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Back 2 School Illinois Newsletter

September 2016

B2SI Continues Partnership with Operation Homefront in 2016

Military Families Receive School Supply Kits



Over the course of the past two months, B2SI has journeyed throughout the state to military bases to aid families in need. From Milan to Mt. Vernon to Springfield, we got to see the state-wide impact of our school supply program. In case you are unfamiliar with Operation Homefront, they are a nation-wide organization that aids military families and a long-time community distribution partner of Back 2 School Illinois.

Our 2016 distribution season was jumpstarted with Operation Homefront. Over the span of seven separate distribution events with Operation Homefront, we were able to distribute 1,500 kits to military families in need. We are very happy to work with them once again and we hope to continue our partnership for many years to come. Military families have a unique set of additional challenges they face making our work with them that much more important.

Register for our Third Annual POWER UP! Boot Camp Before it's Too Late

Deadline for Registration is October 13



Are you struggling to make your child interested in fitness and nutrition? Let us help you out! On October 15 at West Lawn Park we will be hosting our POWER UP! Boot Camp

which aims to teach children about the importance of combining a healthy diet with regular exercise.

From 9:30am-4:00pm, children ages 6-12 can experience an active and fun filled day while being educated on the connection of body and soul. Participants will rotate through a series of activities that include yoga, obstacle course, how to build a healthy snack, and much more. Each child that participates will receive lunch, a POWER UP! Boot Camp shirt, and a fitness/nutrition pack.

If interested in signing up your child, [click here](#). If interested in volunteering, please email Kevin Carroll at kevincarroll@b2si.org

"Build A Kit" Program Continues to Build Steam Three Companies Came Together for One Fundraising Goal



Participants from Belgravia Group, Maris Construction, Sullivan Goulette & Wilson Ltd., and Lincoln Title Company came together on the evening of August 31 at Rauner Family YMCA for our latest "Build A Kit" event. The 25+ employee volunteers from all four entities operated like a well-oiled machine and built an incredible 600 kits in just a little over 2

hours.

What's even more incredible is that the companies raised in excess of \$15,000 meaning that we are able to donate an additional 400 kits! This marks the first time multiple companies have come together for a "Build A Kit" event and we are so pleased with the result. These kits went on to be distributed to area YMCAs, including the Rauner Family Y.

Two Schools Get a Reason to Smile at the Beginning of the School Year

Our "Win School Supplies for an Entire School" Gets its Winners



Each year we host a contest and choose two Chicago schools to receive enough school supplies for their entire student body. Any parent, teacher, faculty, or concerned citizen is able to enter the Chicago school of their choice. This year our lucky winners are ACE Technical Charter School and Leslie Lewis School of Excellence.

On September 6th we visited ACE (Architecture, Construction, and Engineering) Technical, located in the Washington Park neighborhood, to help host an assembly and hand out our signature supply kits. Principal Marvin Talley and bilingual Lead Teacher Ellen Crittendon,

who applied ACE for the contest, both gave brief speeches about the importance of their charter school and what these supplies mean to them before introducing our CEO, Matthew Kurtzman. Speaking before a crowd of 100 students, Matthew explained the B2SI mission and how we hope to alter the landscape of Illinois education for the better. The students showed loads of gratitude for the supplies and we wished them the best of luck on the school year ahead.



On September 9th we made our second stop at Leslie Lewis School of Excellence, an AUSL charter school, located in the North Austin neighborhood. The secret Friday afternoon assembly at the end of the first week of school had the students anxious and intrigued. First we hosted the preschoolers through fourth graders. What this young group lacked in size, they made up for in noise and energy. Principal Aquabah Gooney introduced Back 2 School Illinois and even made Matthew an honorary Lewis Lion with a gift of the school's football jersey. After this high energy group, we met with the fifth through eighth graders who kept the level of enthusiasm just as high. The students roared at the reveal of supplies for their entire school. Each student walked the stage and was handed a supply kit of their very own.



These events remind us why we do what we do. Each smiling face makes us realize the impact our programs have on the schoolchildren of Illinois.

Community Currency Exchange Association of Illinois Continues to Give Back

Friends and Family Came Together for an End of Summer

Field Day



On August 20th in Seward Park, Nate Jones Foundation & Friends For Life hosted a Resources Event for members of the Cabrini-Green area. The day was filled with field day events, health screenings, and the giving away of our signature B2SI supply kits courtesy of the Community Currency Exchange Association of Illinois (CCEA). We want to send a huge "Thank You!" to our founding institution and ongoing sponsor for CCEA for coordinating this successful community giveback.

Boys & Girls Club of Elgin Host Back to School Bash

Downtown Elgin Gets Kids Excited to Return to School



Last month on August 13th, the Boys & Girls Club of Elgin hosted a Back to School Bash for hundreds of children and families. Community members came together for all sorts of outdoor activities, including a water balloon toss, inflatable bounce house, haircuts, and a live DJ. Even McGruff, the crime dog, was there to join in on the fun. West Suburban Currency Exchanges, Inc. (WSCE) made the event that much better by donating 100 of our kits for the festivities. “Attendance exceeded expectations and many local school age children received the school supplies, backpacks, and haircuts that they need to start the school year off right. We hope to be able to support this great event for years to come,” said Scott Hershman of WSCE.

This year alone the WSCE chain raised in excess of \$42,000 in their stores for our Back 2 School Program. We cannot thank them enough for their dedicated support. A special thank you to Scott Hershman, Kathy Peach and Linda Quintanilla for their amazing efforts!



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We like to keep those interested and involved in ICECF informed on what we are doing.

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