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Columbia Sportswear's ReThreads Clothing Recycling Program Expands to All of Its US Stores

Program to benefit key non-profit organizations in its first month

PORTLAND, Ore.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Columbia Sportswear is proud to announce the roll out of its ReThreads program in more than 100 Columbia stores across the United States to help people recycle used clothing and footwear. For the first month of the national program, Columbia will make a financial contribution to a non-profit organization for every pound of clothing that is recycled and kept out of landfills.

"The issue of clothing ending up in landfills is a significant problem, and we want do our part to help conserve our material resources and reduce our collective carbon footprint," said Columbia Sr. Global Corporate Relations Manager, Scott Welch. "We are thrilled to build on last year's successful ReThreads pilot program and roll it out to all of our stores and their communities around the country."

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's website, Americans discarded over 32 billion pounds of clothing, shoes and other textiles in 2014, accounting for over 6% of the municipal waste stream. With the average American throwing away 81 pounds of textiles per year, the Columbia ReThreads program aims to reduce this amount and impact by asking people to drop off garments, outerwear, and footwear (in clean, dry condition) at each of their store locations. According to the EPA's website, programs like ReThreads help keep these items out of the landfill and contribute to the over 5 billion pounds of consumer textile waste being reused or recycled today.

In celebration of this ReThreads launch, Columbia will donate \$1 for every pound of clothing collected at its stores August 9th through September 10, 2017. Participants in the program will be given a token once they drop off their gently used items and can use that token to place their vote for one of the participating non-profits outlined below.

- **American Hiking Society-** Founded in 1976 as the only national voice for hiking, American Hiking Society protects, preserves, and promotes the places you love to hike.
- **National Park Foundation-** As the official charitable partner of the National Park Service, the National Park Foundation enriches America's national parks and programs through private support, safeguarding our heritage and inspiring generations of national park enthusiasts.
- **Children and Nature Network-** Nature has the power to make children happier, healthier and smarter. The Children and Nature Network is leading a global movement to increase equitable access to nature so that children and natural places can thrive.

"Protecting the environment by recycling materials that hikers use is essential for the next generation to explore the places we all love to hike," explains American Hiking Society Executive Director, Dr. Kate Van Waes. "Columbia Sportswear and American Hiking Society have partnered for over 10 years, and we are excited to collaborate on the Rethreads program."

After garments and footwear are dropped in the ReThreads bins in each Columbia store, they are sent to a processing facility through [I:CO](#), a textile recycling solutions company. Items that are still re-wearable are sold as second-hand goods through I:CO's network. Unwearable items are reused for products like cleaning cloths or recycled into fibers for products such as insulation and new fabrics.

The [ReThreads program](#) officially launches on August 9th. For a full listing of store locations, please visit <http://www.columbia.com/stores>.

About Columbia

Columbia, the flagship brand of Portland, Oregon-based Columbia Sportswear Company, has been creating innovative apparel, footwear, accessories and equipment for outdoor enthusiasts since 1938. Columbia has become a leading global brand by channeling the company's passion for the outdoors into technologies and performance products that keep people warm, dry, cool and protected year-round. To learn more, please visit the company's website at www.columbia.com.

About I:CO

I:CO®, short for I:Collect, is a global solutions provider for apparel and footwear collection, reuse and recycling. Through its retail take-back system and worldwide infrastructure, I:CO aims to keep these items in a closed loop cycle to be reused again to reduce waste and protect the environment. For more information, please visit: www.ico-spirit.com.

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