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NY GIANTS SUPER BOWL CHAMPION VICTOR CRUZ, ALTICE USA AND ACER TO TEAM UP TO PROVIDE 100 ACER CHROMEBOOKS FOR PATERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS STUDENTS

Donation made to district where 2/3 of students are without devices

***Photos attached: see end of release for captions.***

PATERNON – Responding to thousands of students who need technology at home while schools are closed, NY Giants Super Bowl Champion Victor Cruz, Altice USA and Acer teamed up today to donate 100 Chromebooks to the district. The announcement was made at a news conference held by Superintendent Eileen Shafer, Deputy Superintendent Susana Perón and School Board Vice President Manuel Martinez, Jr. at the Central Office building at 90 Delaware Avenue. N.J. State Assemblyman Benjie Wimberly and Paterson Mayor Andre Sayegh also be participated in the event.

“Closing our school buildings to help stop the spread of COVID-19 was the right thing to do to keep staff and students safe, but it left many of our students on the wrong side of the digital divide,” said Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer. “That is why we are so grateful for the efforts of Paterson’s own Super Bowl champion Victor Cruz, and the people at Altice USA and ACER, who banded together to put a Chromebook in the hands of more Paterson students.”

“The impact of COVID-19 across the world has been challenging in so many ways. When I learned about the Paterson School District’s need of technology for students at home, I knew immediately my charity, the Victor Cruz Foundation, would find a way to help support the devastating challenge,” said Cruz, a Paterson native who was coached by Wimberly when he played football for Paterson Catholic. “It took many calls and emails but we’re so thankful that our friends at Altice were able to join in support. The need is still great and both myself and the Victor Cruz Foundation will continue to find ways to ensure our future leaders are equipped with the tools they need.”
“As a proud, longstanding partner of Paterson Public Schools, we’re thrilled to have brought together Acer and the Victor Cruz Foundation to make this donation today. More than ever, connecting to the Internet is essential for families and students,” said Lee Schroeder, Executive Vice President, Government & Community Affairs/Chief Diversity Officer for Altice USA. “Similarly, to other recent programs such as student wifi service to connect thousands of devices throughout the district and the complimentary offer of our Altice Advantage Internet program to support remote learning for households with K-12 and college students, today’s donation is another sign of Altice USA’s commitment to our customers and future generations in New Jersey.”

Altice USA is the connectivity provider to the Paterson School District. During the COVID-19 crisis, Altice USA has offered its Altice Advantage Internet product free to student households and has provisioned more than 14,000 school-issued devices so students can access its Optimum WiFi network at no charge.

There are nearly 30,000 students in grades pre-K through 12 in the Paterson Public School District. The district began distributed 7,000 Chromebooks to all high school students at the end of April. At the beginning of May, 1,667 Chromebooks that were purchased with reapportioned budget funds were distributed to as many middle school students as possible. After those efforts, about two thirds of the district’s students remain without a device or access the internet while schools are closed.

On April 24th, the district launched an online campaign to raise funds to purchase online devices for students to use while schools are closed due to the COVID-19 crisis, which has garnered donation from private individuals ranging from $5 to more than $1,000. The district is continuing its fundraising efforts.

Photo 1: NY Giants Super Bowl Champion Victor Cruz speaks at the announcement of 100 Acer Chromebooks being donated.

Photo 2: (from left) Board of Education Vice President Manuel Martinez, Jr., N.J. State Assemblyman Benjie Wimberly, Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer, NY Giants Super Bowl Champion Victor Cruz, Paterson Mayor Andre Sayegh, Deputy Superintendent of Schools Susana Perón.

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