



BERGEN *County* NEW JERSEY

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Freeholder Chair Tracy Zur Hosts First MLK Interfaith Day of Service for Students

PARAMUS- On Monday, January 16th, 2017 Freeholder Chair Tracy Zur hosted an interfaith day of service at Jewish Federation in Paramus, bringing together nearly 100 students from the Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Sikh communities to work on various community service projects and celebrate the legacy of Dr. King by giving back to their communities.

“For young people, this shouldn’t be ‘just another day off,’” said Zur. “This is a day to reflect upon the lessons and the legacy of Dr. King by performing community service projects. We wanted to send a message to our young people that helping others is something that all faiths and all communities should be doing, and that we are stronger when we do these things collectively.”

The students worked on a number of projects, such as creating hygiene kits for the homeless, or decorating soil markers for local community gardens. They also were asked to be creative, working to decorate puzzles for sick children at Hackensack University Medical Center, as well as a large collective “tree of hands” art project. Students also created hundreds of postcards for Operation Goody Bag thanking soldiers for their service that will be included in care packages for troops stationed overseas. All students also participated in a “conversation station” where they exchanged stories of their heritage, holidays, hobbies, and more.

“In a time when our country is so divided, we shouldn’t be building walls—we should be building bridges,” continued Zur. “That’s what I hope these kids got out of this event, that despite our different religious practices and traditions, it is our shared humanity that binds us. Some students looked nervous when first told they would have to be in separate groups from their friends. But after just a few minutes they realized just how much they have in common with the others in their groups, and by the end of the day, some of them were even exchanging information to continue the friendships they had forged.”

Zur announced that she plans on making this an annual event, with larger projects and the involvement of more communities.

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