



INTERNATIONAL UNION OF PAINTERS AND ALLIED TRADES

Marcelino Quiñones (left) from the Roosevelt School District and Masavi Perea, a business representative from the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, deliver backpacks at Ed and Verma Pastor Elementary.

Businesses step up to help with school supplies

Submitted by Torres Consulting and Law Group in Tempe.

As school bells ring across the Valley, business and community groups have stepped up to provide students with backpacks and supplies.

"Education is important, and businesses are always ready to lend a hand," says Mary Lou Valenzuela, spokeswoman for United Way Valley of the Sun.

The average family with children in grades K-12 will spend about \$630 getting ready for school this year, according to the National Retail Federation.

The expenses can take a toll on family finances. Many businesses launch charitable drives — collecting binders, backpacks, books and snacks — this time of year to help lower-income students and unemployed families manage those costs.

"No child should feel at a disadvantage because they lack school supplies," said Israel Torres, managing partner of Torres Consulting and Law Group in Tempe. "Providing backpacks full of

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ISRAEL TORRES

MANAGING PARTNER, TORRES CONSULTING AND LAW GROUP IN TEMPE

supplies helps them come to class confident and ready to learn."

His staff donated backpacks, calculators, USB drives and other school supplies to the families of apprentices at the Arizona Pipe Trades 469.

And at Ed and Verma Elementary School in south Phoenix, all 600 students received backpacks and supplies from the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades District Council 15 and Phoenix Local Union 86.

"We're extremely grateful," Principal Stephanie Acosta said.