

Nonprofit Seeks Volunteers for School Supplies Delivery

by Alexa Rexroth

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Business aviation has a long tradition of philanthropy, both in the U.S. and on a global scale. One organization that tackles the latter is Aviation for Humanity, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to using the international aviation network to deliver humanitarian aid on a global scale. Kimberly Perkins, founder and executive director of Aviation for Humanity, developed the idea for the organization while she was a pilot in West Africa. Perkins recognized a lack of educational resources for students and communities in the region and realized that the aviation industry could help serve the deficit through volunteer action.

That action includes assembling and delivering backpacks filled with supplies to places in need, such as an underfunded school or orphanage. If a volunteer wants to deliver backpacks to a developing nation they are intending to visit, they will be put in touch with an in-country contact established by Aviation for Humanity to arrange necessary logistics. Aviation for Humanity supplies the requisite number of backpacks, and once in the country, the traveler purchases school supplies to fill the backpacks. It is recommended that supplies be purchased in-country to support local economies while also guaranteeing books are published in local languages, but the organization does accept donations of promotional pens and other items that can be used to fill the backpacks.

“My goal is to provide a way for a traveler to have a great interaction with students, so when they get home, they are enthusiastic to do more. I hope that my nonprofit is the catalyst for more humanitarian work,” said Perkins.

Aviation for Humanity has delivered supplies all around the world through the efforts of volunteers. This year, Perkins said, “Uzbekistan and Mongolia are looking like real possibilities. We have someone out in Kenya right now and another traveler set up for a school visit in Tanzania later this summer. I am personally taking supplies to Nepal this October.”

Last year, the organization handed out 500 backpacks and is looking for sponsorship from a company to purchase pencil cases and backpacks for 2018 donations.

The group is always happy to receive donated funds, but also suggests support in other forms. “If your company does sponsorships, donation-matching, or has marketing pens, pencils, etc. that you think it would donate, we would greatly appreciate your support. If you’d like to be a hands-on volunteer either by taking supplies or organizing a school visit, we would love your help. This non-profit is a grassroots effort to use aviation to empower children and support education. I can’t do it without your help,” said Perkins.

More information is available on the association's [website](#).

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