



## Vera Bradley Partners With Blessings in a Backpack

August 1, 2019

– Company to Donate 50,000 Backpacks and More than \$50,000 for Back-to-School Season –

FORT WAYNE, Ind., Aug. 01, 2019 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Vera Bradley, Inc. (NASDAQ: VRA; “Vera Bradley” or the “Company”), a leading American bag and luggage company and iconic lifestyle brand, today announced that it will continue its partnership with non-profit organization Blessings in a Backpack for the second consecutive year. Blessings in a Backpack mobilizes communities, individuals and resources to provide food for the millions of elementary school children across America who might otherwise go hungry.

Through Blessings in a Backpack, a leader in the movement to end childhood hunger, Vera Bradley will donate 50,000 backpacks to children in need throughout the United States. The Company also plans to host and support several backpack packing events, school carnivals and annual back-to-school distribution events in select markets including New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Nashville, Charlotte and Panama City, Florida. Each event will culminate in backpack giveaways and some events will feature celebrity appearances. Among the celebrity guests and partners Vera Bradley is supporting are principal dancer of the American Ballet Theatre Misty Copeland, racing legend and NBC Sports motorsports analyst Dale Earnhardt, Jr. and his wife Amy, singer and songwriter Lauren Alaina and actor Bailee Madison. For the Chicago stop, Blessings in a Backpack will partner with the Julian D. King foundation for their annual HATCH DAY, which was founded by Grammy and Oscar-winning artist Jennifer Hudson and her sister Julia Hudson.

“Blessings in a Backpack is thrilled to be partnering with Vera Bradley’s back-to-school campaign for the second year in a row. Fifty thousand children across the United States will start school this year with a brand new backpack thanks to the generosity of Vera Bradley and their commitment to giving back. We can’t think of a better way to start the school year than having such a well-respected brand supporting our mission of ending childhood hunger,” said Nikki Grizzle, Chief Marketing Officer of Blessings in a Backpack.

Vera Bradley has also launched an awareness and fundraising campaign benefiting Blessings in a Backpack in its stores and on [verabradley.com](http://verabradley.com) that will run through August 31, 2019. With a minimum \$10 donation to Blessings in a Backpack, customers will receive a free Vera Bradley Mini Backpack Keychain to show their support for the organization. Vera Bradley will match customers’ monetary donations up to \$50,000. The Company’s goal is to donate at least \$150,000 in total to assist Blessings in a Backpack with filling children’s backpacks with nutritional food throughout the course of this school year. Blessings in a Backpack is able to turn each \$10 donation into a month of weekend meals for a child.

Robert Wallstrom, Chief Executive Officer of Vera Bradley, noted, “Vera Bradley is committed to giving back to the communities in which we do business, focusing especially on causes that benefit women and children. We are proud to support Blessings in a Backpack in an even bigger way this year and feel fortunate to play a part in enhancing the lives of the students and families this program benefits.”

In 2018, Vera Bradley donated 25,000 backpacks and completed a philanthropic tour of seven carnival-themed events across the country for children who benefit from the Blessings in a Backpack program. Celebrity partners including Brittany and Jason Aldean, Shawn Johnson East and Andrew East, Sarah Michelle Gellar, and Danielle and Kevin Jonas served as carnival hosts.

### **About Vera Bradley**

Vera Bradley is a leading designer of women’s handbags, luggage and travel items, fashion and home accessories, and unique gifts. Founded in 1982 by friends Barbara Bradley Baekgaard and Patricia R. Miller, the brand’s innovative designs, iconic patterns, and brilliant colors continue to inspire and connect women unlike any other brand in the global marketplace.

Vera Bradley offers a multi-channel sales model as well as a focus on service and a high level of customer engagement. The Company sells its products through two reportable segments: Direct and Indirect. The Direct business consists of sales of Vera Bradley products through the Company’s full-line and factory outlet stores throughout the United States, [verabradley.com](http://verabradley.com), the Company’s online outlet site, and its annual outlet sale in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The Indirect business consists of sales of Vera Bradley products to approximately 2,200 specialty retail locations, substantially all of which are located in the United States, as well as sales to select department stores, national accounts, third party e-commerce sites, and third-party inventory liquidators, and royalties recognized through licensing agreements.

The Company’s commitment to bringing more beauty into women’s lives includes its dedication to breast cancer research through the Vera Bradley Foundation for Breast Cancer for which they have raised over \$32 million to date.

In July 2019, Vera Bradley acquired a 75% interest in Creative Genius, Inc., which also operates under the name Pura Vida Bracelets (“Pura Vida”). Pura Vida, based in La Jolla, California, is a rapidly growing, digitally native, and highly engaging lifestyle brand that deeply resonates with its loyal consumer following. The Pura Vida brand has a differentiated and expanding offering of bracelets, jewelry, and other lifestyle accessories.

For more information about Vera Bradley, visit [www.verabradley.com](http://www.verabradley.com) or follow the brand @VeraBradley on Twitter and Instagram.

### **About Blessings in a Backpack**

Hunger has both short- and long-term negative effects on children’s health and ability to succeed in school. Blessings in a Backpack mobilizes communities, individuals, and resources to provide food on the weekends for elementary school children across America who might otherwise go hungry. Blessings in a Backpack is providing 3.2 million hunger-free weekends for nearly 93,000 children in 46 states and the District of Columbia. For more information visit [www.blessingsinabackpack.org](http://www.blessingsinabackpack.org).

### **Websites**

[www.verabradley.com](http://www.verabradley.com)  
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