



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

Coat and Blanket Drive to Benefit Refugees

DAVID J. VALESKY November 1, 2013

This week, I attended two events that spotlight community development efforts in the city of Syracuse. [WCNY](#) officially opened its new headquarters on Syracuse's Near Westside, and Attorney General Eric Schneiderman was in town to announce a \$3 million land bank grant.

I was pleased to take a tour during WCNY's grand opening to see the new facility, which houses two TV studios, two radio studios, a performance studio, seven editing tech suites, an education center, a café, and a courtyard for community events. A combination of public and private funds financed the project, including a \$5 million state Restore New York grant.

The land bank grant will allow Syracuse to renovate 40 city homes and 10 suburban homes for sale to low- or moderate-income homebuyers. The [Greater Syracuse Property Development Corp.](#), as the land bank is formally known, will partner with [Home HeadQuarters](#), a nonprofit homeownership group, to renovate homes. The state money subsidizes the renovation so that the homes are move-in ready. This opens up the homes to potential buyers who may not be able to afford homes that need extensive renovations after purchase.

As you may know, I was the Senate sponsor of legislation to create land banks across the state.

New Alert System Sends Notifications to Victims of Domestic Violence

A new alert system is now available for domestic violence victims in Central New York. The Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification Network (SAVIN) instantly tells victims via text message, email, fax, or automated phone call when an order of protection has been served. Victims can then take appropriate steps to protect themselves and their loved ones from further harm. More information is available on the [SAVIN-NY website](#).

Vera House released its [24th Annual Report to the Community](#) on Wednesday. The organization continues to expand its services, but the tragedy in Liverpool this week reminds us that domestic violence can occur anytime, anyplace. If you or anyone you know is a victim of domestic violence, there are many services available. [Vera House](#) has a 24-hour crisis and support line: (315) 468-3260.

Coat and Blanket Drive to Benefit Newly Arrived Refugees

I am currently holding a coat and blanket drive at the State Office Building in Syracuse through Friday, November 15 in partnership with [InterFaith Works' Refugee Resettlement program](#) at the Center for New Americans. Refugee families often need coats, blankets, and other household items when they arrive in the United States. Many refugees come from warmer climates and have never experienced the kind of winters that we have in Central New York. Most arrive in the United States with only the clothes they are wearing and the items that they can carry in a suitcase.

I encourage you to drop off new or gently used washable coats and blankets in the lobby of the State Office Building through the entrance at 333 E. Washington St in Syracuse. All coat sizes are needed for toddlers, youth, women and men.