



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Backyard Hope, Inc. Awarded \$50,000 from UpMobility Foundation to Launch “Essentials Express” Mobile Community Closet

Utica, NY – August 29, 2025 – Backyard Hope, Inc. is proud to announce it has been awarded a \$50,000 grant from the UpMobility Foundation to launch *Essentials Express*, a mobile community closet initiative that will bring vital resources directly to families, students, and individuals across Oneida County and beyond.

Essentials Express will provide access to hygiene products, seasonal clothing, socks, undergarments, personal care items, and non-perishable food — meeting people where they are. Using a branded vehicle, the mobile closet will travel to schools, neighborhood gatherings, community events, and agency referrals, eliminating barriers such as transportation, scheduling conflicts, and stigma.

“This funding is transformational for Backyard Hope and the families we serve,” said Danielle Padula, Founder of Backyard Hope, Inc. “The Essentials Express ensures that children, parents, and individuals who might otherwise go without essentials will now have access in a way that is respectful, convenient, and dignified. We are deeply grateful to the UpMobility Foundation for believing in this vision and helping us build stronger, healthier communities.”

Each mobile stop will offer a welcoming, store-like environment where families can “shop” free of charge. Beyond distribution, Essentials Express will also connect individuals to local resources and services, furthering Backyard Hope’s mission to empower families and create long-term stability.

Backyard Hope officially launched in January 2025 and has already distributed more than 2,000 essential items to families in need. Through this grant, the organization will expand its reach and impact, ensuring no child or family is left without the most

“The UpMobility Foundation is committed to supporting initiatives that empower individuals to reach their full potential. We are honored to partner with Backyard Hope to help establish the Essentials Express program and ensure that everyone in our community is supported in a manner that is dignified, efficient, and effective.” Said Amy Lindner, Interim Executive Director, UpMobility Foundation, Inc.



Backyard Hope is dedicated to sustaining this initiative through volunteer support, strategic partnerships, in-kind donations, and continued fundraising, ensuring Essentials Express remains a long-term resource for the region.

About Backyard Hope, Inc.


Backyard Hope, Inc. is dedicated to creating a brighter future for families and youth by providing essential resources such as food, clothing, and hygiene products. The organization builds supportive communities where everyone can grow, thrive, and realize their potential through education, empowerment, and meaningful connections.


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