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STUDENTS VOLUNTEER FOR **DERMER DREAMS SPRING NEIGHBORHOOD CAPTAIN FOOD DRIVE**

BY MARIE BIRO

Do you know a student who is looking to earn volunteer hours and enjoy a community-building experience? The Dermer Dreams Spring Neighborhood Captain Food Drive is on April 24, 2021 and there is still time to sign up!

Dermer Dreams, founded by the Dermer family of Fair Haven, collected and distributed 108,450 pounds of food in 2020. It is recognized as one of the top 10 food drives in New Jersey by Move for Hunger and is a member of Lunch Break's Circle of Hope, Gold Level Sponsor. This spring Dermer Dreams aims to smash last year's record! Students who would like to participate can sign up at dermerdreams.org. Participants earn a certificate and so much more.

Alyse Dermer, who founded Dermer Dreams with her husband Dan, daughter Reyna, and son Brendan, wants to remind the community not to forget the hungry after the holidays. "Everyone thinks about the hungry during the holidays," she says. "But we have found that the summer months are the most challenging for all food banks. Let's restock the food banks for the summer!"

Neighborhood Captains who participated in the Dermer Dreams November 2020 Food Drive had an overwhelmingly positive experience. Rumson residents Noah Russo, Charley Rosen, and Lyla Milkowski served as captains and share with us the rewards of their volunteer work.



NOAH RUSSO / Junior, RFH

"As a high school volunteer, working for Dermer Dreams was an amazing experience. After two days of packing thousands of pounds of food, we found our trucks filled to the brim with sorted boxes. Since Alyse and Dan needed additional transportation and places to distribute all of the extra food, I offered to load up my car with as many yellow bags as it could hold and drive to various food banks that were happy to have the donations. Looking at a sea of yellow bags in the back of my Jeep was such an inspiring thing to see. Even more inspiring was unloading it all at the food banks. We packed them with so much food that they were in awe. Being able to help out with and experience the delivery process firsthand was a good deed I will never forget."



CHARLEY ROSEN / Junior, RFH

"When I think of Dermer Dreams I think of a community, love, reaching out, helping others, and making a difference. This has been my second year working with this organization. Last year I helped organize bags and coordinate the food in preparation to be sent off. This year I did all that plus became a neighborhood captain. With the bags that I helped compile, I was able to deliver 100 bags to homes around my neighborhood and retrieve most of them full of food. The abundance of food and supplies collected put a smile on my face knowing that one bag can really impact a person's life. Dermer dreams taught me that too many people in the community are food insufficient. Some people don't know if they will be able to provide dinner for their families. Being able to send food to those families keeps my heart warm as I know I am making a difference in their lives."



LYLA MILKOWSKI / Junior, RFH

"I was introduced to Dermer Dreams by a close friend of mine, Lexi Samuels. For the first food drive I was a part of, my friends and I spent hours in the Dermer's house organizing bags that would be passed out to collect food. I never realized the impact of Dermer Dreams until the food arrived in all the bags we had gone through. The next drive only grew with tens of thousands additional pounds of food being delivered. Dermer Dreams showed me the ability of a community like Monmouth County to come together for those who are in need. Beyond the fact that the people volunteering for Dermer Dreams made the drives feel more like a party than work, Dermer Dreams has become so important to me because of its sense of community. All of the volunteers work together for several days to achieve a common goal. It has helped me understand that the world is bigger than myself and allowed me to help the people around me."

DERMER DREAMS SPRING NEIGHBORHOOD CAPTAIN FOOD DRIVE IS APRIL 24TH, 2021

BY MARIE BIRO

Do you know a student who is passionate about fighting food insecurity and who may be interested in earning volunteer hours or experience that they can include on university applications? The Dermer Dreams Spring Neighborhood Captain Food Drive is April 24th, 2021, and there is still time to sign up!

Dermer Dreams collected and distributed 108,450 pounds of food in 2020. They are recognized as one of the top 10 food drives in New Jersey by Move for Hunger and a member of Lunch Break's Circle of Hope, Gold Level Sponsor. This spring they aim to smash their record from last year! Students who would like to participate can sign up at www.dermerdreams.org. Participants earn a certificate and so much more.

Alyse Dermer, who founded Dermer Dreams with her husband Dan, daughter Reyna, and son Brendan, wants to remind the community not to forget the hungry after the holidays. "Everyone thinks about the hungry during the holidays," she says. "But we have found that the summer months are the most challenging for all food banks. Let's restock the food banks for the summer!"

Neighborhood Captains who participated in the 2020 November Food Drive were overwhelmingly happy with their experience. Fair Haven residents Charlotte Stant, Lexi Samuels, and Michael DeFazio were among the captains and shared with us the rewards of their volunteer work.



"Compañeros de Comida, created by RFH Senior and Fair Haven resident Charlotte Stant, is entirely student-run and has served over 120,00 meals to immigrant families in Red Bank since the start of the pandemic. The volunteers work tirelessly to ensure that all of their families receive exactly what they need, and they have created a multitude of fundraising campaigns

and events over the last ten months. Back in November, Alyse Dermer from the incredible organization Dermer Dreams reached out to Charlotte to assist in their food collection and donate over 15,000 pounds of food to Compañeros. Thanks to a collaboration between Dermer Dreams and Compañeros de Comida, thousands of pounds of food were delivered to local families for the holidays and for the winter months. Compañeros is eternally grateful for Dermer Dreams, as their donation allowed a massive distribution of nonperishable items to over 80 families. Both organizations are committed to making sure that no one in Monmouth County goes hungry, and understand the power of students to lead donation efforts within their communities. Compañeros de Comida delivers food every Saturday to their families.

If you are a high school student who would like to volunteer, please contact charlottestant13@yahoo.com or message through Instagram @companerosdecomida."

– Compañeros de Comida

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"I am Lexi Samuels and I have been a part of the Dermer Dreams team for two years. This year was incredible. The sea of yellow bags filled with food made me feel so happy and proud of what we had accomplished. We are obviously living in a very challenging and difficult time right now. The food drive this year was lined up perfectly with Thanksgiving, to provide a light for families in need. Before the food drive, my friends and I were able to help the Dermer family set up and organize everything needed in preparation for the big weekend. Seeing all of the bags coming back to us after hours of sorting and distributing them all over Monmouth County was a gratifying feeling. When I first started with Dermer Dreams in 2019, I was amazed to see 25,000 pounds of food and supplies donated. Imagine how amazing it felt when Alyse Dermer told me we collected over 110,000 pounds this past food drive! The growth of this organization in just one year is mind-blowing! I couldn't be more proud to be a part of the Dermer Dreams team and can't wait to see what more we can achieve."

- Lexi Samuels



"My name is Michael DeFazio and I am a Freshman at CBA. I have volunteered with Dermer Dreams in a variety of roles in the last 2 years. I have delivered donation bags and run my own Food Drive through the Neighborhood Captain Program. I have worked on the Dermer Dreams trucks that pick up the donations alongside my friend Nick Harvey and his dad Lance. I also worked at the headquarters packing up the food donations and loading them onto the U-Hauls for delivery to the various Food Banks. I was really impressed with how organized Dermer Dreams was and how so many people really cared to help those in need. It felt good to help and I really felt the sense of community that it created for all of us. It was really cool seeing all the yellow Dermer Dreams hats and shirts around town that day and knowing that you were part of something bigger than yourself!"

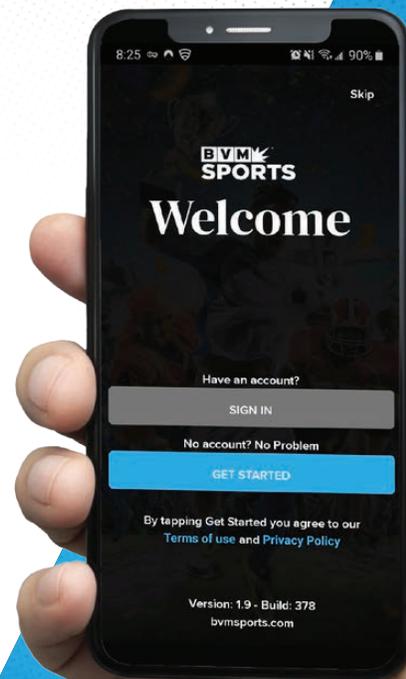
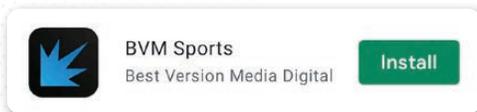
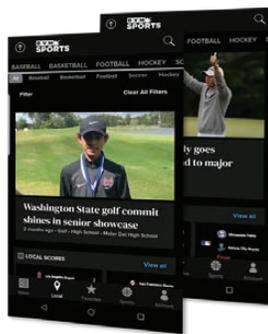
- Michael DeFazio



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