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ASTRA FEATURES VOLUNTEER AND CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES AT 2018 MARKETPLACE & ACADEMY

MIGHTY TOGETHER VOLUNTEER PROGRAM LEND A HAND IN NEW ORLEANS

Chicago, Illinois (April 30, 2018)– The American Specialty Toy Retailing Association (ASTRA) announced today that hands-on volunteer activities will be a prominent feature of its 2018 [Marketplace & Academy](#). As part of the *Mighty Together Volunteer Program*, attendees are invited to participate in a school beautification project and in filling back-to-school backpacks for New Orleans children. In addition, New Orleans organizations will receive toys that manufacturers donate and extra food from ASTRA meal functions.

“ASTRA’s charitable activities at our national convention are an extension of what our members are doing in their own communities where their stores are located,” notes Kimberly Mosley, President of ASTRA. “ASTRA members are leaders who have a positive influence the economy, culture and creativity of the communities they serve, and we want to reflect those same values at Marketplace & Academy. Lending a hand while we are together in New Orleans is another way for ASTRA members to live our *Mighty Together* vision.”

The school clean up project will take place Saturday afternoon, June 9th, at a New Orleans school to be announced and is generously sponsored by Alex Brands. Backpack stuffing will take place on Monday, June 11th and Tuesday, June 12th in the My ASTRA Center booth 919 on the exhibit hall floor and is generously sponsored by Crayola. Manufacturers will be invited to donate toys at the end of Marketplace & Academy, and all donations will be distributed to local charities in New Orleans. The Ernest N. Morial Convention Center will manage donations of extra meals in partnership with Bethel Colony. For more information or to register for the school clean up project, visit <http://marketplaceandacademy.org/about-astra/volunteer-program>

ASTRA’s Marketplace & Academy will be held June 10-13, 2018 in New Orleans, LA, with pre-conference sessions beginning June 8th.

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About the American Specialty Toy Retailing Association (ASTRA)

Founded in 1992, the American Specialty Toy Retailing Association (ASTRA) is an international not-for-profit trade organization that serves more than 1,800 independent retailers, manufacturers and sales representatives in the specialty toy industry. ASTRA is a community of dedicated professionals committed to providing children with healthy, quality play materials that have high play value and are designed with a focus on what the child can do, rather than what the toy can do. ASTRA members are leaders who, through their businesses, make a positive impact on the economy and culture of the communities they serve. For more information, visit www.astratoy.org/.

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