



College English lecturer Diana Aynaci stacking boxes of toiletries for Ukraine families.

Picture: BARKING AND DAGENHAM COLLEGE

news

Crisis charity

Hundreds of children were given chocolate eggs over the holiday by volunteers from Dagenham United charity working with a Dagenham supermarket and the Time FM local radio station.

Volunteers handed out 300 treats to schools before they broke up.

Then they made a special delivery to the children living at Grays Court hostel who were buzzing with excitement.

"These families are in genuine need," hostel manager Paul Perry said. "Something like this brings a smile to their faces."

The charity contacts schools in the Dagenham area to find out where parents are who struggle financially.

Its chairman Peter Chand said: "This is a difficult time with the cost-of-living crises. My fear is that charities like us will be called on to help more and more people like never before."

Dagenham United puts money onto a card that the families can use in supermarkets including Asda's Dagenham superstore by the A13 to help them out.

Students join campaign in support of families fleeing war in Ukraine

Collections of toiletries to help Ukraine families fleeing the devastating Russian invasion have been organised by lecture staff and college students in Dagenham.

English lecturer Diana Aynaci was overwhelmed with donations from her students at Barking and Dagenham College.

Boxes and boxes of toiletries were stacked floor to ceiling before the Rush Green Campus in Dagenham Road closed for the Easter break.

She decided to do something for the refugees after a call on social media from the White Eagle Club at Balham in south London for donations to help families arriving in refugee camps.

The families, many with children, were getting meals—but desperately needed everyday things like soap and toothpaste and cotton pads for babies.

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"My students were very generous," Diana said. "We drove the supplies down to Balham and were given a warm welcome when we arrived at the White Eagle club. Now we plan to collect and deliver even more donations."

Communities across Essex and east London have responded to the crisis. A "Concert for Ukraine" raised £17,000 in Brentwood for the British Red Cross which was packed with 500 well-wishers. Donations reached five figures, with more still pouring in.

Volunteers from the Food For All charity in Hackney travelled to Poland to set up feeding camps to cook hundreds of meals for Ukrainians fleeing the war.

They had a narrow

escape themselves crossing into Ukraine to help bring mothers with children back to safety.

The charity's director Peter O'Grady said: "There was an air strike when 30 people were killed and 100 others injured. We were just one kilometre away when our contact on radio instructed us to make a u-turn and take a different road." The charity had mobile teams running field kitchens and using their vans to distribute meals directly to the refugees. Another 15 tonnes of food and essential supplies were being sent last week from the Hackney base overland to Ukraine.

The charity thanked "all the schoolchildren in east London who helped raise funds".

Their efforts have been followed by the students at Barking and Dagenham College donating boxes of toiletries ready to be shipped out to Poland.



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