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Moraga Charity and Teens Plant Hope in Tornado Torn Joplin

Submitted by Kyla Christie



Teens Gaby Gryko, Vivien Lee, Steven Zhou sort, log, and pack books Photo provided

community health center, we are presenting each child with a book as they enter the exam room, putting them at ease." wrote Dr. Debra Davidson, Chief Operations Officer for Access Family Care in Joplin.

Authors John Woods, Maggie Mei Lewis, Jeff Bennett, Allen Klein contributed. Friends of the Lafayette Library donated seven boxes of children's books and a local philanthropist paid the postage.

Over \$45,000 of books, cards, and games shipped. "Thank you so much to Be the Star You Are and the authors. You have been amazing!" responded Joplin recipients.

"A book is like a garden in your pocket. We are planting the seeds of hope and growing joy," Brian exclaimed.

For more information, go to www.bethestaryouare.org or www.btsya.com.



When recent tornadoes destroyed 262 classrooms and 16 schools leaving 13,000 students without supplies or books in Joplin, Missouri, Be the Star You Are!(r) charity spearheaded Operation Disaster Relief. Teen volunteers Courtney Cheng and Katherine Kim identified the sources that needed resources. Founder/Executive Director of the literacy charity, Cynthia Brian, who is producer and host of the radio show, Starstyle(r)-Be the Star You Are!(r) invited guest authors to participate.

"I let authors who've I've interviewed know they could make a difference for the kids in Joplin by donating through our Be the Star You Are!(r) Operation Disaster Relief. My goal was to get books to the district before school starts in September," Brian remarked. Brooks Olbrys, author of Blue Ocean Bob, and Diana Zimmerman, author of Kandide were first to donate.

Teen volunteers Steven Zhou, Gaby Gryko, and Vivien Lee sorted, stamped, packed, labeled, and prepared cases of books for shipment. All stated how good it made them feel to help students in Joplin. Gryko said how "awesome it was" to have great books to share. "Wow! Thank you so much! We appreciate these books and will put them to great use!" commented an ecstatic Kristen Dudolski of the Joplin School District.

When the Joplin Access Family Clinic asked for books for their patients, Be the Star You Are!(r) acted. Cases of new books from the BTSYA library were shipped including books written by Brian, Be the Star You Are!(r) 99 Gifts and Be the Star You Are!(r) for TEENS.

"Your gifts are greatly appreciated. We are now just learning how widespread the devastating effects of the tornado reached. At our

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Moraga Country Club Station Postman Mark Fahmy stamps cases of books for Joplin from Be the Star You Are!(r) volunteers Gaby Gryko and Cynthia Brian Photo provided

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