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Victaulic, American Red Cross and United Way Collaborate to Prepare Youth for Emergencies

Pillowcase Project helps children and their families learn how to be better prepared for the unexpected and keep kids safe during disasters

Easton, Pa. – May 19, 2017 – The American Red Cross of Lehigh Valley-Bucks is preparing students to be ready for anything. Thanks to a grant from The Walt Disney Company, the Pillowcase Project teaches children coping skills to help them deal with an emergency situation and also offers tips and tools to help them prepare for emergencies.

Using three steps - Learn, Practice and Share - children in fifth grade (ages 8-11) learn how to stay safe in an emergency and are empowered to take action by practicing preparedness. They're encouraged to share what they've learned with family and friends, knowing that their information can help create a better-prepared community.

Victaulic is partnering with United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley and American Red Cross Lehigh Valley – Bucks to bring the program to students at Cheston Elementary, a United Way Community School in the Easton Area. On May 19, all fifth-grade classes will learn how to stay safe in an emergency and be empowered to take action. Following the instructor-led presentation, every fifth-grade student at Cheston Elementary will receive their personal emergency pillowcase stuffed with supplies.

The Pillowcase Project is taught by trained Red Cross volunteers in a 45 to 60-minute classroom session. Children participating in the project each receive a preparedness toolkit, which includes a 'My Preparedness Workbook' and a pillowcase with items to include in case of emergency.

"At Victaulic, safety is a business necessity and an essential part of our culture," said Carolyn Stennett, Victaulic Vice President of Human Resources. "We are proud to help students build resiliency and learn about emergency preparedness and life safety skills."

Educating approximately 600 students from kindergarten through fifth grade, Cheston Elementary, teachers and administrators value and challenge each student by providing opportunities for achievement. Victaulic, along with Crayola and Follett, are valued Corporate Partners of this United Way Community School, working tirelessly to ensure students have all they need in order to be able to achieve that success.

"We are excited to hold the Pillowcase Project because it shows how community partners are willing to respond to the needs of Cheston students and families," said Cheston Principal Kyle Yanders.

“Unfortunately, no community is immune to emergencies and we are grateful to have this opportunity to teach our students about the importance of being prepared.”

David Lewis, President of UWGLV, said this is just one of the many ways Victaulic has stepped up for the community. “Victaulic employees truly embody what it means to be personally engaged within the communities they work,” Lewis said. “The students at Cheston are lucky to have a company like Victaulic care so much.”

“The Pillowcase Project was originally created in New Orleans, inspired by students who carried their belongings in pillowcases during Hurricane Katrina evacuations,” said Peter Brown, Executive Director of the American Red Cross Lehigh Valley – Bucks chapter. “We’re thrilled to partner with Victaulic and the United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley to expand the program and reach more children here in our community.”

About Victaulic

Since 1919, Victaulic has been the originator and world's leading producer of mechanical pipe joining solutions. Used in the most demanding markets, Victaulic innovative piping technologies and services put people to work faster while increasing safety, ensuring reliability and maximizing efficiency.

The company has 13 manufacturing facilities and 30 branches worldwide with 3,600 employees who speak 43 languages across the globe. With over 1,900 global patents, Victaulic solutions are at work in more than 140 countries across diverse business lines including oil, gas and chemical, mining, power generation, water and wastewater treatment, military and marine, as well as commercial building and fire protection. For more information, visit www.victaulic.com.

About American Red Cross

The American Red Cross of Lehigh Valley-Bucks chapter serves residents of Bucks, Lehigh and Northampton counties. With a population of approximately 1.3 million people, our chapter provides food and shelter in emergencies, delivers preparedness training to children, youth, adults, and seniors, assists members of our armed forces and their families, teaches lifesaving skills, and so much more. All American Red Cross disaster assistance is free, made possible by voluntary donations of time and money from the American people.

About United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley

The mission of United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley is to provide the leadership, convene the partnerships and develop the resources and solutions that improve our community. We remain committed to these goals and sincerely appreciate the continued support of partners, program providers and donors throughout the Lehigh Valley. www.unitedwayglv.org

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