

NEWS

VOLUNTEER CENTER OF BERGEN COUNTY, INC.

64 Passaic Street Hackensack, NJ 07601 Phone: 201-489-9454 Fax: 201-489-1995
www.bergenvolunteers.org

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Contact: Jane He
201-489-9454 Ext.125

Community Chest Funds Volunteer Center

The Volunteer Center of Bergen County of Hackensack has been notified that it will receive a grant of \$5,000 from the Community Chest serving Englewood, Tenafly and Englewood Cliffs. The Community Chest grant will provide unrestricted support for Volunteer Center programs.

The Volunteer Center programs are divided into three main categories: Community Volunteer Services, Business Volunteer Services and Direct Volunteer Services.

Community Volunteer Services:

The Referral Service connects thousands of people annually with volunteer opportunities at hundreds of public and private non-profit agencies in and near Bergen County. Students, school groups, community, civic and faith-based organizations can obtain the *Guide to Volunteering*, a comprehensive directory of volunteer opportunities. This information is also posted in searchable form on the Center's website: www.bergenvolunteers.org

RSVP links senior volunteers age 55 and older with non-profit agencies where their time, interests, talents, knowledge and experience can be effectively utilized to meet important needs in our community.

The Volunteer Center offers non-profit agencies training in Volunteer Management, trains individuals to serve on nonprofit boards, and offers consultations to nonprofits regarding development and effectiveness of their boards

The Volunteer Center offers the Youth Leadership Program, an interactive leadership development course, to schools and youth groups, which can be tailored to individual groups' needs. Visitors to the **BergenVolunTEENS** page on the Center's website can get ideas about

volunteer projects, learn about national days of service and search for volunteer jobs available nearby. The site also links to many other youth volunteer-related websites.

The Volunteer Center leads the Bergen County VOAD (Voluntary Agencies Active in Disaster), an alliance of agencies that assists the Bergen County Office of Emergency Management, the American Red Cross and other first responders in preparing for and responding to disasters, whether natural or man-made. Its Long Term Recovery Committee continues to offer help and resources to residents still affected by the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, especially those in Moonachie, Little Ferry and Lyndhurst.

The Volunteer Center sponsors the All Wrapped Up holiday giving program to link individuals and families in need with willing donors during the holiday season. Last year, nearly \$400,000 was generated to assist more than 4,000 people.

The Volunteer Center sponsors **Bergen LEADS**, a year-long community leadership and learning experience for adults who live and/or work in Bergen County. The interactive and experiential curriculum addresses critical issues facing the Bergen County community, while offering participants the opportunity to understand and develop their leadership style. A critical component of the curriculum is community trusteeship, in which participants learn to use their new-found knowledge of the community to affect positive change.

Business Volunteer Services

The Business Volunteer Services department helps area businesses seeking to engage their employees in service activities. Through the Northern New Jersey Business Volunteer Council (BVC), more than 35,000 employees from 30 area businesses participate in strategic initiatives that meet the needs of children and families by addressing the issues of literacy, hunger and education. Since 2000, the BVC has generated and distributed more than \$1.4 million in resources to families in need, while fostering collaboration between member companies and community organizations.

Direct Service Programs:

The Volunteer Center sponsors several programs in which volunteers are trained and supervised to provide services directly to people in need.

Bergen Mentors – two programs recruit, train, screen, and provide ongoing supervision and support to caring adults who serve as mentors through one-on-one relationships.

Mentoring Youth are mentors, friends and role models to troubled, abused or neglected children, helping children to see a positive future and, hopefully breaking the cycle of abuse and neglect.

Mentoring Moms serve as friends and role models to support mothers who have experienced difficulties with parenting, managing households, providing for their children, and other obstacles.

Chore Service - crews of volunteers provide minor home repairs that help the elderly and disabled remain safe in their homes. Performing the minor but essential repairs that clients can neither do for themselves nor get anyone else to do for them, Chore can mean the difference between independence and institutionalization.

To find out more about supporting the community programs of the Volunteer Center, or to volunteer, call (201) 489-9454

The Volunteer Center of Bergen County strengthens the community by connecting people through service and developing civic leaders.

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