



## PRESS RELEASE

# Novotel New York Times Square Supports Local Youth with Operation Backpack

New York, NY (July 19, 2011) – Novotel, which offers a high standard of attentive service at eight hotels in North America and nearly 400 around the world, continues to affirm its commitment towards its community. Novotel New York Times Square is working with business partners, vendors and team members to benefit Operation Backpack, supporting children in the Greater New York community prepare for their return to school in the fall.

Operation Backpack, in association with Volunteers of America, engages the entire Greater New York community in an effort to ensure that every child who is homeless returns to school in the fall with a new backpack filled with grade-specific supplies.

Participating for a fourth consecutive year, Novotel New York Times Square will donate approximately 50 backpacks and use generously donated funds from business partners, vendors, and team member-led fundraising events, to purchase the necessary school supplies to fill them.

“Last year, we raised over \$4,000 – providing 100 elementary-age children with the tools they need to start the school year,” said Marc Sternagel, general manager of Novotel New York Times Square. “This year, we hope to raise more money so we can fill the more demanding school supply needs of high school-age students.”

In 2010, Operation Backpack distributed a total of 7,000 full backpacks and an additional 700 unfilled backpacks to children living throughout the five boroughs of Greater New York. This year, the goal is 11,000.

“We could not do this without the support of individuals and businesses such as Novotel New York Times Square,” said Richard P. Motta, president and CEO of Volunteers of America. “Their willingness to support the local community means hundreds of homeless children can start the new school year looking and feeling more like their classmates.”

Novotel New York Times Square team members and volunteers will gather at Novotel’s training room on **Thursday, July 21<sup>st</sup>**, from **10 a.m. to 12 p.m.** to stuff backpacks with all donated supplies, ahead of the new school year. For more information, contact Marc Sternagel, general manager of Novotel New York Times Square, at (212) 315-0100.

Volunteers of America also welcomes community volunteers for supplies and backpack sorting at their warehouse, located at W. 54th St. and 6th Avenue, July 25-26 in the morning and afternoon and on July 27 and 29 in the morning. For more information, contact Kristin Kelly-Jangraw at Volunteers of America at (212) 496-4307.

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## **About Novotel**

As the mid-scale hotel brand within the Accor group portfolio, Novotel offers close to 400 hotels and resorts in 60 countries, situated in the centre of major international cities from business districts to tourist destinations. Novotel's consistently high standard of service contributes to the wellbeing of both business and leisure travellers: think spacious, modular-design guestrooms, balanced cuisine available 24/7, excellent meeting facilities, attentive staff, dedicated children's areas and rejuvenating wellness facilities. The Novotel group is a pioneer in sustainable development and all Novotel hotels participate in the EarthCheck worldwide environmental certification program.

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