

# NEWS

## VOLUNTEER CENTER OF BERGEN COUNTY, INC.

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**CAPTION (#747):** Local high school students participated in the 2014-15 class of Ready Set Serve at the Volunteer Center of Bergen County.

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 7, 2015

Repeat as space permits

End date: July 1, 2015

## Applications Being Accepted for Youth Leadership Program

Leadership and Community Service the Focus of Week-Long Activities

Bergen County--The Volunteer Center of Bergen County will be offering two sessions of the kick off, one-week summer service and leadership program for local students this summer. The program, *Ready Set Serve*, is scheduled for June 22-25 for students entering 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade this September, and August 31-September 3 for students entering grades 6, 7 or 8. Both sessions will be held at the Volunteer Center in Hackensack from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm daily.

*Ready Set Serve* is an exciting and challenging program for Bergen County students who will be immersed in a week of interactive, interesting and fun activities, learning leadership skills that will help them make a difference in their schools and communities. The focus of *Ready Set Serve* is community service. Through a state-of –the-art curriculum that includes both classroom instruction and experiential training, students will participate in challenging exercises including community needs analysis, goal setting, team building, project planning, decision making and other dynamic leadership skills.

Kayla Cottiers, a 10th grader at Hackensack High School, participated *in Ready Set Serve* in 2014. "I have participated in many leadership programs through my school, church and camp but this experience with the Volunteer Center has been one of a kind. *Ready Set Serve* gave me the confidence and the knowledge to take my passions and ideas and turn them into action. Community service is something I will do for the rest of my life. I cannot wait to be student trainer during this summer's session."

The *Ready Set Serve* experience continues beyond the one week in summer. Participants will continue to meet monthly from September through March to discuss and work on individual or group service projects. A graduation and project presentation will be held in conjunction with the Volunteer Center's Celebrate Volunteers recognition event in April 2016. Last summer, students initiated and worked on projects with many local non-profit agencies and programs, including the Volunteer Center's Mentoring Youth and Mentoring Moms, Habitat for Humanity, MEVO, Center for Food Action, Bergen Family Promise and many more.

"The ultimate purpose of *Ready Set Serve* is to help create stronger communities - and a stronger nation - by igniting in young people the ability and desire to make meaningful, lifelong contributions to their communities," says Debbie Emery, Community Volunteer Services Director at the Volunteer Center. "Students participating in this program will have a great activity to add to their college applications, as well as service hours they can use to meet requirements of schools and religious institutions."

The fee to attend this program is \$350 per student, which includes all class materials, snacks, beverages and lunch on the Thursday closing session. Students provide their own lunch the other days. The deadline for application is May 31. Tuition can be paid online at [www.bergenvolunteers.org](http://www.bergenvolunteers.org). Call 201-489-9454 Ext. 118 or email [demery@bergenvolunteers.org](mailto:demery@bergenvolunteers.org) for more information or to obtain an application.

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

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