

NCJW Cleveland helps local library, distributes clothing to those in need

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A child comes up to Warner Girls' Leadership Academy librarian/media specialist Joyce Chappelle and asks if she can take a book out.

Not yet, she's told.

Brittany Brewer strolls into the library, newly replenished by National Council of Jewish Women volunteers, with her 7-year-old daughter, Michaela Battee.

"We have a lot more reading to do this year so we appreciate that for sure," Brewer said.

The National Council of Jewish Women Cleveland Section poured more than 400 volunteer hours into the Cleveland school's library this summer; donating, organizing and stocking more than 1,500 books. Their work was unveiled Aug. 14.

"They added a lot of books," Chappelle said. "It's a big room, but they managed to make it feel cozy."

Debbie Joseph, vice president of community service at the National Council of Jewish Women Cleveland Section, said that the organization had been looking to refurbish a library – and that Warner stood out due to its supportive administration, its beautiful library space and Chappelle's eagerness.

"It was like a match made in heaven," Joseph said.

The library unveiling presented a calmer scene than the Aug. 11 Share What You Wear clothing distribution, also put on by the NCJW, which provided clothing and school supplies to Greater Clevelanders in need.

"All of the little kids rave about it," said Zoey Gottlieb, Solon High School graduate and co-teen chair of Share What You Wear. "They take everything."

The Crystal Ballroom of the Tudor Arms Hotel in Cleveland's University Circle quickly swelled with people jockeying for everything from a pair of shoes to children's books to sports gear. People filled shopping bags, even trash bags – frequently more than one.

Gottlieb said she worked with clubs at her high school, as well as with friends, to gather clothing for the event.

Gottlieb's co-teen chair, Orange High School graduate Eva Bogomolny, also gathered her friends and got them to contribute. After school, the Temple Emanu El member would go to people's houses, pick up clothes and sort them in her basement.

"It's super-rewarding," said Bogomolny, who is about to start her freshman year at The Ohio State University. "Clothes, I think, are something that we often take for granted, and it's really cool to see kids who don't really have the chance to actually pick out what they're going to wear get a full new closet of clothes for school."

The group also had a cookout for the first time, to draw clothing and interest.

"The cookout this year was one of the best events that we've had," Gottlieb said. "Everyone raved about it. They said it was so much fun."

Gottlieb said this past year as co-teen chair provided valuable insight as the Park Synagogue member prepares for her freshman year at Pennsylvania State University.

"I've always loved volunteering for any organization that's in need for helping people," Gottlieb said. "It kind of gives an insight, being a leader, into what I want to do next year and making sure that I volunteer with different organizations and keep it going – not just stop (after) the high school experience."



CJN PHOTOS / JONAH L. ROSENBLUM

Warner Girls' Leadership Academy librarian Joyce Chappelle guides Je'lyssa Banks, 9, of Cleveland through the newly refurbished school library.



Orange High School graduate Eva Bogomolny, co-teen chair of Share What You Wear, helps parents find clothing for their children at an Aug. 11 distribution event.



Orange High School sophomore Matt Rosenthal helps pack boxes of backpacks for the National Council of Jewish Women's Aug. 11 Share What You Wear event.