



NEWS

The Volunteer Center of Bergen County – Business Volunteer Council

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Bring the Joy of Reading to a Child

Northern New Jersey---Studies show that reading to a child, especially early learners, is the single most important thing a parent can do to help the child acquire language, develop a love of learning and prepare for school - leading to greater academic success.

Often, children in low-income families lack access to books. These families are struggling to pay for rent, utilities and food, so books are far down on the list of must-have items.

To address this need, The Volunteer Center of Bergen County's **Business Volunteer Council**, has kicked off its annual **Books in a Bag** campaign. The goal of the program is to collect 5,000 NEW books between January 21st and March 2nd. The books will be distributed to children enrolled in Mentoring Youth and Mentoring Moms, which are programs of the Volunteer Center that provide mentors to children and families in need. Books suitable for ages preschool through high school level are needed.

The campaign will culminate on Read Across America Day on March 2nd, which also commemorates Theodore "Dr. Seuss" Geisel's March birthday. On that day, the collected books will be delivered to the children by dozens of corporate volunteers, who will also stay to read to the younger children.

Companies or individuals are invited to bring the joy of reading to a child. **Books in a Bag** is an onsite volunteer project perfect for companies of any size. Participating companies will receive a toolkit with detailed instructions on successfully implementing the program. For more information, contact Erica West, Director of Corporate Engagement, at ewest@bergenvolunteers.org or call 201-489-9454, x133.

Individuals may purchase books online by going to nnjbvc.org. Those books will be shipped to the Volunteer Center, then assembled in backpacks and delivered to children. The deadline for ordering books is February 13th.

“Since 2000, 75,000 books have been distributed to 15,000 children in low-income families through *Books in a Bag*”, says Erica West, Director of Corporate Engagement at the Volunteer Center. “Getting involved in this initiative is a great way for a company to do good work in the community. As Dr. Seuss said, ‘Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.’”

The Business Volunteer Council gives businesses a platform to successfully engage employees through volunteer service and workplace giving. The BVC provides customized volunteer projects, including skills-based volunteering and support for corporate social responsibility initiatives. The BVC makes doing good an easy part of doing business by building high-impact employee led-programs that are locally significant and socially relevant. Companies with the right engagement tools and guidance can create incredible social change, while having a fun, memorable team building experience!

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

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