

Up To Speed Live
Tuesday, August 6 2024

[MUSIC PLAYS].

>> JEN MARIN: Today on Up to Speed we'll have an update on severe weather events affecting multiple parts of the country. August is in full swing all month long we're celebrating parents and caregivers alongside PACT ERG. Find out how you can get involved. Plus Small Business Days are back again we're the go-to partner for small and medium sized businesses.

Now let's get into the show.

[MUSIC PLAYS].

>> JEN MARIN: Hello, V Team.

[APPLAUSE].

>> JEN MARIN: It is Tuesday, August 6th and we want to start off today's show by acknowledging a number of severe weather events across the country. Now as you may know we are well into wildfire season for parts of the U.S. with 85 active wildfires burning across 11 western states.

And as we speak, parts of the Southeast are being impacted by severe flooding and power outages due to Tropical Storm Debby.

Our network teams have been working tirelessly to ensure our customers stay connected of course when it matters most and we're happy to report that our network is holding strong and the frontline Crisis Response Team is engaged and working hard to support public safety agencies.

Now during times like these it's important to remember our Verizon Emergency Notification Systems, or VENS, which helps V Teamers stay informed during these emergencies.

Now through alerts you can learn if you're in danger of being impacted or displaced along with any action steps to stay safe.

Employees or contingent workers can sign up to get alerts via text or email to their personal or company devices.

Learn how to sign up in today's story.

And V Team, we do want to take this opportunity to remind you to please consider donating to our VtoV Employee Relief Fund.

This helps V Teamers get back on their feet when they are affected by natural disasters such as the ongoing fires and storms as well as domestic violence.

There are multiple ways to donate you can see them now on your screen and

we'll have all the details in today's story.

And if you find yourself affected by these natural disasters, there are a few ways that you can reach out to VtoV for assistance.

There's a QR Code on screen right now you can scan that and we'll have more details in today's story and remember V Team EAP is also available if you need to speak to someone for some extra support.

Switching gears now to other topics can you believe it's August?

I mean summer is flying by.

That means it's back to schooltime for many of our V Team parents and caregivers but the good news is you don't have to deal with all of that madness alone.

In fact if you didn't already know here at Verizon we have a wonderful Employee Resource Group called PACT which stands for Parents and Caregivers Together.

It's an ERG dedicated to empowering not just parents but all caregivers. Folks who are caring for their aging parents, sick spouses, loved ones with disabilities, the list goes on and on.

It's safe to say that these folks of course deserve some celebration and that is what August is all about.

The theme for this month's celebration is focused around the beauty of Acts of Kindness.

I mean who doesn't love those?

And to share a bit more about why this wonderful ERG is so important and why you should get involved throughout the month we have PACT's executive advisor Monica Pate here today.

Monica.

[APPLAUSE].

>> JEN MARIN: Thank you for being here Monica.

>> MONICA PATE: Thank you so much.

Can you feel the energy from this PACT crowd today.

>> JEN MARIN: I can.

[APPLAUSE].

>> MONICA PATE: Yes.

>> JEN MARIN: Yes thank you all for being here and thank you Monica for being here first question for you I would love to know why is PACT such an important ERG in your opinion here at Verizon.

>> MONICA PATE: Yes let me start with a global stat.

>> JEN MARIN: Yeah.

>> MONICA PATE: There are 40 million parents and caregivers across the globe.

We're here for those parents and caregivers.

Now, PACT, we have about 5800 today.

We're looking to increase that.

But we're also super proud that we just onboarded globally India.

And we also have groups across the UK that are ramping up.

>> JEN MARIN: Look at that.

>> MONICA PATE: So I will tell you, as a parent and a former caregiver of my parents, it has given me the courage to speak to others about what I go through.

It's given me the opportunity to give back to my team.

Things like empathy.

So PACT, we're there, we have tough conversations.

But we also rejoice when things are going well within our workgroup.

So that's one of many reasons to join PACT.

And why it's so impactful.

>> JEN MARIN: I love that impactful I love that word on a personal note any instance or example of you have how PACT has made a difference throughout your years here at Verizon.

>> MONICA PATE: Oh, my goodness there are so many I will tell you we talk about connections at Verizon and I think about how it's impacted me through people.

I think about Glo who is a parent she's a single parent and she's juggling how do you balance running a marathon or maybe being at home when I need to with my child.

I've learned from Ingrid Quinnly our working parent of the month last year she's an advocate for her son with autism.

I've learned through that.

Or Kevin Pierce who is my counterpart as an Advisory Board member.

He's teaching us how to stay well.

But I will tell you last year, it hit home with me when my own son needed help.

And because I had been through impactful conversations through packet, I had the courage to reach out and get resources on the closest therapist to me.

>> JEN MARIN: Wow.

>> MONICA PATE: I then was able to give him the courage to say, we can do this together, let's go.

And then through therapy, which we're still going through, I as a parent know how to get through those moments with him.

But because of PACT, I know now I can get through those.

That's how it impacts me and I know it's impacting others the same way.

>> JEN MARIN: Absolutely and thank you for sharing that.

It's all about breaking stigmas and therapy is a good thing and we need to do these things so thank you for sharing.

Absolutely.

Monica, anything you want to say to the V Team because this is our moment right now.

>> MONICA PATE: This is our moment.

>> JEN MARIN: For you to be able to encourage folks even in one more -- a few ways, why should they join?

Why is it so important?

People came out here today.

>> MONICA PATE: They did.

>> JEN MARIN: Yes.

>> MONICA PATE: You know what the people behind me are offering support.

And you mentioned this month we're kicking off Acts of Kindness.

>> JEN MARIN: Yes.

>> MONICA PATE: That is an example of an act of kindness, showing up for your peers or your family members.

If you want to get involved, there are so many ways.

Just go to the web.

Inside Verizon, type PACT in there.

But I will tell you the ability to make sure that we're together, that we are let's say in the environment we're in today we're being kind, that's what this month is all about.

So I have a challenge for the V Teamers and those here with me today.

>> JEN MARIN: I'll take it, too.

>> MONICA PATE: We're kicking off Acts of Kindness.

I would say every day through the end of the month let's just do one act of kindness.

Think of the impact that can make on us.

So whether you're a caregiver or a parent or not, come join us, we're inclusive,

and we're ready to make an impact at Verizon.

And our community.

>> JEN MARIN: Absolutely Monica yesterday I was driving and I saw a sign I was preparing for the show it said an act of kindness can change someone's life.

>> MONICA PATE: Every day, every minute.

>> JEN MARIN: So maybe even past August but let's start by just one act of kindness every day this month.

>> MONICA PATE: That's right and it could be a smile it could be giving grace to a co-worker that might have missed an assignment, we never do that, it happens.

Or maybe just helping someone who is elderly in your neighborhood.

Helping them with yard work.

It doesn't matter.

One act of kindness will create a ripple effect.

>> JEN MARIN: Absolutely.

>> MONICA PATE: Through the world.

>> JEN MARIN: Absolutely thank you so much for being here. I will be practicing those acts of kindness everyone in the audience will as well everyone at home we want to see that happening thank you Monica for being here we appreciate you.

>> MONICA PATE: All righty.

>> JEN MARIN: Such an important topic folks there are plenty of ways to get involved with PACT through the month of August but just highlight two ways be sure to mark your calendars for PACT's Marquee event on Tuesday August 20th that event will focus on celebrating single working mothers you'll actually have a chance to hear from Verizon leaders who will share tips for balancing work and motherhood that's bound to be a great conversation how about a volunteer event we all love those this can be virtual or in person it's an opportunity to send school supplies to the children at Hope's Door New Beginning Center an organization dedicated to supporting families healing from domestic violence.

For more information on those events and a list of more ways to get involved be sure to read through today's story where you'll also find a link to an article that will share a really neat list of benefits and resources offered by Verizon that all parents and caregivers should know about.

Okay.

Now we're talking about parents and caregivers, right?

So why not take a peek at a very realistic example of what being a working parent looks like.

We recently asked Aaron West, a V Teamer from our Reading UK office and the global community lead for PACT in EMEA if he would take us through one of his days, let's check it out.

>> AARON WEST: Every family has a story welcome mine as a co-parent of two amazing kids it's always a mission to find the right blend of work and family life mornings always start the same coffee for me breakfast for him Mondays and Tuesdays it's centered around the kids I work remotely and flexibly to support the homeschooling routine and anything else that a dad of two homeschool teenagers needs to do Wednesdays and Thursdays I head to our offices in Reading or London it's a half hour drive time to sit back. At Verizon I'm a Senior Principal in the VBG global project management practice team I'm constantly looking for ways to help and coach our delivery teams and partners to think about what might go to plan and what actions need to be taken to keep custom projects on track finding ways to help others is always a big part of my day after finding the PACT ERG in 2021 it's like a huge weight has been lifted off my shoulders I can talk openly and authentically about my parenting journey now I feel empowered to bring my whole self to work I'm also a crisis intervention volunteer for a mental health charity called Shout here in the UK.

Thanks for following along.

And remember, every family has a story.

This is just a small taste of mine.

Catch you later.

[APPLAUSE].

>> JEN MARIN: Wow, big thank you to Aaron.

It's always so great to learn more about our fellow V Teamers and see that everywhere we're located we're all similar I love seeing they wave at him when he's coming into the office that's one of my favorite parts as I'm driving in keeping up with the theme of celebrating parents and caregivers let's hit on a very exciting award.

V Team, did you know that every year, respected media company Seramount invites companies that rank in their 100 Best Companies list to participate in selecting their Working Parents of the Year.

Well, this year there were plenty of nominations here at Verizon and we're

excited to share the 2024 Working Parents of the Year winners, can we get a rounds of applause for Latoya Flemming and Amber Flowers?

[APPLAUSE].

>> JEN MARIN: Now let me share a bit more about these impressive winners.

Amber is a senior analyst on our consumer Customer Success Team.

In 2016 she became a foster mom while also earning a Bachelor's in business administration and an MBA.

She recently adopted two kids there they are in that picture and has helped them overcome significant mental health struggles and trauma.

Thank you so much for doing that.

Now Latoya, who is going to come up next is a tech expert for the B-G-CO org and completes her job with total vision impairment.

In her role she helps Verizon make systems more accessible for people with disabilities.

All while raising two children and supporting two retired parents.

Really hats off to both of these incredible ladies.

And keeping on the award theme and even relating to Latoya's important accessibility work at our company, we're excited to share that Verizon recently scored a 100% on this year's Disability:IN Disability Equality Index.

Nine years running we've been recognized for our commitment to creating an empowering and accessible workplace for all and we couldn't be more proud of this recognition.

And the accolades continue.

Just recently the U.S. Black Chambers named Verizon the 2024 corporate Partner of the Year over the years Verizon's strategic alliances team has worked on several initiatives to empower the Black Community.

[APPLAUSE].

>> JEN MARIN: Yes, a round of applause.

One Standout collaboration with the U.S. Black Chambers has been the promotion of Verizon's Small Business Digital Ready.

Now, this free program has reached over 350,000 businesses so far.

With half of them being Black owned.

And on the topic of business and diversity Small Business Days are back again and launching in stores yesterday through August 11th with the goal of

supporting businesses and business customers across the nation.

Throughout SMB Days Verizon Business will offer special deals on the latest technology solutions to help small and mid size businesses thrive.

And this month's events happen to coincide with National Black Business Month and we're lucky to work with some incredible African American small business owners here at Verizon and Black Business Month is the perfect chance to not only remind folks to support these businesses but to shine a spotlight on them. Verizon Business customer Natasha Brown found Cincinnati's first ever Black Wine Fest which showcases Black-owned wine brands and prescription drugs as we know social media -- brands and producers as we know social media is a non-negotiable at an event like a wine festival and Natasha's shared that being able to work with her Verizon Business rep to secure multiple routers and dedicated Wi-Fi at the events has been a game changer for her.

Head over to today's story to learn more. Verizon Business just released our 7th Annual Mobile Security Index report. This annual study highlights the escalating risks of mobile and IOT security, not to mention it's full of stats and best practices that organizations can use. This year's report goes beyond -- goes beyond employee-level mobile usage and extends into the usage of IOT devices and sensors and the security concerns that the growth of these devices can present, especially as people continue working remotely. The information and insights are important for organizations large and small that manage employee devices.

Now if you want to check out the report for yourself, we'll of course have that link in today's story.

And speaking of exciting partnerships, Verizon and Hyfi are proud to share that we're installing game-changing stormwater sensor devices powered by Verizon's 5G network in the greater New Orleans area.

The sensors on screen were created by Hyfi, one of the winners of Verizon's 2022 Climate Resilience Prize competition.

They leverage the benefits of 5G and provide vital information that will allow the city and community to better predict and respond to flood events.

We're also working with the United Way of Southeast Louisiana to educate communities on the best ways to stay safe throughout this hurricane season and beyond.

We look forward to seeing the benefits of this technology in New Orleans and gathering insights from the project to hopefully roll out this valuable technology in other areas that are vulnerable to flooding.

All right, well a couple of weeks ago Raquel hosted an episode with a huge

focus on our amazing Verizon summer interns, but V Team, did you know that we also have a high school Internship Program?

Verizon has been an NAF partner since 2011 promoting STEM education among high school students.

NAF stands for the National Academic Foundation and it's an educational nonprofit with a National Network of education, business, and community leaders who work together to ensure high school students in disadvantaged communities are college, career and future ready.

And down in Texas before their internships ended in July, some of our NAF high school interns, they expressed interest in creating a Coding Camp for V Team dependents in 4th to 8th Grades and last week they actually made it happen.

Let's take a look.

[MUSIC PLAYS].

>> I proposed the idea of getting interns here helping out the kids of Verizon employees and we're helping them learn new materials and go through different coding courses.

>> I am excited to learn how to code.

I've never done coding in like in command coding before really so I'm excited to learn how to do that.

>> I have a passion for coding as well as volunteering.

I started coding at a very young age.

When I was these kid's age.

>> It's so amazing what you can do with coding.

The possibilities are endless.

>> We just wanted to see how much kids in the middle school were able to learn from us obviously we were able to learn to code in high school but as long as that spark was protected there in an early age it's better for everyone.

>> I know that getting those resources, getting that ability to learn that this is something you love to do is so important.

So I wanted to be able to give that back to Verizon.

[MUSIC PLAYS].

>> JEN MARIN: What an amazing event.

[APPLAUSE].

>> JEN MARIN: A big shoutout to those NAF interns.

What an initiative to put that on.

We really appreciate it.

And with that V Team we've reached the end of today's show.

It was a packed one.

So be sure to check out today's story for a full recap of everything that we shared.

And remember, as Monica shared earlier in the show be sure to find ways throughout the month to spread kindness because that my friends is contagious.

Have a wonderful Tuesday, and until next time, you're Up to Speed.

[APPLAUSE].

[MUSIC PLAYS].