



## Circles of Mercy Back to School Program

Dear Benefactors, Friends and Mercy Family:

Since the onset of the COVID-19 virus, its influence is being felt in many ways. We have come to realize that there are so many people that are in need of our help. Of the approximate 1,073 Rensselaer students who attended school this year, 68% qualify for either free or reduced price lunch program which is higher than the state average of 52%. We continue to be surprised to learn that so many children (21.5%) live near or below the poverty level. Due to the high cost of preparing a child for school, Circles has a program available where low-income parents may come in and get free school supplies for their students. This project is known as "Cate's Kids Back to School Program" and we need your assistance again to help us help others - especially given the impact of COVID-19.

Our program focus is on all high school grades (9-12) and pre-school students. Circles is requesting the following types of school supplies:

Pencils (regular lead #2 and color), pencil sharpener, erasers (for pencils), pens (black or blue), markers (dry erase and sharpies - assorted colors), pocket folders (assorted colors), 3 ring binders (in 2" and 3" sizes), loose leaf paper (college ruled), graph paper, spiral subject notebooks (1, 3 and 5 subject in college ruled), subject dividers, plastic zipper pencil cases / boxes, 3"x5" index cards, highlighters (yellow), rulers (regular with metric), kleenex tissues, hand sanitizer (small bottles), post-it-notes, backpacks (no rollers/wheels), hole reinforcement labels, combination lock (for gym lockers), and other electronic items such as: flash drives, ear buds (for computer use) and scientific calculators (TI-84).

Donations can be dropped off at Circles or we would be happy to arrange picking them up. If you are unable to shop and would prefer to make a monetary contribution to Circles of Mercy for Cate's Kids Back to School Program, please do so by sending in your donation to us. We have the months of July and August to gather the donations. We would like to have the items delivered here by August 21st, so we can process the supplies and have families pick them up at Circles beginning the last week of August 24th through August 28th. This will enable the children to be better prepared for their all-important first weeks back to school beginning on – September 3rd.

Any assistance with this project will be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions please feel free to call me, or contact Candice or Mary at Circles of Mercy: 518-462-0899. Thank you in advanced for your help and support. Our client students require your assistance now more than ever!

Sincere best regards,

Richard S. Zazycki,  
Director - Circles of Mercy

