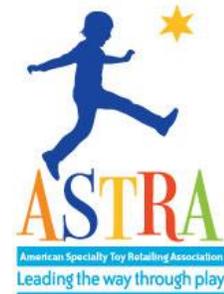


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## ***ASTRA FEATURES VOLUNTEER AND CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES AT 2019 MARKETPLACE & ACADEMY***



**Chicago, Illinois** (May 20, 2019)– The American Specialty Toy Retailing Association (ASTRA) announced today that hands-on volunteer activities will be a prominent feature of its 2019 [Marketplace & Academy](#). Attendees are invited to participate in a park clean-up and plant restoration project and in filling back-to-school backpacks that will be distributed to several Pittsburgh schools with economically disadvantaged students. In addition, manufacturers will have an opportunity to donate toys at the conclusion of Marketplace & Academy.

“ASTRA’s charitable activities at our national convention are an extension of what our members are doing in their own communities,” notes Kimberly Mosley, president of ASTRA. “These businesses have a positive influence on 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 Pittsburgh is another way for ASTRA members to live our values and to have fun while we are at it.”

- The park clean-up project will take place Saturday afternoon, June 8<sup>th</sup>, at Frick Park, located near the Squirrel Hill neighborhood and the Tree of Life Synagogue. Activities will include willow planting, invasive plant removal and trash removal from the stream. The event is coordinated through the Nine Mile Run Watershed Association, which restores and protects its watershed ecosystem, while working regionally to support and implement resilient solutions for a healthy urban environment, and is supported in partnership by Tangle Creations.
- Backpack stuffing will take place on Monday, June 10<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, June 11<sup>th</sup> at the front of aisles 1700 and 1800 on the exhibit hall floor. This activity is generously brought to you in partnership with Crayola.
- To kick off ASTRA’s *Toys for Joy* holiday toy drive, manufacturers will be invited to donate toys at the end of Marketplace & Academy.

For more information on community service activities at Marketplace & Academy or to register for the park beautification project, visit <http://marketplaceandacademy.org/about-astra/volunteer-program>. [ASTRA’s Marketplace & Academy](#) will be held June 9-12, 2019 in Pittsburgh, PA, with pre-conference sessions beginning June 7<sup>th</sup>.

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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/](http://www.astratoy.org/).

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