JetBlue Celebrates 20th Playground Build in Partnership With KaBOOM!

Aug 15, 2014

JetBlue Celebrates 20th Playground Build in Partnership With KaBOOM!

New York's Hometown Airline(TM) Completes Three Playgrounds in Areas Impacted by Hurricane Sandy, Restoring Play for Local Children

NEW YORK, NY -- (Marketwired) -- 08/15/14 -- JetBlue Airways (NASDAQ: JBLU), New York's Hometown Airline™, recently completed its 20th playground build in partnership with KaBOOM!, helping to restore play for nearly 44,000 children throughout the airline's network. Since 2005, JetBlue and long-standing partner KaBOOM! have worked together to create safe playspaces and help give children in underserved neighborhoods the playful childhood they deserve.

JetBlue and KaBOOM! have worked together over the last nine years to inspire play. This partnership has successfully engaged more than 4,512 volunteers to move 29 tractor trailers containing 2,573 cubic yards of mulch for 20 playground builds.

Following Hurricane Sandy, JetBlue committed to help rebuild New York by dedicating three upcoming playgrounds for areas devastated by the superstorm. The third playground was completed earlier this month in Island Park, Long Island, following previous builds in Broad Channel and Long Beach in Nassau County, New York.

Nearly two years after Hurricane Sandy, dozens of communities in the New York metro area are still rebuilding. With essential infrastructure such as, hospitals, schools and roads being the primary focus, playgrounds and playspaces often take a lower priority. Following natural disasters, play becomes even more critical as it creates a sense of normalcy and provides an emotional outlet for kids.

"Over the past nine years, we've built 20 playgrounds, moved 220 tons of concrete and positively impacted 43,767 kids," said Icema Gibbs, director of corporate social responsibility at JetBlue Airways. "Play is important for all children. It is also a crucial element in the healing process after a disaster. As New York's Hometown Airline, our crewmembers felt it was important to build playgrounds for our neighbors. Our customers, local communities and our crewmembers rallied together to help bring some normalcy back to these children's lives."

JetBlue's three post-Hurricane Sandy Builds will restore play back into the lives of thousands of children. In Island Park, nearly 95 percent of the community's 1,000 homes were damaged and valuable community resources such as Landgraf Park were destroyed. Since then, more than 500 children in the community have been missing a valuable element important to the recovery process -- play. The previous site at Magnolia Playground in Long Beach was destroyed by Hurricane Sandy and thousands of children living in the area have not had a suitable place to play since the storm. Additionally, the Broad Channel Athletic Club experienced water rising up to nine feet in their clubhouse, causing the facility to lose virtually everything in the storm. The Club serves more than 900 children every year and 95 percent of those children lost their homes and playspace due to Hurricane Sandy.

"At KaBOOM!, we believe play matters for all kids, especially for those whose childhoods have been turned upside down by a natural disaster," said Darell Hammond, founder and CEO of KaBOOM!. "In building this playground with the support of JetBlue and the Village of Island Park, together we are able to give these kids the play they need to help them return to normalcy, build resilience and thrive."

When a natural disaster affects a community, the resulting trauma resonates among the survivors, especially children. The anxiety and fear that follows a disaster can be troubling for them. Some may regress or become withdrawn and school performance may suffer. There are several ways to help alleviate the emotional stress for children, including increasing access to play, which has been proven to help relieve their tension. Kids aren't playing enough today and the consequences are devastating, only one in four children gets 60 minutes of physical activity or active play each day.

Since Hurricane Sandy, JetBlue has coordinated several efforts to provide assistance to its neighbors and crewmembers and help rebuild communities in New York. In 2013, JetBlue helped revitalize Highland Park in Brooklyn. Crewmembers and community volunteers planted more than 2,500 trees in an area identified by the New York City Parks Department as a priority location for revitalization efforts. The 100-acre park lost a significant stretch of trees due to Hurricane Sandy. Additionally, in the days following the storm, JetBlue partnered with the NYC Food Truck Association to serve more than 25,000 meals to residents in impacted areas. The airline's customers also donated $720,000 through JetBlueGives.org to support the relief and recovery efforts of impacted communities. JetBlue matched the first $100,000 bringing the grand total to $820,000.

To view a video of JetBlue's 20th playground build with KaBOOM! at Landgraf Park in Island Park, Long Island, visit https://vimeo.com/103377769.

About KaBOOM!

KaBOOM! is the national non-profit dedicated to the bold new goal of ensuring that all children, particularly the 16 million American children living in poverty, get the balanced and active play they need to thrive. KaBOOM! has been a powerful champion for play since its founding in 1996, working with partners to build, improve and open more than 15,000 playgrounds, engage more than 1,000,000 volunteers and serve more than 6,600,000 children. KaBOOM! creates and catalyzes great places to play, inspires, empowers and leads play advocates, and educates and elevates the societal conversation

about the importance of play in children's lives. For more information, visit kaboom.org/act or follow the conversation on why #playmatters at twitter.com/kaboom or facebook.com/kaboom.

About JetBlue Airways

JetBlue is New York's Hometown Airline™, and a leading carrier in Boston, Fort Lauderdale/ Hollywood, Los Angeles (Long Beach), Orlando, and San Juan. JetBlue carries more than 30 million customers a year to 86 cities in the U.S., Caribbean, and Latin America with an average of 850 daily flights. With JetBlue, all seats are assigned, all fares are one-way, an overnight stay is never required and the first checked bag is free (subject to weight and size limits and exceptions for itineraries including flights marketed or operated by other airlines). For more information please visit JetBlue.com.

Image Available: http://www.marketwire.com/library/MwGo/2014/8/15/11G020044/Images/Kaboom_20th_build_(2)-851307929577.jpg

Media Contacts
JetBlue Corporate Communications
Tel: +1 718 709 3089
corpcomm@jetblue.com

Reservations
+1 800 JETBLUE (538 2583)
TTY/TDD: +1 800 336-5530
www.jetblue.com

Source: JetBlue Airways

Powered by SITECORE