

## SPREADING OPTIMISM AND HOPE

The Barbera Foundation is a local non-profit organization which motivates and inspires Reston area residents to give back to the community and help those who are less fortunate. Partnered with other non-profit and for-profit organizations including Cornerstones, HopeCam, Fellowship Square, Women Giving Back, Shelter House, Beloved Yoga, Reston Serenity Smiles, and McCabe World Travel, the Barbera Foundation organizes a diverse set of charitable initiatives that are social, convenient, and fun for volunteers. From collecting books for local underprivileged children and laptop computers for children recovering from cancer to cooking dinners for low-income elderly and the homeless, the Barbera Foundation strives to create an environment where people can come together to help others, while simultaneously helping themselves.

**"It's a win-win!"** says Kevin Barbera, CEO and Founder of the Barbera Foundation, "While the primary purpose is to serve those less fortunate, our events influence volunteers in a way that helps them live more optimistic, fulfilling, and purpose-driven lives."

"The Barbera Foundation is a true asset to the Reston community," says Barbera Foundation volunteer, Dr. Sheetal Ajmani. "It allows people to serve the community in hands-on, practical ways. Delivering hand-made Valentine's to our active duty military. Handing out sleeping bags to the homeless to keep them warm during the cold winter nights. Sending flower bouquets to women survivors of domestic violence on Mother's Day. The opportunities to give and serve are endless. The Barbera Foundation breaks down barriers to make giving back easy. With well-planned events every month, there's no shortage of ways to serve. And, in doing so, connecting with a community of like-minded friends."

The Barbera Foundation was established by local Reston resident, Kevin Barbera in September 2017. Kevin developed a passion for charitable work while attending Business school in Washington, D.C. On his way to class, he frequently passed homeless people who asked for food, clothing, and money. This experience inspired him to take action, and he, along with his closest friends, delivered sandwiches, snacks, clothing, and other essentials to those in need. Kevin discovered that there was a strong desire in the community to give back as his first group of volunteers quickly grew from a handful to hundreds.

Since then, the Barbera Foundation has grown to over 3,000 volunteers. To continue the growth and positive influence of the Barbera Foundation, Kevin relies on social media, e-mail marketing, word of mouth, and by hosting rewarding volunteer experiences. "People want to make an impact in our community, but are limited as far as time is concerned. I try to keep things relatively simple by limiting the time commitment to a few hours per event, and by incorporating a fun and social aspect to everything we do," says Barbera. By doing so, Kevin hopes to continue spreading optimism and hope throughout the community for many years to come. [www.barberafoundation.org](http://www.barberafoundation.org)

