



## Backpacks That Give Back: Vera Bradley Supports Blessings in a Backpack to Help Feed Children in Need This Back-to-School Season

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FORT WAYNE, Ind., Aug. 02, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- As our communities prepare to head back to the classroom this fall, Vera Bradley, Inc. (NASDAQ: VRA; "Vera Bradley" or the "brand") wants to ensure both students and teachers are set up for a successful and bright school year ahead. The brand is proud to continue its longstanding partnership with Blessings in a Backpack, and with the help of its customers, is donating \$100,000 to further support the nonprofit's mission of providing food to the millions of elementary school children across America who might otherwise go hungry.

"COVID-19 not only caused mass school closures – preventing access to the free lunch programs that so many kids rely on – but also led to a rise in unemployment and poverty. It is now projected that 18 million children are experiencing food insecurity," said Nikki Grizzle, Chief Marketing Officer of Blessings in a Backpack. "As students finally head back to their classrooms, we are so grateful to have Vera Bradley's continued financial support and help in raising awareness for such an important and ongoing issue in our schools."

"The back-to-school season should be filled with joy and excitement, but we know that not every child has access to the same resources to set them up for success. That's why the mission of Blessings in a Backpack is so important, and why the organization quickly captured our hearts with all of the ways they impact kids' lives," said Daren Hull, President of Vera Bradley. "We're honored to continue our partnership and to give our customers the opportunity to shop with purpose this season."

Vera Bradley has all of your back-to-school and campus life essentials – including lunch bags, zip ID lanyards, planners, notebooks, dorm décor and accessories – and of course, backpacks! The brand's best-selling backpacks are durable, washable and functional, with plenty of pockets to keep customers organized. Constructed with the wearer's comfort in mind, five Vera Bradley backpack styles are even endorsed by the American Chiropractic Association. Customers can shop favorites including the Campus Backpack, Grand Backpack and Sling Backpack in sustainable fabrications, including ReActive, a water-resistant material made from recycled plastic bottles, and new consciously crafted Recycled Cotton. Teachers and students alike can choose from a wide selection of the iconic, colorful patterns Vera Bradley is known for, including new Plaza Medallion and Lavender Butterflies, as well as the brand's first-ever cotton solids for endless outfit-pairing potential.

This is the third consecutive year Vera Bradley has supported Blessings in a Backpack. To date, the brand has donated more than \$750,000 to the organization. This partnership supports Vera Bradley's [VB Cares](#) initiative and its mission of "Brightening Futures" and empowering women and children by building a world that is more welcoming and inclusive.

Shop back-to-school essentials and learn more about how Vera Bradley is supporting Blessings in a Backpack at [VeraBradley.com](#).

### **ABOUT VERA BRADLEY, INC.**

Vera Bradley, Inc. operates two unique lifestyle brands – Vera Bradley and Pura Vida. Vera Bradley and Pura Vida are complementary businesses, both with devoted, emotionally-connected, and multi-generational female customer bases; alignment as causal, comfortable, affordable, and fun brands; positioning as "gifting" and socially-connected brands; strong, entrepreneurial cultures; a keen focus on community, charity, and social consciousness; multi-channel distribution strategies; and talented leadership teams aligned and committed to the long-term success of their brands.

Vera Bradley, based in Fort Wayne, Indiana, is a leading designer of women's handbags, luggage and other travel items, fashion and home accessories, and unique gifts. Founded in 1982 by friends Barbara Bradley Baekgaard and Patricia R. Miller, the brand is known for its innovative designs, iconic patterns, and brilliant colors that inspire and connect women unlike any other brand in the global marketplace.

In July 2019, Vera Bradley, Inc. 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 founded in 2010 by friends Paul Goodman and Griffin Thall. Pura Vida has a differentiated and expanding offering of bracelets, jewelry, and other lifestyle accessories.

### **ABOUT BLESSINGS IN A BACKPACK**

Blessings in a Backpack is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and leader in the movement to end childhood hunger. 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 distributed 2.2 million bags of ready-to-eat food to children during the 2020/21 school year at more than 1,090 schools in 46 U.S. states and the District of Columbia.

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