



JNESO

DISTRICT COUNCIL 1, IUOE / AFL-CIO
the professional health care union

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For Immediate Release

JNESO Nurses at LVH-Pocono Donate Shoes to Local Girls Empowerment Program

Pocono, Pa. (Nov. 20, 2018) – More than 100 pairs of shoes have been collected by the JNESO nurses at Lehigh Valley Hospital-Pocono (LVH-P) to help support a local girls empowerment program.

JNESO Chief Steward and Board Member Annmarie Ruggiero organized the shoe drive after learning about the Girls On The Run Pocono program which provides afterschool programming for girls in grades three to eight.

“I was at StroudFest 2018 promoting information about Safe Nurse-to-Patient Staffing Ratios when I met Kimberlee from Girls On The Run Pocono. Because their activities are geared toward young girls and promote wellness and healthy living, I knew immediately that I wanted to get involved,” said Ruggiero, who has been a nurse at LVH-P for 14 years. “I raised three girls on my own and know how important it is for young women to have opportunities to learn how to be a strong and independent while growing up.”

Ruggiero enlisted the support of several JNESO union members at LVH-P who helped spread the word and enabled them to collect more than 100 pairs of shoes since September. This week, the final batch of shoes was delivered and donated to Girls On The Run Pocono.

“It was a good time to ask because after back-to-school and summer people had a lot of shoes to get rid of, kids, men’s and women’s, so we were able to collect a lot,” said Ruggiero. “JNESO and our Pocono nurses always look for ways to give back the local community so this was a win-win for everyone.”

This is the first time JNESO has participated in the shoe drive, but the fifth year that Girls on the Run Pocono has sponsored the fundraiser which supports programs that annually serve between 800 and 950 girls in five Pennsylvania counties: Monroe, Northampton, Pike, Lackawana and Luzerne.



Photo: Nurse Annmarie Ruggiero poses with a few of the shoes collected by JNESO Nurses at LVH-Pocono for the Girls On The Run Pocono program.

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“Our 10-week program, which is taught by volunteer coaches, features a well-rounded curriculum that combines exercise and life skills such as teamwork, gratitude, anti-bullying and self-esteem building to teach and empower young girls to set, reach and achieve goals,” explained Kimberlee Zateeny, Community Outreach Director for Girls On The Run Pocono. “Our programs are open to any girl who wants to participate, which is why we fundraise so that affordability isn’t an obstacle.”

The collected shoes are sold for .40 per pound and then shipped to Third World Countries where they are cleaned and resold by micro businesses that support families in those regions.

“Last year we collected 9,969 pounds of shoes, and this year, thanks to the efforts of the JNESO nurses, the Stroudsburg H.S. Marching Band, local sororities, grade schools and area businesses, we hope to meet our goal of collecting 10,000 pounds of shoes this year,” stated Zateeny.

Zateeny added, “Girls On The Run truly appreciates all the help the JNESO nurses have given for this shoe drive and we look forward to doing more in the future together. Every little bit helps, and together we can do so much!”

There are still a few days left to donate shoes for the 2018 drive and Girls On the Run Pocono is always looking for adults volunteers. For more information please visit www.gotrpocono.org or call 570-534-7387 for more information.

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JNESO District Council 1 is the professional healthcare union representing more than 5,000 nurses and other healthcare workers in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. For more information, visit <http://www.jneso.org/>