

# 12-Year-Old New York City Student Creates Community Lending Library at Roosevelt Hotel Migrant Center

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Rohan Verdonck, a 12-year-old 6th

grader in New York City, has made a significant impact on the lives of immigrant children by creating a free community lending library at the Roosevelt Hotel Migrant Center. This initiative was carried out in collaboration with Mayor Eric Adams' office, highlighting the importance of community support and government involvement.

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My goal was to provide kids like me with access to the same joy and knowledge that books have given me.”

*Rohan Verdonck, 12-year-old  
New York City Student*

Driven by a deep love for books and reading, Rohan has always believed in the transformative power of literature. As the founder of his school's book club and an elected librarian, he witnessed firsthand how books could inspire and change lives. His project is aimed to bring that same inspiration to children of immigrant families seeking refuge at the Roosevelt Hotel.

## The Roosevelt Hotel Library

The Roosevelt Hotel Library is a self-funded and volunteer-driven project that created a small library specifically for the children of immigrants at the Roosevelt Hotel. Rohan donated a small 3-shelf bookshelf along with an initial collection of books. He seeded the library with 200 books through donations from the community, including schools, bookstores, and individuals, and he restocks the library as needed. As the project evolved, he has grown to include books also geared toward teens and adults, and in multiple languages, to better suit the needs of the Roosevelt Hotel Migrant Center.

## The Impact

The Roosevelt Hotel shelters over 1,000 migrant families in New York City. While parents focus on finding work and permanent housing, their children often lack educational stimulation. This project addresses that gap by providing access to books, fostering learning, and reducing boredom. Donated by Rohan Verdonck with the assistance of community members he approached to help him, the Community Library bookshelf was designed to fit easily in an

unused space within the hotel. The library functions on a "take a book, leave a book" basis, encouraging community participation without the need for staffing. Book replenishment occurs monthly or as needed, with additional donations from the broader community.

"My goal was to provide kids like me with access to the same joy and knowledge that books have given me. New York City is going through such a transitional time, and there are many New Yorkers who don't have resources for housing and basic needs. Although I can't help with all of this, I knew I could help with books," said Rohan. "I hope the Roosevelt Hotel Library will be a small step toward bringing the joy of literature to the newest New Yorkers."

Working with Mayor Eric Adams' office underscored the importance of community and governmental collaboration in supporting immigrant families. The community is encouraged to support this initiative by donating new and gently used children's books.

#### About Rohan Verdonck

Rohan Verdonck is 12-year old student in at the Buckley School in New York City who loves reading. This is his second community library project.

Rohan Verdonck

The Roosevelt Hotel Migrant Center Community Library  
[email us here](#)



12-year-old Rohan Verdonck installs the Roosevelt Hotel Migrant Center Community Library, an initiative he created to help literacy in new migrant communities.

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