



From left, Japhet School students Gabe Shaffer, 13, of Royal Oak; Sloan Hale, 12, of Bloomfield Hills; and Jacob Shaffer, 13, of Royal Oak, stand with fleece blankets their seventh-grade class collected for the Ukrainian-American Response Committee of Michigan.

Photo provided by Janine Krasicky Sadaj

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## Japhet School holds drive for Ukrainian families displaced by war

By: [Sarah Wojcik](#) | [Royal Oak Review](#) | Published June 22, 2022

CLAWSON — Japhet School administrators recently dropped off at a warehouse in Hamtramck two truckloads of items that students and their families collected during a drive for the Ukrainian-American Crisis Response Committee of Michigan.

Head of Japhet School Kerri Vizena said the drive to support and send aid to Ukrainian children tied into the school's character quality "respect for others" in April.

“Children are fleeing Ukraine and arriving in nearby countries with absolutely nothing,” Vizena said. “This is a tangible way for our Japhet School students to see how their generosity and giving can help others who are in need. Giving and serving others is at the heart of Japhet.”

Japhet School is a preschool to eighth-grade private school with an enrollment of approximately 60 students located near Normandy and Crooks roads in Clawson.

The call for donations yielded 19 packed boxes of supplies to help young Ukrainian refugees during March and April.

Preschool families donated over 2,000 diapers; kindergarten families donated 169 coloring books, 160 boxes of crayons and 107 boxes of washable markers; lower elementary families donated over 300 first-aid and hygiene supplies to make 144 small personal hygiene kits; upper elementary families and staff donated 87 stuffed animals; and middle school families donated 82 fleece blankets, according to a press release.

“I was very proud of our school and the way our families responded,” Vizena said. “It was obvious that they were looking for an outlet. They were troubled by what they saw on the news. It has disturbed many, and this was a way to (help).”

Jacob Shaffer, 13, of Royal Oak, will begin eighth grade at Japhet School in the fall. His seventh-grade class collected fleece blankets for the drive.

“We try to talk in our class a lot about what’s going on in the world every day in the morning, what’s going on in the news, and on Fridays, we have a discussion about it,” Shaffer said. “We find it very important. (The crisis in Ukraine) could be us.”

Vizena sent out the call for donations to the Japhet School community after learning that Janine Krasicky Sadaj, president of J9 Media Solutions, the school’s communications and marketing firm, is half Ukrainian.

Sadaj said her great-grandmother emigrated and her sister stayed in western Ukraine.

“When the war started, it was really hard for me because I knew the tie for me and I just wanted to do something,” she said.

Since the onset of the conflict in Ukraine, Sadaj has helped the “Tell the Truth” campaign, which connects journalists with people in Ukraine to obtain accurate information; volunteered with the Ukrainian-American Crisis Response Committee of Michigan; and arranged a webinar with Ukrainian journalists for the Detroit Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America, according to the release.

For more information about the Ukrainian-American Crisis Response Committee of Michigan, visit [uacrisisresponse.org](http://uacrisisresponse.org) or call (313) 920-8245.

For more information about Japhet School, visit [japhetschool.org](http://japhetschool.org) or call (248) 585-9150.