



News

For immediate release

LUMA lights the way for children and youth in Puerto Rico

San Juan, Puerto Rico, May 3, 2021 – As part of its social responsibility agenda, LUMA is committed to supporting Puerto Rican students to pursue their dreams through education and teaching children to prepare for emergencies. To achieve this, the LUMA Illuminating Steps program has been launched, to contribute to the social and economic development of Puerto Rico directly from its communities.

To start the Illuminating Steps program, LUMA has established collaborative relationships with Boys & Girls Clubs of Puerto Rico and the American Red Cross Puerto Rico Chapter, two entities with a long history of supporting and helping the most vulnerable communities at the times of greatest need.

“Partnering with the American Red Cross and Boys & Girls Clubs is a key step in putting LUMA’s values into action,” said Wayne Stensby, LUMA President and CEO. “As the company in charge of electricity transmission and distribution in Puerto Rico, we know that when the island’s communities prosper, all Puerto Ricans benefit. Our people are at the center of our community investment, people who live and work in the communities we serve and we take pride in being a good neighbor to all of them,” added Stensby.

LUMA’s mission is to transform Puerto Rico’s electrical system safely and effectively, an effort that goes hand in hand with the goal of “energizing” the next generation of youth through education and wellness.

Since its inception in 1967, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Puerto Rico have impacted the lives of more than 70,000 children and youth from the most vulnerable communities in Puerto Rico. Guided by its mission to provide children and youth with hope for a better future and the opportunity to develop their full potential, the organization provides participants with a safe and creative place to develop as leaders and achieve their academic, professional and personal goals. Throughout more than 50 years of history, the organization has provided extracurricular activities services for children and young people ages 6 to 18, in 11 clubs around the island, from San Juan to Mayagüez and Vieques.

“At Boys & Girls Clubs of Puerto Rico we understand the pressing needs of the more than 12,000 participants who walk through our doors each year and their families. Nine out of 10 of them live below the poverty level and the current crisis has increased their lack of access to basic services such as education, connectivity, social-emotional support and food. Partners like LUMA allow us to continue operating during the pandemic and fully restore all our services in person as soon as the emergency is over and we are safe,” said Olga Ramos Carrasquillo, president of Boys & Girls Clubs of Puerto Rico.

“In the most recent National Youth Outcome Initiative survey, 92% of BG CPR participants indicated that our clubs improve their emotional security. Meanwhile, 98% said their mentors help them set high expectations. This last piece of information explains why 96% of BG CPR participants go on to the next grade and the same percentage graduate from high school. With this alliance we impact this and future generations who deserve a better quality of life”, concluded Ramos Carrasquillo.

The collaboration between LUMA and the BG CPRs will support educational projects with a child-centered approach. The programs will be put into action on multiple fronts and carried out in phases to provide participants with access and preparation for higher education and psychosocial support with the goal of moving children from poverty to self-sufficiency.

For its part, the Red Cross, through its work after Hurricane Maria, as well as its experience around the world, is well aware of the social and economic difficulties that disasters cause. To alleviate the human suffering caused by natural disasters and help people recover faster and more effectively, the Red Cross works year-round to better prepare people for emergencies.

To address disaster preparedness among Puerto Rican children and their families, the Red Cross has developed child preparedness programs, which LUMA will support. Programs include: **My Pillowcase**, a readiness initiative designed for 3rd through 5th grade students; **Prepare with Pedro**, a pilot preparation program designed for children in grades K-2; and the **Fire Safety** program to teach children about the dangers of fires in the home.

“Through our disaster preparedness programs for children, we help the next generation of youth to be more prepared for future dangers and empower them with the tools and knowledge they need to be stronger in their communities. LUMA's support will benefit one of the most vulnerable populations when disasters strike,” said Lee Vanessa Feliciano, regional executive of the American Red Cross Chapter of Puerto Rico.

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