



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AdventHealth Ottawa and Shoes That Fit Provide More than 1,500 Pairs of New Athletic Shoes for Students Across Franklin County

For the second year in a row, students received a new pair of shoes along with two pairs of socks made possible, in part, by donations through AdventHealth Ottawa Foundation

OTTAWA, Kan. – For the second year, [AdventHealth Ottawa](#) and AdventHealth Ottawa Foundation partnered with the national nonprofit organization [Shoes That Fit](#) to provide a brand-new pair of name-brand athletic shoes and two pairs of socks to every student across seven elementary schools in Franklin County, Kan., equaling to more than 1,500 pairs of shoes and 3,000 pairs of socks.

During the kickoff distribution event that took place at Wellsville Elementary School, more than 300 students were provided shoes, socks and a breakfast, courtesy of volunteers, community leaders and AdventHealth Ottawa and AdventHealth Ottawa Foundation representatives.

“The purpose of this incredible event is to provide new, well-fitting shoes to all kids who are on the free or reduced lunch program in Franklin County, which impacts about 50% of students in the district. So much of our mission and purpose extends to helping our community feel whole; this is a wonderful opportunity to bring health and wholeness to some of our littlest citizens,” said Brendan Johnson, president and chief executive officer of AdventHealth Ottawa. “Because of generous donations, we’re able to gift these students with shoes and socks which means kids on the free and reduced lunch program will have an inclusive experience alongside their classmates, bringing them and their families joy.”

In the United States, one in three kids live in low-income families, and one of the most visible signs of poverty is shoes. Millions of children miss school, refrain from participating in sports, and face teasing and bullying due to worn-out shoes.

“By providing children with new shoes and socks, their self-esteem is boosted, attendance improves, and participation in physical activities increases,” said Ryan Henningsen, board chair of AdventHealth Ottawa Foundation. “This initiative helps ensure elementary school children in need in Franklin County can walk into school proud and ready to learn.”

Ariel Jankord, principal of Lincoln Elementary School in Ottawa, extended her gratitude for this community initiative.

“Thank you to everyone for supporting our students,” said Jankord. “Recently, I noticed several students wearing worn or ill-fitting shoes. It was reassuring to know that, thanks to your support, they’ll soon have a new pair. Your generosity means so much to our community.”

USD 290 Superintendent Ryan Cobbs, EdD, said, “This event means so much to our kids and their families. I am not sure that I can conjure up the right words to display the enormity of the contribution; the impact this has on our school community is beyond compare.”

For more information about the AdventHealth Ottawa and Shoes That Fit, visit [Donate to Shoes That Fit](#).

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About AdventHealth Ottawa

AdventHealth Ottawa is a 44-bed acute care facility that delivers a wide range of inpatient, outpatient and surgical health care services across Franklin County and its surrounding areas. AdventHealth Ottawa provides whole-person care for every stage of life and health with a presence in the community lasting more than 80 years. In May 2019 Ransom Memorial Health became AdventHealth Ottawa, joining AdventHealth’s connected system of care comprised of nearly 50 hospital campuses and hundreds of care sites in diverse markets throughout almost a dozen states. With a sacred mission of Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ, AdventHealth is a connected system of care with more than 80,000 skilled and compassionate caregivers in physician practices, hospitals, outpatient clinics, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies and hospice centers provide individualized, wholistic care.

About AdventHealth Ottawa Foundation

The AdventHealth Ottawa Foundation has a longstanding tradition to inspire philanthropy in our community to support the healing mission of AdventHealth Ottawa. The foundation is an independent 501(c)(3) organization, and 100% of all donations stay in the Franklin County community. The foundation directly supports programs and services at AdventHealth Ottawa through a multitude of gifts from local, passionate community members invested in creating a whole-person health care experience that includes healing the body, easing the mind, and lifting the spirit. Funds raised by the foundation assist in the purchase of new, updated equipment and facilities for AdventHealth Ottawa and support programs that will have a life-changing, positive impact on members of the community. To learn more about the AdventHealth Ottawa Foundation, visit [AdventHealthOttawa.com](#).

About Shoes That Fit

Shoes That Fit is a national nonprofit active in all 50 states, helping over 100,000 kids annually. The organization addresses the visible signs of poverty by providing children with new athletic shoes, partnering with individual donors, corporate sponsors, and volunteers to make a significant impact.