



THE CENTERSM

201 Bleecker Street | Utica, New York 13501 | 315.738.1083 | TheCenterUtica.org

For Immediate Release

September 3, 2020

Contacts:

The Center
Shelly Callahan, Executive Director
shellyc@thecenterutica.org
315.738.1083 (office)
315.272.9267 (cell)

Safe Schools Mohawk Valley
Anne Lansing, Chief Executive Officer
alansing@uticaschools.org
(315)792-2205

The Center Partners with Safe Schools Mohawk Valley for a Bike Giveaway

The Center (formerly the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees), in partnership with Safe Schools Mohawk Valley and their Build-A-Bike program, delivered 42 bicycles and helmets to children and their families on August 10, 2020. Due to COVID-19, the bicycles were delivered to recipient's homes following social distancing guidelines, and face masks were required. All of the youth and adults who participated in the giveaway were extremely grateful and excited to receive a bicycle and helmet. The Center staff member Dan Vellone, who coordinated the delivery stated, "When we pulled up to each house on delivery day, we were greeted by excited kids joined by their parents. Even if you don't understand Arabic, Burmese, Karen or Russian, you can instantly recognize when a mom or dad is excited for their child, but also telling them that they need to wear helmets!" Bike safety information and the proper use of bike helmets was provided by The Center's Coordinator of Traffic Safety.

The Center would like to thank Safe Schools Mohawk Valley for their generosity and willingness to support a bike giveaway during these difficult times due to COVID-19. The bicycles were a welcome addition to each family, which will allow them to participate in traditional summer activity that can be done safely while practicing social distancing.

Safe Schools Mohawk Valley is a unique school and community-based provider working to foster a seamless approach to service coordination amongst families, students, schools and the community. The mission of Safe Schools MV is to keep kids in school by reducing barriers to learning while supporting their social and emotional well-being.

The Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to assisting refugees, immigrants, and Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals throughout the integration process and helps them achieve independence and self-sufficiency by developing products and services that enable us to build community with many cultures. Since its inception in 1981, the organization has provided comprehensive resettlement and integration services, fostering significant economic growth, and cultivating a thriving, vibrant and inclusive multicultural community.

###