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## Congressman Perriello Visits Blue Ridge Commons

On a brilliant May day, Virginia Congressman Tom Perriello, (D) 5th District met with AmeriCorps members at Blue Ridge Commons Apartments (BRC) in Charlottesville, Virginia, sharing his enthusiasm for volunteerism and civic engagement with people who give back to their communities daily by teaching conflict resolution skills, increasing literacy, and promoting family stability through access to mainstream resources and appropriate medical and employment services.

As part of AmeriCorps Week, members from across the community came out to show Perriello the type of work they do, using BRC's community center as a shining example. Two AmeriCorps members run an after-school program there for resident children every day from 3 pm - 5 pm, providing help with homework, computer assistance, access to an extensive on-site library, and time for crafts and games.



*Young residents of Blue Ridge Commons*

*Apartments in Charlottesville, Virginia read a story to Virginia Congressman Tom Perriello during his visit to the property.*

Along with a handful of other children, ten-year-old Kashirra Jackson demonstrated her polished reading skills to Perriello and proudly showed off the center's computer lab to the visiting media. Jackson is one of dozens of kids at Blue Ridge Commons Apartments that receive invaluable help after school from AmeriCorps.

"It's better than being outside, gettin' in trouble all the time and doin' stuff that you know you're not supposed to do," explained Jackson. "I tell all the kids they should come here, because we have a lot of fun," Jackson added.

The freshman congressman has long been an advocate of giving back to the community, and recently sponsored a bill that promotes just that. "The Give Act, or National Community Service

Act, is one of the largest expansions of community service in a generation," said Perriello. With this legislation, volunteer programs in the U.S. (including AmeriCorps) should triple in size to 250,000 people across the nation.