



St. Christopher's Hospital for Children: Back to School Carnival

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COMMUNITY PARTNER



The Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CCYSCN) is located within St. Christopher's Hospital for Children in North Philadelphia and provides complete, coordinated, family-centered care in a single place.

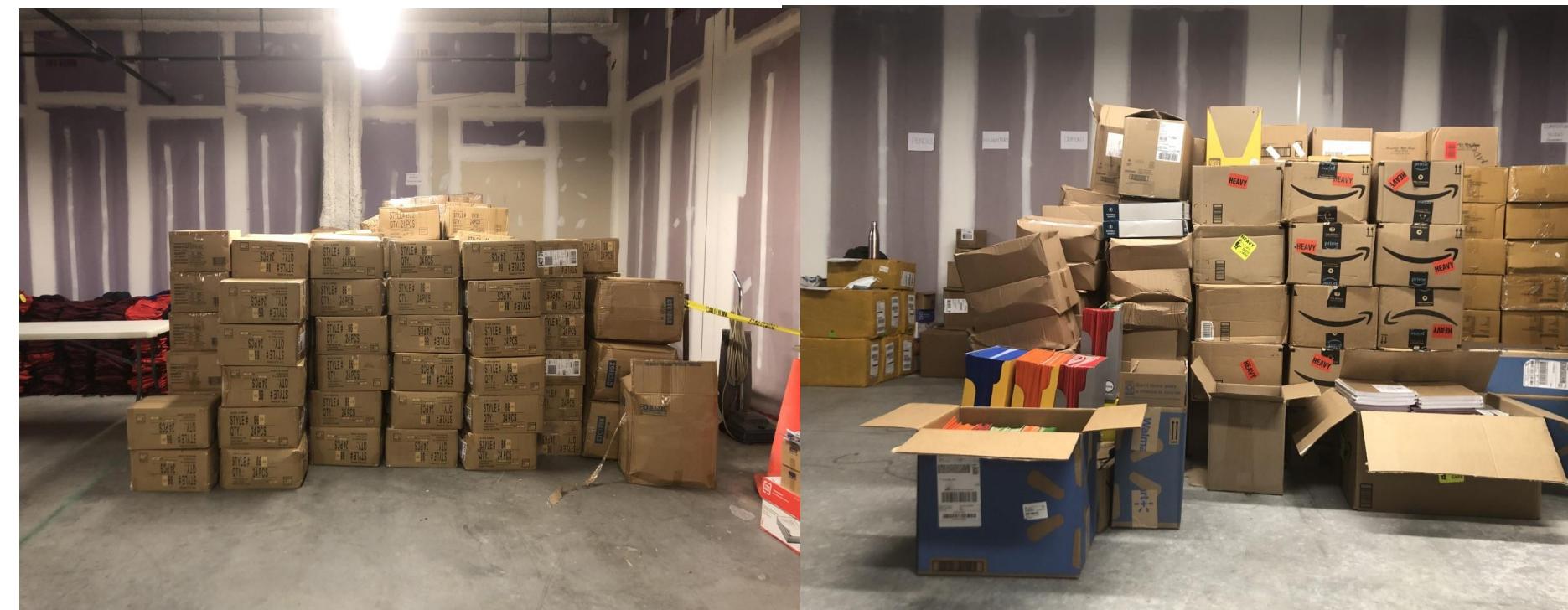
<https://towerhealth.org/services/center-children-and-youth-special-healthcare-needs>



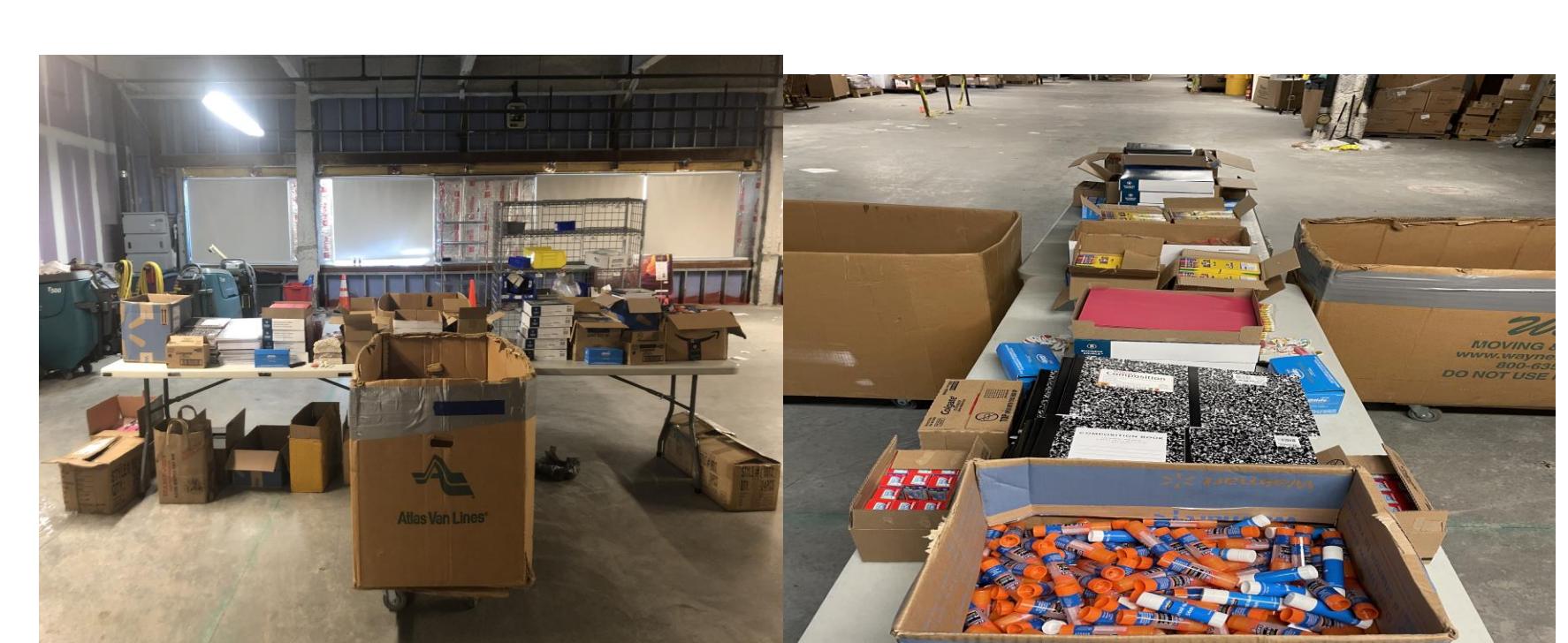
PROJECT

Each year, CCYSCN holds a back to school carnival to help the children of the North Philadelphia community get ready for the new school year with backpacks filled with school supplies as well as providing families with health resources. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 11th annual carnival was held virtually with a drive-thru backpack distribution two weeks prior to the carnival. To prepare for the backpack drive and carnival this year, Erica and Vysh aided in fundraising, planning, and ordering the supplies for the backpacks. The main project Erica and Vysh undertook this summer was coordinating the stuffing and distributing of 10,000 backpacks, which was the most to have been distributed. In addition, they were tasked with creating oral health educational materials which included creating instructions for easy at-home science experiments demonstrating the importance of proper oral care as well as instructional videos on how to properly brush and floss.

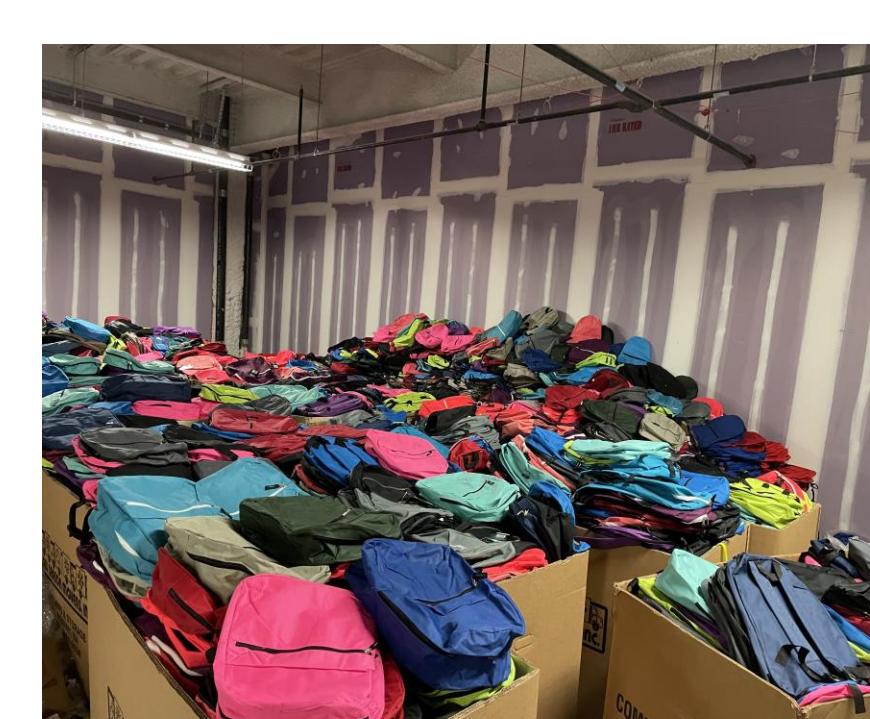
PROJECT RESULTS



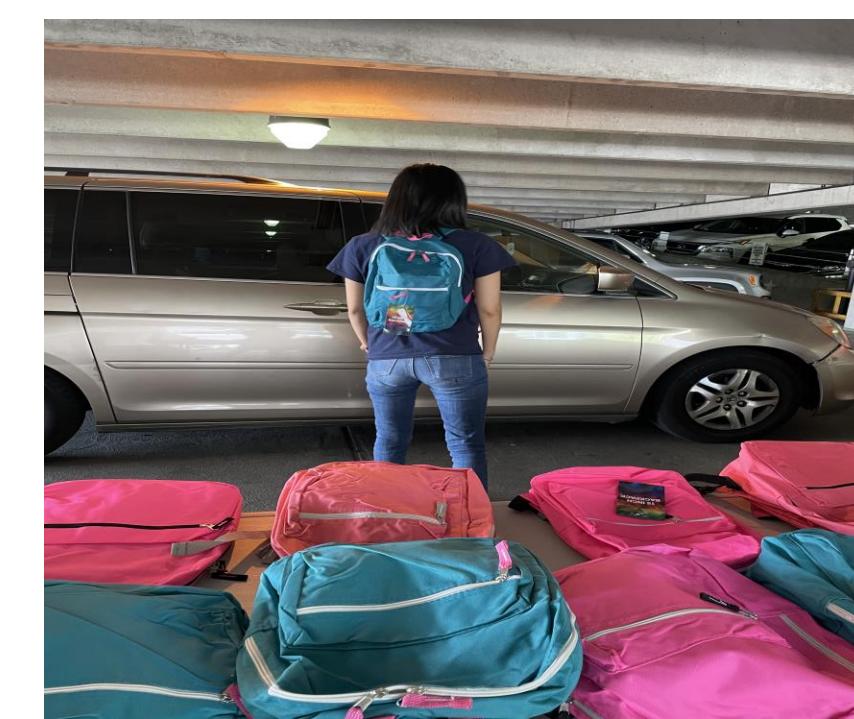
10,000 bags ready to fill with supplies, and 20,000 notebooks and folders in or warehouse



Stations all set up ready to stuff bags



10,000 stuffed bags ready to give out!



Erica distributing backpacks to community members during the drive through event



Everyone received fun oral health experiments with the backpack! Video guides were made available on the carnival website

REFLECTION

While working on this project through the summer, I was struck by how many expenses there are just to prepare a child to be ready for school. I realized how privileged I was growing up, not having to worry about not having school supplies or a backpack each fall. I was exposed to the reality that was occurring just a few minutes down the street; parents unable to buy school supplies for their children, which deterred the children from attending school, leading to a number of consequences down the line. By distributing these stuffed backpacks, I was not only able to prepare these children for school but also build resilience in these children while becoming more aware of the disparities that exist in my community, stirring a desire to continue learning more and make a change. - **Erica Yi**

This summer I learned a lot more about social determinants of health and realized how something like not having basic school supplies can affect a child's education, health, and wellbeing. I am thankful to have had the opportunity to build resilience and confidence in children while also preparing them for the school year. I was also struck by just how much work goes into an endeavor like this. Over the course of the summer we worked with staff from all around the hospital, including from administration, shipping and receiving, marketing, volunteer services, and janitorial services. I have a much stronger understanding and appreciation for all the amazing people required to keep the hospital running day to day. This is not something I've ever been able to see before, so I am thankful to have had the opportunity to do this through BTG. - **Vyshnavi Anandan**