



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Martin J. Golden

Senator Golden Joins Volunteers of America to Support Operation Backpack 2011 for New York City's Homeless Children

MARTIN J. GOLDEN July 8, 2011

Brooklyn - State Senator Martin J. Golden (R-C-I, Brooklyn) is announcing that his community offices will serve as drop off locations for the Volunteers of America OPERATION BACKPACK 2011, their 9th annual drive to collect brand-new backpacks and school supplies for the thousands of children living in New York City shelters. The campaign continues through July 24th and the district office is located at 7408-5th Avenue and the satellite office is located at 3604 Quentin Road.

Senator Marty Golden stated, "I am proud to join with Volunteers of America to support Operation Backpack 2011 which will help thousands of New Yorkers be prepared for school in September. This program provides a chance for students living in a homeless shelter to start the school year off right, when otherwise they wouldn't have such opportunity, or it would pose a tremendous burden to their families. I am confident that this community will be generous and support this great cause so to help our fellow New Yorkers in need."

On July 25th Fed Ex will contribute an entire day of services to collect the donations and deliver them to be sorted and packed, in a commercial space generously provided by a local real estate partner. From there, the grade-specific backpacks will be distributed to children in shelters across the city in time for the start of the school year. Last year Volunteers of America outfitted more than 7,000 homeless children with new, filled, backpacks. This year, the goal is to help more than 9,000 children.

One of the most devastating consequences of homelessness is the impact it has on a child's education. Nearly 11,000 school-age children are living in New York City homeless shelters. Most of them would face the start of school in September without basic school supplies if not for Operation Backpack. Relieving their parents of yet another financial burden, the program raises public awareness about the needs of homeless families and the impact homelessness has on a child's education.

Rachel Weinstein, Vice-President/Chief Communications Officer of Volunteers of America-Greater New York, speaks of the importance of the program and the reasons for its success. "With family homelessness at record levels, we are expanding our program this year to insure that no child who needs a backpack will be left out. Operation Backpack works because it gives everyone in the community the opportunity to help these children in need."

For grade-appropriate packing lists and other drop locations visit www.OperationBackpackNYC.org.

ABOUT OPERATION BACKPACK

Volunteers of America's back-to-school drive began in 1999 as a small effort to collect school supplies for the children in its shelters. In 2003 the campaign was re-branded "Operation Backpack" to reflect its ambitious, new goal: to give every child in the New York City shelter system who needs one, a new backpack filled with grade-specific school supplies.