

Exploring Asylum Hill – Back to School

The last full week of August saw five different opportunities for school children to get a free backpack and a celebration of “Back to School” The first was on Tuesday the 22nd when the Asylum Hill Family Center had the section of Gillett St in front of their offices blocked off for a celebration that included food, face-painting, music with a DJ, “vendors” offering services for children and parents alike and of course more that 300 free backpacks. This mix of offerings was repeated the next day at the Boys & Girls Club on Sigourney St where West Middle School held their back to school event. They even added a bouncy house and slide to the mix and there was a backpack waiting for each of the approximately 500 students expected for the first day of school. Much of this support, including uniforms and tutoring comes from The Hartford and their employees each year.



On Saturday, both the Urban League of Greater Hartford and First Calvary Church were doing the same with slight differences. ULGH had the food, DJ with music, vendors and more than 300 backpacks, while First Calvary, set up at Grace Lutheran a few blocks south on Woodland offered food, music, free clothes and prayers with their backpacks. Sunday brought the last of the celebrations when the Open Door Church on the corner of Sigourney and Asylum offered most of the same to any children passing by.

More than a thousand backpacks were distributed to children in Asylum Hill that week as well as a lot of excitement.

On Monday it was the teachers' turn to get excited, but that's another article. See *HPS Convocation* elsewhere in this newsletter.

All in all it was an exciting start to a very important school year. A lot of futures depend on it, including our own. For photos of each of the events go to:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/zZ6Lf95YPdfBWxru1>

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/7068wjA9ootRhpiG3>

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/WNeVqEzCOBRi9cnH2>

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/SRN9on5zBFapOOa23>