



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**JEWISH FEDERATION OF DURHAM-CHAPEL HILL TO HOLD
8th ANNUAL MITZVAH DAY:
A DAYLONG VOLUNTEER EVENT ON CHRISTMAS DAY**

DURHAM, NC (December 18, 2013) – Bringing people together to build community is one of the core values of the Jewish Federation of Durham-Chapel Hill, and is demonstrated on December 25. For the Jewish community, Christmas Day has a different meaning. Community members around the region take the opportunity to spend the day off from work performing a day of service, to help those in need.

Mitzvah is the Hebrew word for “good deed.” The event is a community outreach effort coordinated by the Jewish Federation in conjunction with local synagogues, the Lerner School and the at-large Jewish community. People of all faiths are welcome to participate and help make a difference on Christmas day. The inspiration for Mitzvah Day is to help less-fortunate individuals in our community and to provide an opportunity for volunteers to experience the joy of helping others.

Schedule:

- 9am – Community-wide breakfast at the Levin JCC, 1937 W. Cornwallis Rd. Durham 27705
- 10am-12pm – 500 volunteers go to 30 different projects in sites around Durham and Orange County

The volunteers will serve over 30 agencies on Christmas Eve Day: visiting seniors, cooking meals at local shelters, cleaning local parks and trails, delivering books and gifts to the under-privileged and making blankets for the homeless. Some agencies benefiting from Mitzvah Day include Habitat for Humanity, Urban Ministries, IFC Community Kitchen, Ronald McDonald Houses of Durham & Chapel Hill, Durham Rescue Mission, Durham Literacy Center and Threshold.

This year the list also includes several brand new projects, such as partnering with the NC Diaper Bank do collect and package diapers for low-income families and bringing a Christmas meal to firefighters from our local fire station who are on duty on Christmas Day.

Some Highlights:

- Families will visit Hillcrest Convalescent home and play bingo with older adults.
- At the Levin JCC, volunteers will put together bags with diapers and infant clothes for mothers in need, through the project Welcome Baby.
- At the Lerner Community Day School – volunteers will build compost bins, for the school to use throughout the year.

Mitzvah Day is an exceptional day of volunteerism, community activism and unity. It brings individuals from different faiths and backgrounds together to help one another. For more information about Mitzvah Day, please contact Shoshana Israel (sisrael@shalomdch.org) at the Jewish Federation at 919-886-7076, or visit www.levinjcc.org/mitzvahday.

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About the Jewish Federation of Durham-Chapel Hill:

The Jewish Federation of Durham-Chapel Hill is the umbrella organization representing the Jewish community of Durham, Orange, Chatham, Person, and Alamance counties.

The mission of the Jewish Federation of Durham-Chapel Hill is to connect Jews in the local community, to help those in need both here and abroad, and to provide and support programs and services that enable current and future generations to lead more meaningful lives inspired by Jewish values. The Jewish Federation of Durham-Chapel Hill is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

<http://www.shalomdch.org>

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