Group encourages literacy with every step

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The University will unite in a Walk for Literacy Saturday morning where host Galvanizing and Organizing Youth Activism hopes every step they take from Douglass campus to the College Avenue campus will further improvements for education in impoverished areas.

"In GOYA, we're working to get the Rutgers community out to participate in activism and volunteerism to improve literacy on the local, regional and global level," said Rutgers College junior Corbin Laedlein, the University group's co-chair. "Our philosophy is that with the power of literacy and a good education, people will be able to fight poverty on their own."

Laedlein said all proceeds from the walk will benefit three separate causes. The first of which will be local as they will donate supplies and books to a daycare in New Brunswick operated by the Puerto Rican Action Board.

"This daycare center doesn't qualify for funding from the city, so its funding comes from payments based on a sliding scale of income of the families," Laedlein said. "But a lot of the families are really low-come, so they have trouble getting adequate funding."

GOYA also works with the non-profit University group, the Global Literacy Project, so another portion of the walk's proceeds will go to sending materials to a kindergarten classroom in one of the project's newly developed learning centers in Kibera of Nairobi, Kenya.

Finally, the last group receiving a piece of the profits raised by GOYA Saturday will be the non-profit international group, the Cooperative Housing Foundation.

"Our money will go toward the emergency relief effort to help support the rebuilding of a learning center in Ica, Peru, where they were devastated by an earthquake in August," Laedlein said.

But why a walk?

"Having a walk is a good way to get people out and do something physical," Laedlein said. "It's one thing to just give someone money, it's a completely different thing to bring an entire

community together to walk for a worldwide cause."

Laedlein said last year, the current GOYA executive board held the walk for the first time last year and raised just over $1,000, but with experience from last year under their belt, they're expectations are high for Saturday.

"We have a lot more organizations onboard this year, and I think we'll raise a lot more money because of it," he said.

Members of Alpha Kappa Psi, the co-ed professional business fraternity at the University, are one such example of an active addition to the event this year as they have been working to raise both awareness and funds for the upcoming walk.

"Overall, Alpha Kappa Psi just wanted to support a great cause which is why we tried raising money from a bake sale [yesterday] in front of Brower," said Maya T. Pillai, a

Rutgers College junior.

Rutgers College senior and fraternity brother Tammy Lee said she appreciated being able to take part in a worthwhile cause while she worked at the bake sale that took place from 2 to 6 p.m.

"We do various community service projects throughout the year, and that accomplishes a couple of things," said Tammy Lee, a Rutgers College senior and Alpha Kappa Psi member. "As brothers, it's a way for us to bond, but also, we want to help out the community and give back to the local New Brunswick area."

Pillai said members of Alpha Kappa Psi caught wind of the event and decided they could collectively make a good addition to GOYA's efforts.

"We just heard about the walk and thought to ourselves, 'Hey, why don't we raise as much money for them as we can?'" Pillai said.

She said the profits from yesterday's bake sale alone were upwards of $150, and that will be combined with personal donations from the participating members of the fraternity when they walk with GOYA to promote global literacy.

Students in support of the activism group and children's education in general can register Saturday morning for the walk at 10 a.m. in the Douglass Campus Center, which will finish around 1 p.m. at Brower Commons on the College Avenue campus.