

# NEWS

## VOLUNTEER CENTER OF BERGEN COUNTY, INC.

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[www.bergenvolunteers.org](http://www.bergenvolunteers.org)

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### **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Day of Service**

North Jersey—Make January 19, 2009 a day “on”, not a day “off”.

That was the intent when, in 1994, Congress passed the King Holiday and Service Act, designating the Martin Luther King Holiday as a national day of volunteer service. Instead of a day off from work or school, Congress asked Americans of all backgrounds and ages to celebrate Dr. King’s legacy by turning community concerns into citizen action. The King Day of Service is meant to bring together people who might not ordinarily meet, breaking down barriers that may have divided them in the past, and leading to better understanding and ongoing relationships.

“We encourage people to work toward Dr. King’s dream by participating in service activities on or around January 19,” says Janet Sharma, executive director of the Volunteer Center of Bergen County.

“We also encourage agencies, municipalities and schools to think of projects that can engage people in service as a tribute to Dr. King,” continues Ms. Sharma. “Some ideas for projects might be getting a space painted, having closets or pantries organized, or sponsoring a collection of items your agency needs and distributes to the community, such as food, office or school supplies, baby or children’s products.

“If you work with seniors, ask a group of teens or members of a community organization to come in and organize a puzzle party or a social event. All these projects can help your agency and celebrate the lasting legacy of Dr. King.”

Volunteers from the community are encouraged to contact food banks, schools, houses of worship and other social service agencies to offer their help in any project that

will enhance that organization's efforts. The following projects will take place on Monday, January 19, 2009, unless otherwise noted:

**New Jersey After 3 (NJA3), Teaneck**

A volunteer group is needed to do a "clean up" on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Contact: Seb Rotz (917) 513-9213 [sebrodz@optonline.net](mailto:sebrodz@optonline.net)

**UJA Federation of Northern New Jersey, Paramus**

The UJA will be collecting diapers, wipes, formula and/or toiletries. The donations will go to the Jewish Family Services and Jewish Family and Children's Service

Donations can be dropped off on Monday, January 19 between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm at 50 Eisenhower Drive, Paramus

Contact: Alice Blass (201) 820-3948

**Bright Side Manor, Teaneck**

Volunteers needed to organize a group to host a social event for the residents.

Bright Side Manor will also be collecting office supplies such as copy paper, note pads, pens, sticky notes, etc.

Contact: Erika Dankovits (201) 692-1000 [erikadankovits@brightsidemanor.org](mailto:erikadankovits@brightsidemanor.org)

**YWCA Rodie Child Care Center, Upper Saddle River**

Volunteer groups are needed to help paint classrooms

Contact: Diane Eide (201) 236-3126 [deide@ywcabergencounty.org](mailto:deide@ywcabergencounty.org)

**Artists' Collective for Social Change, Englewood**

Volunteers are needed for numerous activities on January 19<sup>th</sup> at the Englewood site, including serving meals and beverages, as well as:

*High School Seniors/College student volunteers* to help with filing and organizing;

*Graphic Web Designers* to assist in updating the website;

*Sales or PR Professionals/retirees* to work with the artistic/marketing director to create a press kit.

Contact: Alexis Marnel (201) 816-9369, (201) 658-6419 [amarnel@aol.com](mailto:amarnel@aol.com)

### **Central Unitarian Church, Paramus**

The Central Unitarian Church, located on Forest Ave in Paramus, will be holding a food drive on **Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup>**. All donations will benefit the Center for Food Action in Englewood.

The food most needed is canned meat (tuna, chicken), canned soups, canned vegetables, macaroni and cheese, peanut butter and jelly, cereal (all kinds), dry milk, rice, beans, pasta, baby formula, diapers, 100% juice, nutritional supplements (Ensure) and supermarket gift cards.

Contact: Herb Ouida (201) 803-1366 [Houida99@aol.com](mailto:Houida99@aol.com)

### **Calvary United Methodist Church, Dumont**

A series of events will be scheduled for the Martin Luther King Holiday weekend-- **Friday, January 16 through Monday, January 19**, which includes plays, demonstrations and assembling care packages.

For specific times of the events, Contact the Leadership Team at Calvary United Methodist Church (201) 384-3630 [calvary185@verizon.net](mailto:calvary185@verizon.net)

According to the Corporation for National Service, more than 500,000 Americans participated in the MLK Day of Service last year. This historic turnout is the largest ever in the 13 years since Congress encouraged Americans to observe the King Holiday.

“We hope people in and near Bergen County will help make this an even bigger holiday,” says Sharma. “It’s also the day before the inauguration of President-Elect Obama, which gives the MLK Holiday even greater significance.”

For more ideas on how to observe this day, and perform a real service to the community, call the Volunteer Center at (201) 489-9454, or visit [www.mlkday.gov](http://www.mlkday.gov)

The Volunteer Center of Bergen County strengthens the community by connecting people with opportunities to serve, operating model volunteer programs, building capacity for effective volunteering, and participating in strategic partnerships that meet community needs.