

Primerus Reaches Out

Packing sack meals for homeless families in Boise, Idaho.

Assembling food for hungry children in Louisville, Kentucky, to eat over the weekend when they don't have access to school lunches.

Encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit of students in under-resourced communities around New York City.



Primerus Community Service

These are some of the ways Primerus members have worked together to serve their communities in 2019.

These efforts in particular took place at Primerus Regional Meetings in June as part of Primerus' commitment to offer a community service event at every gathering.

On June 11, at the Primerus Northeast U.S. Regional Meeting, co-hosted by Barton LLP in New York City, firm managing partner Roger Barton shared with his Primerus colleagues the work of a non-profit he supports – BUILD NYC (Businesses United in Investing, Lending and Development). The organization serves more than 400 students in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan and Staten Island – using entrepreneurship to help reduce the high school dropout rate and

set students up for success in college and their future careers.

Two other New York City-based Primerus firms – Ganfer Shore Leeds & Zauderer LLP and Lewis Johs Avallone Aviles, LLP – joined Barton's firm in hosting the meeting.

Barton's firm focuses on education for many of their community service efforts, and Barton serves on the local advisory board for BUILD NYC.

"It's challenging in many cities, including New York City, for kids in the public school system to get access to the resources that are elsewhere," Barton said.

At the Primerus event, BUILD NYC leaders led Primerus members through a "Minute to Win It" style game in which they brainstormed products or services in the automotive industry. The group with the most unique items, not named by another group, won.

"That energized the whole room," Barton said.

Three BUILD NYC high school students also shared their projects, which included creating a product and developing a business plan to take it to market.

It was gratifying for Barton to showcase the work of an organization he believes in, and Primerus members were inspired by BUILD NYC's work.

"People were touched," Barton said. "It was a nice event."

That same spirit emerged from the Louisville and Boise events, according to Chris Dawe, Primerus vice president of services. The Boise event linked with Interfaith Sanctuary, which provides a meal and a safe place to sleep seven nights a week for those in the Boise area struggling with homelessness.



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According to Joseph Pirtle, attorney with Elam & Burke in Boise, many are families with children who also struggle with food insecurity.

Pirtle said Primerus members packed 200 meals, including turkey or roast beef sandwiches, mustard and mayonnaise packets, assorted chips, fruit (apples or oranges) and a cookie.

“The service project was great for me. The positive energy from all of the Primerus participants was contagious. Additionally, seeing the appreciation of our efforts from those at Interfaith

Sanctuary was rewarding,” Pirtle said.

Pirtle said the service project also “was a great way for those attending the Primerus Regional Meeting to interact with one another while benefiting the Boise community at the same time.”

“I hope that this shared experience will help strengthen the bond between Primerus members,” he said.

The Louisville event was a partnership with Blessings in a Backpack, an organization which supplies food on the weekends for elementary school children across America who might otherwise go hungry.

In Louisville, Primerus members packed 500 bags of food. Dawe said the non-profit also has a chapter in San Diego, home of the 2019 Primerus Global Conference. So Primerus will partner with them there as well, with conference participants having the option of joining with their Primerus colleagues from around the world to pack 1,000 bags of food.

Efforts are also underway for the first Primerus Global Day of Service on December 5, uniting members around the world in a common community service effort on the same day, Dawe said. Stay tuned for more information at primerus.com. 

