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## **Dacon Corp. completes 82,790 s/f distribution center for Christianbook - working with Oliver Street Capital, Bain Capital and Fraser PM**

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Peabody, MA Christianbook, Oliver Street Capital, Bain Capital Real Estate, Fraser Project Management, Dacon Corp., and the city celebrated the completion of a 82,790 s/f new distribution center contiguous to Christianbook's corporate headquarters.

This space enables efficient management of over 100,000 products by providing increased capacity and eliminating off-site storage. The steel framed structure with insulated precast concrete wall panels was designed to complement the masonry veneer banding of the existing building. An additional 8 receiving docks increases logistics flexibility to meet consumer demand. For over 46 years Christianbook has kept readers inspired with over 500,000 titles. Begun in 1978 by two brothers ages 19 and 14 out of their parent's garage, it is now one of the country's leading literature distributors for academic and faith-based publications. Alongside literature, product offerings span clothing, accessories, home décor, music, stationary, and homeschool products.

David Fowler, VP strategy & research said, "Christianbook provides meaningful employment for hundreds of valued employees. Our purposefulness and sense of community is reflected in Top Places to Work awards and the annual Pastor Appreciation Day for over a hundred local clergy. The USO Reading Program exemplifies our mission of equipping individuals to bring positive change to life."

Present were 370 people to celebrate the facility's completion with a program consisting of a philanthropic partnership, 150 handwritten notes of encouragement by Christianbook employees,

and Treadwell's ice cream sundaes. The philanthropic endeavor consisted of a grant by the project's principles - Christianbook, Oliver Street Capital, Bain Capital Real Estate, Fraser Project Management and Dacon Corp. - to sponsor 200 military personnel through the USO Reading Program. Newly deployed service members from the 10th Mountain Division of Fort Drum, NY are the program recipients. As a free service, these members will enter any USO Center in conflict areas and record themselves reading a children's book, after which the recording and books are mailed to their families. There is no visitation limit. A consistent struggle for military families is emotional support during deployment. Military children experience disproportionately more symptoms of sadness, sleep troubles, and distrust. This program provides critical on-demand visual and vocal reassurance to children and spouses, thereby relieving anxiety. Additionally, reading to children builds imagination, language skills, empathy, awareness of emotions, and overall cognitive capacity.

Wellness programs for military families remain a critical issue both during and after deployment. In 2020, the Department of Defense study assessed that an average of 53% of active-duty service members and their families seeking behavioral care did not receive it,[1] "It is not a small accomplishment to make a war zone disappear. This program demonstrates how the simple act of reading is exceptional in raising morale through communication, comfort, and connection. On the battlefield, any initiative adding normalcy is a worthwhile endeavor," said Lauren Nowicki, Dacon's chief communications officer. In 2023, this program was used 30,000 times by service members. Begun during WWII, the USO is the nation's leading military support organization for service members and their families. It is not funded by the government, but rather through private donations and the support of volunteers to help maintain over 250 USO centers across 7 continents.

[1] Evaluation of Access to Mental Health Care in the Department of Defense, [https://media.defense.gov/2020/Aug/12/2002475605/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2020-112\\_REDACTED.PDF](https://media.defense.gov/2020/Aug/12/2002475605/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2020-112_REDACTED.PDF).