

Colonial Crossroads Red Cross partners with Summit nonprofits

Published: Friday, June 11, 2010, 6:00 PM Updated: Thursday, June 10, 2010, 4:56 PM



Independent Press



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING â Red Cross chapter executive director Christy Hodde and Chris Truhe of Summit Supports Our Troops sign a Memorandum of Understanding to share a commitment to support service members and their families.

SUMMIT — The Colonial Crossroads Chapter of the Red Cross, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Junior League of Summit and Summit Supports Our Troops that provides a written basis for a cooperative working relationship to assist residents in the community.

“We are delighted to announce these formal relationships which allow us to streamline our responses when there is an emergency in our area. In particular, our partnership with Summit Supports Our Troops strengthens our ability to reach out to members of the Armed Forces and their families,” says Chapter Executive Director Christy Hodde.

“Our Disaster Action Team which is on call 24/7 will work with the Junior League of Summit when there is a family in crisis. This team also manages our Red Cross Service to the Armed Forces Program and will partner with Summit Supports Our Troops to ensure that families of deployed troops as well as veterans have access to all the benefits available.”

The Junior League of Summit is an organization of women committed to promoting volunteerism, developing the potential of women and improving the community through its trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.

“Our organization currently has a membership of more than 400 women in the communities of Berkeley Heights, Chatham, New Providence and Summit,” says Samantha Ekert, former League president. “We have previously supported the Red Cross Disaster Action Team during repeated local disasters. With this signed document we are formally agreeing to continue to provide assistance to disaster victims in the form of clothing and other household items from our Second Time Around Thrift Shop.”

The JLS has also agreed to ask its members to support this team during a disaster by serving in shelters or to help with feeding, disaster assessment surveys and client casework. “We also hope to be involved with local blood drives, a new type of partnership with the Red Cross,” said Ekert.

Summit-based nonprofit Summit Supports Our Troops provides emotional, financial, and community outreach to the men and women serving in the Armed Forces, and to their families.

“Our organization supports troops and their families who have a link to the greater, Summit, NJ community... ,” says Christine Truhe, founder of Summit Supports Our Troops. Truhe started this organization when her own son, Michael Aros-Truhe, received his orders for his first deployment to Iraq.

“We are delighted to partner with the Red Cross in their Get to Know Us Before You Need Us presentations which inform families and friends of active duty members about Red Cross services,” says Truhe. “We will also be partnering with the chapter on their workshop, Coping with Deployment, and will refer clients to each other as the need arises.”

To learn about the Red Cross Service to the Armed Forces program, visit ccnjredcross.org and click Community Services at the top and then Armed Forces; or call 908-273-2076.

For information about Summit Supports Our Troops, visit ssot.org. For information about the Junior League of Summit visit jlsummit.org.

Local Red Cross programs and services include disaster preparedness education and response services; life-saving skills training such as CPR, AED, First Aid, and water safety; armed forces emergency services, transportation and blood services.

The Colonial Crossroads chapter serves Berkeley Heights, Chatham Borough, Chatham Township, East Hanover, Florham Park, Long Hill Township, Madison, New Providence, Springfield and Summit. Visit ccnjredcross.org.