



GETTING STARTED

Learn about the Project

This is a wonderful volunteer opportunity for you and your school. You can read about Matthew and his mom, Lisa, on our website, www.freemanproject.org. On the website, please read the Mission Statement and watch the moving eleven minute documentary. Check out the media coverage in the “News and Media” Section. These things will help you understand the motivation behind the project. Let the appropriate school administrators know about the project up front.

This is a list of what you'll need:

- Containers – boxes or other receptacles to store what you collect.
- Collection point – a location (or several locations) where people can bring the school supplies they want to donate.
- Publicity – flyers that can be put up in store windows, information on your Facebook page, contact with the local news media, and/or morning announcements at school. Use these tools or others that you can create to let people know that you're organizing a collection drive of school supplies for school children in war-torn countries through The Matthew Freeman Project: Pens & Paper for Peace.
- Storage – a place to keep the things you collect.
- Shipping – contact us at www.freemanproject.org so that we may facilitate shipping.
- Monetary Donations – Collect donations to help offset shipping costs.

Events

Here are some ideas for events that could be used to collect supplies or to raise money.

Minute to Win-it: Based on the popular tv game show, collect entry fees to watch contestants perform challenging one-minute stunts. See pictures on our website and check-out episodes on the web for examples. It is a great way to involve individual classes in a competition!

Athletic Events: Either for the homecoming game or the game against your school's arch-rival, arrange for a collection of supplies. Challenge your opponents for that game to see who collects the most.

Walk-a-thons or 5K, 10K runs: Have people donate a certain amount for each mile walked. And have everyone bring a spiral notebook and a box of pens.

Car washes, Food Sales: More good ways to collect money for the cause.

Special Days: Build an event to collect supplies or raise money around a specific holiday.

Labor Day – Could be in conjunction with the start of school “ One for You,
One for Them” (School supplies are the most inexpensive at this time)
Veteran’s Day
Pearl Harbor Day
President’s Day
Armed Forces Day
Memorial Day

Competitions

Create contests to see who can raise the most money or collect the most supplies. Judge it by weight. One school in Mississippi collected more than a ton – over 5,000 items! Winners can be either individuals, individual classes, grade levels, clubs, or teams. Or have different athletic teams within your school compete to see who can raise the most money or collect the most supplies.

Incentives

Winners of contests can win:

Free or discount tickets to athletic events/ individual or club members

Free or discount admission for parents or families to athletic events

Preferred parking in the school parking lot – a new winner each month

Wear PJ’s to school

Free meals from restaurants

Gift cards from merchants

Pizza party at school or a local restaurant

Ice cream parties

Make it fun!

Post a video on our website and YouTube

The Matthew Freeman Project: Pens & Paper for Peace has its own channel on YouTube! We

also want you to send us your own videos – shoot it on a FlipVideo camera and email it to us at www.freemanproject.org We'll post it on our site – and on the Matthew Freeman Project YouTube channel. THEN, whenever we can pull it off, we'll get the U.S. military personnel that delivers the supplies you collected to shoot the story from their end and we'll put the entire story of your collection and their delivery on our website and our YouTube channel. Pretty cool, eh?

HOW TO DISCUSS THE PROJECT WITH OTHERS

Now that you're on board with this meaningful volunteer opportunity, you're going to need to be able to explain the importance of The Matthew Freeman Project: Pens & Paper for Peace to parents, school administrators, your friends, merchants, community leaders. Show them the website at www.freemanproject.org and this packet. We have also listed some facts that can be used in your correspondence, announcements, or even just conversations in gaining support from others.

FAST FACTS - Background

Matthew Freeman was a true renaissance man. He had read all of Shakespeare's works – before he even started high school. He played saxophone in his high school marching band. He was a two-time regional tennis champion. He was an Eagle Scout.

He was a third-generation graduate of The Naval Academy who became a Marine pilot.

Even though he was Marine pilot and could have stayed in the relative safety of the cockpit, Matthew volunteered to serve with ground forces – in Afghanistan

Just a few days after he arrived in Afghanistan Matthew called his mother, Lisa, a schoolteacher, in Richmond Hill, Georgia and asked her to start collecting school supplies so he could give them to Afghan school kids. In his very last conversation with his mom, he said, "Mom, they would rather have pens and paper than food and water." Two days later, he was killed.

Matthew was a 29-year old Marine Captain when he was killed in combat in August 2009 and was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star for bravery. He had only been married for three weeks when he was killed.

Richmond Hill boy scouts were the first group to implement Matthew's vision. They heard about Matthew's request and a week after Matthew's funeral, they collected school supplies and sent them to Matthew's unit in Afghanistan where they were distributed to Afghan school kids.

Matthew's mother Lisa, a 30-year veteran school teacher, launched "The Matthew Freeman Project: Pens & Paper for Peace" on Memorial Day, 2009 at a press conference and launch event attended by 500 people.

The mission of The Freeman Project is to provide educational supplies and support to children anywhere in the world whose education has been interrupted by armed conflict.

Fast Facts –Why This is Important

It was in the classrooms of the madrasas in the early '90s where the Taliban was born – where those who flew the planes on 9/11 learned their terrible hatred.

We have a chance to get into other classrooms – and fight the enemy there.

We have a chance to SHOW them the love of American school children – and the "better angels" of our U.S. military – who hand them those supplies.

And who knows, one of those children in those classrooms may become the leader of a free country!

Fast Facts –What's Been Done

The Matthew Freeman Project: Pens & Paper for Peace is now a registered 501(c) 3 charitable organization. All donations are tax-deductible.

All four Savannah television stations support The Freeman Project. Three of them, WJCL, WSAV, and Fox 28 banded together in a televised fundraiser that aired in Savannah on Comcast channel 7.

In early August, 2010, just 6 weeks after the launch The Freeman Project saw the first collection of school supplies delivered to 300 school kids just outside Jalalabad, Afghanistan!

A ten year-old boy in Texas took it upon himself to collect supplies.

A high school junior in Jacksonville has arranged for a collection at her homecoming

game – and she got the other school, their opponents to donate, too!

Matthew's widow, Theresa was given a donation of 5,000 items from Gulfport HS in Mississippi – over one ton!

Six 70 pound bins of school supplies were shipped to our military in Afghanistan Dec., 2011 and have been distributed to school aged children there.

- Over 100 military personnel from all branches of the military have stepped forward and offered to distribute the supplies – on the ground in Afghanistan.

Join our cause and help accomplish our goals first established by Capt. Matthew Freeman, a true American hero.