



## **CREW New York donates 50 supply-filled backpacks and \$500 to VOA-GNY**

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CREW New York - one of the largest professional organizations for women in commercial real estate in New York City - has fulfilled its goal of donating 50 supply-filled backpacks along with \$500 to Volunteers of America - Greater New York's (VOA-GNY) Operation Backpack campaign. Operation Backpack is VOA-GNY's annual drive to collect all new backpacks and supplies for the tens of thousands of children living in New York City's homeless and domestic violence shelters. Operation Backpack's goal this year is to give brand-new filled backpacks to 20,000 children in New York City's shelter system before the start of the school year.

In addition to donating supplies and monetary contributions, members gave their time by participating in two packing/sorting sessions to organize donated school supplies into age-appropriate backpacks for high school students living in homeless shelters. This marks the second summer that members from CREW New York have participated in the program.

"At its core, CREW New York is a community for brilliant, motivated women - from seasoned professionals to inquisitive young people. We're proud to give back through our Charitable Fund with a number of important initiatives throughout the year, such as Operation Backpack," said CREW New York co-president Christine Chipurnoi, senior vice president of Wells Fargo Insurance Services.

"Our members are committed to giving back to our community to support women and children in need," added CREW New York co-president Jane Lyons, managing partner at Rhodes Associates.

"We encourage them to give do what they can to help make a difference in the lives of others, whether they are making monetary contributions, collecting and donating important supplies, or donating their time for the benefit of others."

"The participation of more than 160 corporate partners is essential to the success of Operation Backpack," said Rachel Weinstein, Operation Backpack founder, and Vice President/Chief Development and Communications Officer, Volunteers of America-Greater New York. "The members of CREW New York have been steadfast in their support, enlisting the help of their industry colleagues through their breakfast series, and reminding us of the compassionate individuals who drive our many corporate partnerships."

CREW New York's Charitable Fund is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, which was established by the organization in 1989 as part of its ongoing commitment to make a difference for women and children in need. As part of this initiative, CREW New York in partnership with Women in Need (WIN), hosted a weekly summer reading program in July and August to help children improve their reading levels at a local homeless shelter.

In addition, CREW New York members volunteered their time in July, as well as donated \$3,500 to the Bella Abzug Leadership Institute, Inc. (BALI), an organization which mentors and teaches young women in high school and college to be leaders of tomorrow. The Charitable Fund also focuses on

funding scholarships for students in real estate and urban studies programs at Baruch College, Columbia University and New York University. More than \$185,000 in scholarships has been awarded since the program's inception.

Shown (from left) are: Silke Rapelius, GKV Architects; Allison Deluca, Baker Tilly; Veronica Valdez, Baker Tilly; Evyan O'Keefe, Zetlin & De Chiara; Beth Zafonte, Akerman LLP; Joeann Walker, Zetlin & De Chiara; Kim Pinkerton, Creative Office Pavilion; Michelle Greenberg, Moritt, Hock and Hamroff LLP

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