideas and methods that help us responsibly broaden our impact.

3. COMMUNITY
   Connecting children in need with the compassionate organizations and individuals that provide services and support.

4. DIVERSITY
   Commitment to building a diverse network of partners, donors, board members, and staff as a way to inspire children and communities to engage positively.
“Impact Beyond Warmth” event provides Chicago children living in public housing and those using housing choice vouchers with the gift of brand-new, colorful and warm winter coats while their families are connected to valuable social services at a resource fair.

OceanFirst Foundation led a community event to support New Jersey families in need. With funding from the South Jersey Collaborative and partners Fulfill and Better Education 4 Kids, the event provided meal kits, learning resources, and 3,200 new coats for kids.

In Utah, a collection of funders including Sorensen Legacy Foundation, McCarthey Family Foundation, and the Val A. and Edith D. Green Foundation, Molina Healthcare of Utah, and the Salt Lake County Mayors office came together to provide Operation Warm coats, food boxes from Utah Food Bank, and flu shots administered by Salt Lake County Health Department for over 1,500 Salt Lake City, Title 1 School students and their families.

At the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, families came for brand-new coats, and also received books, learning resources, and an introduction of the community services that the library provides beyond books.


**A CALL TO ACTION**

Necessity is often the driver of innovation. The challenges posed by the pandemic motivated Operation Warm staff and supporters in unimaginable ways.

**Partnering with New Voices — #morethanacoat campaign**

In the Fall of 2020, we launched our first influencer activation, calling on athletes, celebrities, and national brands to use their platforms to help raise awareness for our mission.

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**Virtual Volunteering**

Skilled volunteers reached out to offer their talents on projects large and small. Experts in data analytics, marketing, supply chain, and more dedicated their time to help us optimize operations and save costs.

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**Expansion of supply chain**

In response to supply chain challenges, we began the expansion of our manufacturing countries of origin, and added a new warehouse in Pennsylvania.

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**Digital Resources**

When the world went digital, we were ready with a more inclusive and responsive website and an optimized online ordering system.

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Images by Andre Drummond, Lauren Alaina, Nordstrom via Instagram

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**40** Influencer Partners

**38** US cities

**7,730** Children served

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EVENTS RE-IMAGINED

Gifting events are the heart of our mission...the interactions between children and volunteers have been a driver of our partnerships. In the midst of a global pandemic, we found creative ways to get coats to kids in the safest way possible.

VOLUNTEER POWERED DELIVERY

FedEx team members collected items for purple totes, met delivery trucks, and handed out Operation Warm coats in safe, socially-distanced settings.

ZOOM DROP-INS

Superstar athletes Ben Simmons and Donte Jackson surprised students by “stopping-by” in virtual classrooms to say ‘hello!’

VIRTUAL VOLUNTEERING WITH WARM THOUGHTS

Corporate volunteers decorated coloring pages and wrote inspiring notes that were delivered with coats to schools and other beneficiary agencies.
IN 2020, WE SERVED MORE CHILDREN THAN EVER BEFORE.

556,000 CHILDREN SERVED IN 2020

62 STATES & PROVINCES

1,900 COMMUNITIES SERVED

4 MILLION COATS GIFTED SINCE 1998
FINANCIALS

Total Income ..................................... $33,009,404
Program Services.................................. $29,774,041
Management and General .................... $482,275
Fundraising............................................. $945,291
Total Expenses.................................... $31,201,607
Income for 2021 Programs .................. $1,807,797
Net Assets, End of Period ..................... $6,850,750

PROGRAM EFFICIENCY: 95%

4 MILLION COATS

Dick Sanford was driving through his small Pennsylvania town one frigid winter morning in 1998, when he saw a group of children – coatless – huddled together at their bus stop, trying to stay warm. Shocked to see such poverty in his own community, Dick bought all 58 coats at his local department store and got those coats to the kids who needed them. Operation Warm was born.

For the last twenty-two years, caring individuals, organizations and companies have joined Dick and the Operation Warm team to give brand new coats to children across North America. Most of all, we were deeply grateful to Operation Warm’s supporters, who have given warmth, confidence and hope to over 4 million children living in need.
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MORE THAN EVER
we are
more than a coat