

NEWS RELEASE

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New Rochelle Elementary Students to Receive Inclusivity Lesson & More from Volunteer New York!'s RISE Volunteers & New Rochelle's Seniors



Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and volunteer residents from New Rochelle's Garito Manor contributed to making colorful therapy pillows seen here, which Volunteer New York!'s RISE volunteers will hand-delivery to the students of Jefferson Elementary School on December 19, 2019.

NEW ROCHELLE, NY, December 19, 2018 – On Wednesday, December 19 students at Jefferson Elementary School in New Rochelle will benefit from receiving 45 volunteer-made therapy pillows. The microwavable pillows made from a sock and 2 lbs. of rice can be used as a weighted neck wrap or calming lap band for small children. Volunteers with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are members of Volunteer New York!'s RISE job-readiness program helped make these as part of an intergenerational volunteer opportunity with residents of New Rochelle's Garito Manor, an independent living facility, earlier this month.

The Jefferson Elementary students will have the chance to meet the RISE volunteers who made their therapy pillow as they are delivered. A chance for RISE volunteers to also deliver a real-life lesson in inclusion, ability and volunteerism.

“It is especially meaningful for the children to have a direct connection with our RISE volunteers. They get to see inclusivity in action and our RISE volunteers get the chance to see who their work will impact,” said Patti Colombo, Volunteer New York! RISE program manager. “It’s a win-win. That’s what our RISE program is all about.”

Under Colombo, weighted therapy pillows have been made by Volunteer New York! volunteers since 2016. Hundreds of pillows have been distributed since then locally to numerous agencies and groups who work with and support individuals on the autism spectrum.

Colombo continued, “[Weighted therapeutic] products like these are typically very expensive. Making these from scratch helps us continue to use volunteer power to move past limitations and bring our community closer together.”

About RISE: Readiness thru Integrated Service

This program of Volunteer New York! helps connect young adults with intellectual & developmental disabilities to nonprofits, where they can build skills and gain confidence through volunteer service. For more information on RISE, please contact Patti Colombo, RISE Manager at 914-227-9312 or patti@volunteernewyork.org.

About Therapy Pillows

A weighted neck wrap/lap pad can be used to provide self-regulation in children. These items help keep individuals calm and organized in a variety of environments. Weighted lap pads or neck wraps apply deep pressure to calm the nervous system. They are used for children and adults who have sensory-processing disorders, such as autism and attention-deficit disorder, and movement disorders, such as ataxia, Parkinson's disease, dystonia and ataxic cerebral palsy. They are also used for stress reduction in individuals with anxiety or Tourette's syndrome. Deep pressure has a calming effect on individuals with sensory-processing disorders. The deep pressure works on the central nervous system and aids in the processing of sensory information so that individuals with sensory-processing disorders can perform routine tasks in an organized, attentive and calm manner.

References & Resources

- The American Journal of Occupational Therapy; The Use of a Weighted Vest to Increase On-Task Behavior in Children with Attention Deficits; NL VandenBerg
- The American Journal of Occupational Therapy; Effects of a Weighted Vest on Attention to Task and Self-Stimulatory Behaviors in Preschoolers With Pervasive Developmental Disorders; Doreen Fertel-Daly et al.
- Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities; Effect of Weighted Vests on the Engagement of Children With Developmental Delays and Autism; Brian Reichow et al.
- JNPT, Balance-Based Torso-Weighting in a Patient with Ataxia and Multiple Sclerosis: A Case Report; Cynthia Gibson-Horn, PT
- The American Journal of Occupational Therapy; Effects of Weighted Vests on Attention, Impulse Control, and On-Task Behavior in Children With Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder; H. Y. Lin et al.

About Volunteer New York!

The core mission of Volunteer New York! (volunteernewyork.org) is to inspire, mobilize, and equip individuals and groups to take positive action to address pressing challenges, support non-profits and improve the quality of life in Westchester, Rockland and Putnam. For more than 68 years the organization has encouraged adults to serve, youth to build character, families to bond, young professionals to lead, mature adults to share their wisdom and businesses to engage through volunteerism.

Last year Volunteer New York! helped coordinate over 301,000 hours of service, which were devoted to over 500 local nonprofits and charities at a value of over \$8.7 million.

The Corporate Champions who strongly support the mission of Volunteer New York! include: Akzo Nobel, Bunge Limited; MasterCard; PepsiCo; Regeneron; The Journal News & Lohud.com; Con Edison; Empire City Casino; Entergy, Keystone Property Group; K-LOVE Radio; M&T Bank; Morgan Stanley; NewYork-Presbyterian; TD Bank; The Dannon Company; Andersen Tax, LLC; LifeNY; PCSB Bank; PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP; RNN & The French Family; Robison Oil Corporation; IBM; MAG Real Estate Advisors, Inc.; Pentegra Retirement Services; Reckson, a Division of SL Green Realty Corp.; RPW Group; Webster Bank; Westmed; WMC Health; and WhiffAway. With ongoing support from Westchester Community Foundation, Westchester County, Corporation for National & Community Service, and the New York State Commission on National and Community Service.

Official media partners of Volunteer New York! who help amplify the message of local volunteer advocacy include: The Journal News & Lohud.com, K-LOVE Radio and Lifestyle Westchester.

