



Congratulations to the 2019 Fairfax County Volunteer Service Award Winners!

2019 Community Champions

Braddock District Community Champion

Allan Boswell Robertson honored by Supervisor John Cook

Some parents take their children to the lake for vacation. Children learn to skip rocks, climb trees, swim and appreciate nature while developing those important childhood memories. Close your eyes and imagine a world where this did not happen. Allan Robertson works to ensure that Lake Accotink is preserved for generations to come! As the president of Save Lake Accotink, he has led major grassroots effort to raise awareness about proposed changes that could result in the disappearance of the lake and to mobilize support. Allan organized many community events where he encouraged neighbors to be involved in decisions concerning the preservation of the Lake. As a result, the community supported making the investment necessary to preserve this community gem.



Dranesville District Community Champion

Homer Johns honored by Supervisor John Foust

Mr. Johns has taken volunteerism to another level. Fighting fires is typically seen as a job for most people, but not for Mr. Johns. For over 52 years, he held nearly every administrative and operational leadership role, including president, chief, assistant chief, treasurer, secretary and board member between the McLean and Great Falls Volunteer Fire Departments. Mr. Johns is committed to ensuring that the best volunteers in our community are fighting fires and saving lives.



Hunter Mill District Community Champion

St. John Neumann Catholic Church honored by Supervisor Cathy Hudgins

In early January 2018, Fairfax County experienced a brutally cold arctic chill. Adequate accommodations were needed for our homeless citizens and in response to the need, St. John Neumann Catholic Church activated the Hypothermia Prevention Response Program. A safe shelter was provided to the guests, as well all meals, warm clothing and a place to sleep. However, that's not where the hospitality of St. John Neumann stopped.,

there was live entertainment and lots of fellowship. The guests reported that The Church was a warm and welcoming place that treated them with dignity. Two former guests who are no longer homeless, dropped in for fellowship and a meal. They remembered he church's kindness and wanted to give their thanks. By organizing and housing a Hypothermia Shelter, St. John Neumann Church demonstrates a sense of compassion by providing a place where all are truly welcome.



Lee District Community Champion

Liz Murphy honored by Supervisor Jeff McKay

Liz Murphy works to create fair and equitable chances for kids through her leadership as the President of “People for Equity in Fairfax County Public Schools”. Her work impacts the lives of many by way of increasing equity among our students. This mission falls in line with Fairfax County’s One Fairfax initiative. Through her outreach efforts and mentorship, she has left an impact on many, whether it’s the struggling student in school, a child that needs a Christmas gift, community members who need a helping hand from faith-based organizations, or a kid who needs a home- Liz is there at every corner helping all those she can.



Mason District Community Champion

Binod Gupta honored by Supervisor Penny Gross Honors

Binod identified a community problem and set out to solve it. His collaborative work with the Supervisor's office, Park Authority, and the community-at-large produced dividends beyond anyone's wildest dreams, and restored pride in Backlick Park and the neighborhood. It can be really frustrating to look at a space that is meant for community and to only find it unusable. After many months of Binod's community advocacy, the Park Authority prepared a plan that not only cleaned up the parkland and removed damaged play structures, but totally revamped the park with new trails, fitness and play equipment, even a gorgeous new picnic pavilion. Binod now is trying to set up a Friends of Backlick Park group to hold annual cleanup events. The newly refurbished park now is a centerpiece for outdoor activity, walkable from surrounding residential neighborhoods as well as a destination that now has a larger, and more welcoming, parking area.



Mount Vernon District Community Champion

Jonathan Kiell honored by Supervisor Daniel G. Storck

Every great community needs a great emergency preparedness plan. With natural and manmade disasters surrounding us, the Office of Emergency Management Volunteer Corp's Jonathan Kiell has been instrumental in building disaster resiliency efforts in Fairfax County. His dedication to educating the public on disaster preparedness is second only to his enthusiasm about the topic. Since joining the Office of Emergency Management's Volunteer Corps, he has been involved with social media campaigns, help present the mission of Emergency Management, and has been at the forefront of the Community Resiliency Groups. From verifying data on the Functional Needs Registry to participating in events such as the Preparedness Awareness Weekend, to creating literature for Community Resiliency Groups in approaching new and continuing members, Jonathan goes the extra mile to make sure the Fairfax residents as well prepared to respond to disasters.



Providence District Community Champion

***Oakton Women's Club* honored by Supervisor Linda Q. Smyth**

Statistics show that children who do not eat breakfast are less able to learn. Hunger can contribute to a student's lower test scores, attention, behavioral, emotional, and academic problems. Bottom line, it can be hard to focus while trying to learn in a classroom setting on an empty stomach. Oakton Women's Club works to make sure Fairfax kids, especially those at Luther Jackson Middle School get something nutritious to eat. Their latest project is their partnership with "No Kid Hungry," and the Fairfax County Public Schools, to help supply breakfast to hungry children through the Second Chance Breakfast Program, a model for other Fairfax County Public Schools Middle Schools.



Springfield District Community Champion

***Jenni Cantwell* honored by Supervisor Pat Herrity**

Jenni Cantwell is a champion for women's sports and promotes women's sports development throughout the county. She serves on the Athletic Council both as Secretary and formally as Vice Chairman. She has worked tirelessly to improve children's educational and developmental opportunities, in addition to advocating for women's sports opportunities within the county.



Sully District Community Champion

***Carol Robinson* honored by Supervisor Kathy L. Smith**

If one were to look up the word Volunteer in the dictionary you will find a picture of Carol Robinson. Her impressive volunteer resume includes a lengthy list of organizations she has devoted her time and energy to serve. Her enthusiastic can-do attitude inspires other volunteers in the many organizations with which she works. In addition to her extraordinary volunteer work, Carol donates food, clothing, books, and school supplies throughout the year to non-profit organizations such as:



Western Fairfax Christian Ministries, Katherine K. Hanley Family Shelter, Habitat for Humanity, and BritePaths. Carol is an unwavering champion for her community, and the Sully District greatly benefits from all her efforts.

At-Large Fairfax County Community Champion

John Pellegrin honored by Chairman Sharon Bulova

Your student might have run into “Judge” Pellegrin at some point in their school years. Why you ask? He runs the annual Ethics and Leadership Day for over 70 student and presides over mock trials. John Pellegrin is a stalwart figure not only for his unique style and warm personality, but for his dedication to Fairfax County, having served as Chairman Bulova’s appointee to the Small Business Commission for over 10 years, offering invaluable knowledge and guidance on issues that affect all parts of the County.



Competitive Category Winners

Adult Volunteer under 250 hours

Danae Delman, Capital Caring

Danae's work has helped hundreds of patients and their families in our community walk through the toughest time in their lives, saying goodbye to a loved one. In one instance, Danae came alongside a family who had hired live-in caregiver to provide additional support. By doing so, she was able to provide time for the family to focus on the patient’s desires, hopes and fears at the end of their life. Danae’s true gift and skill is to comfort those who are facing serious health challenges. As a hospice volunteer for Capital Caring, a palliative and hospice program, Danae has helped those facing life-limiting illness and injury, by showing care and compassion. Hospice volunteers not only help patients, but they help family members to honor their loved ones. Danae is an advocate for educating the community on the benefits of hospice care.



Adult Over 250 hours

Julie Hill, Reading Together

Julie is passionate about sustaining an organization's mission. Under her leadership this past year, the Reading Together board of directors, completed an 18-month Excellence in Governance program to enhance governance, develop a strategic plan to shape the course of the organization over the next three years, and received the top statewide Best Practices Award from the Commonwealth Council on Aging a new program called RT (Reading Together) Express. Additionally, in her role as Board Chair, Julie led her own Navy Federal Credit Union volunteer team on two repair projects.



Adult Volunteer Group

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)

A group of 41 retirees took the time over the holidays to take professional portraits of military personnel and their families including their pets! Each family or individual received a flash drive of their photos and one printed portrait. The Photography Club at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at George Mason University, never passes up an opportunity to provide free services to organizations in need of professional level photography in Fairfax County. The Club, a group of retirees with a passion and knack for the lens, has donated thousands of hours in photographic services to benefit wounded servicemen, Fairfax County, George Mason University and other worthy causes in northern Virginia. The list of its community service projects is extensive and especially impressive given the average age of Photo Club members is about 70. The Photo Club has undertaken projects over the past few years to benefit Fairfax County government. Even our very own RSVP- Northern VA and some of Volunteer Fairfax's programs have benefited from OLLI's services!



RSVP Northern Virginia

Shelley Brosnan

Shelley has been with RSVP for three years, but she started sharing her time and talents with Volunteer Fairfax nearly 20 years ago. Shelley supports a variety of causes by volunteering for more than a dozen nonprofits including Food for Others, Volunteers For Change, Children's Science Center, Britepaths, The Shepherd's Center of Annandale- Springfield, FACETS and Cornerstones. Fellow RSVP volunteer Sue Dussinger, who

nominated Shelley, says Shelley is special because, "She is so willing. Once she gets involved there is no stopping her. Shelley has just got that certain drive. Volunteering and helping others is just so very important to her." Shelley volunteers more than 500 hours of her time in a typical year. Shelley also supports RSVP as a volunteer engagement leader, shepherding new recruits into the world of senior volunteering. Carly Hubicki, RSVP's volunteer specialist says, "Shelley truly puts the needs of others before her own. She has committed to a life of volunteerism, and it is quite inspiring. Shelley not only models a true volunteer spirit, but actively engages in the betterment of our community through her selflessness," Shelley not only affects the people she is helping, she influences the volunteer managers and volunteers she works with. Kim Luckabaugh, program manager of Volunteers For Change says, "When I tell people who the volunteer is that has made the biggest impact in my life just by inspiration, it is Shelley Brosnan, without a doubt." Carly says Shelley's dedication to service is evident in everything that she does and it inspires those around her. "Many of my other volunteers have commented on the amazing work that Shelley does and how it pushes them to do more."



Senior Volunteer

Alcira Pernot

Going to court is a daunting enough. Imagine, having to respond to questions and read through court documents that are not in your native language. Enter Alcira Pernot an outstanding interpreter for the Limited English Proficiency community, who is fluent in French and Spanish with a passion to help. Alcira has earned the respect and love of the County and State court personnel. She is the first to take on the most complex cases regardless of length or obstacles. In 2019, Alcira reached a new status of mentorship, where she prepares interpreters for court hearings. This is a very difficult skill to develop but she does it with a big smile and great energy. She brings her creative, proactive, professional and knowledge of the court process to help organizations such as Department of Child Support Enforcement and Northern Virginia Legal Services. Her clients have stated the following about



her work: "Mrs. Pernot is respectful and knows how to help without intervening in the court process." "Thanks to Mrs. Alcira our case got a process sooner." The clients all agree that she makes a difference every time she is with a client.

Volunteer Program

ECHO

Celebrating 50 years, Ecumenical Community Helping Others, better known as ECHO, provides financial assistance, food and referral to other human service programs and to those in short-term emergencies. Additionally, ECHO provides donated clothing, household items and school supplies to low income families. Here is a quick snapshot how ECHO impacted lives in 2018 - they managed 930 food visits, distributed 192,615 pounds of food; more than 1,248 clients received 4,602 bags of clothing and small household goods. Families with children in school received 1,235 backpacks filled with school supplies worth \$55,575. During the holidays, the ECHO Christmas Shop distributed new toys, games and clothing to 240 families, which provided holiday gifts to 605 kids. All of this work was volunteer led and managed!



Youth Volunteer

Carmela Dangale

Carmela's efforts in service have stretched across organizations and causes, having a far-reaching effect on the Mount Vernon area of Fairfax County. In her own community, Carmela has a hand in nearly every program, from organizing and running an early childhood literacy program called "CPDC Reads" to assisting in the planning for the Stony Brook Community Day to running a door-to-door recycling program. Most impressively, Carmela was given the responsibility for running the Stony Brook Community Garden, which harvested nearly 50 pounds of fresh produce that was handed out to low-income community residents facing food crisis. She has run movie nights for youth, bingo nights for adults, and been a summer tutor, working one-on-one with youth in math and language arts to avoid "summer slide".



Youth Volunteer Group

Stoney Brook Junior Volunteers

The Stony Brook Community is part of the Community Preservation and Development Corporation, a not-for-profit real estate developer dedicated to providing safe, high quality affordable housing to low and moderate-income families and individuals. The group continued to run programs and events in the Stony Brook community, ranging from bingo nights for adults, to summer sports programs, to early childhood education reading programs. They worked to grow, plant, and harvest vegetables from a community garden they built, the bulk of which was donated to community residents facing food access issues. They organized and ran a Community Day for nearly 150 residents, including creating carnival games, baking treats to hand out, and running giveaways and activities for attendees. The groups also continues to run a door-to-door recycling collection program, picking up recycling every Monday afternoon directly from residents to encourage and increase the amount of recycling in the community.



In April 2018, the group was chosen as the face of a national service campaign, the Scooby-Doo DOO GOOD Campaign, sponsored by Scooby-Doo, Warner Brothers, and generationOn. 60 youth worked to clean up a highly-polluted stretch of Little Hunting Creek immediately behind Stony Brook.

Family Volunteer

Linda and Stefanie Kline

When our neighbors are most in need, whether they are displaced in the aftermath of a home fire, or a major disaster such as a hurricane, this mother and daughter team, lead a group of volunteers who operate emergency shelters, provide meal and beverages, and care for members of our community during their darkest hours. Linda and Stefanie Kline serve together in regional volunteer leadership positions with the American Red Cross National Capital Region. Linda, in her role, oversees all sheltering, feeding, and other major response functions in times of emergency or disaster. While Stefanie, is responsible for identifying, training, and deploying qualified volunteers from the National Capital Region to fill positions on disaster relief operations. Together they have managed the shelter that housed over 100 seniors that were displaced due to a fire, teamed with local fire departments to install smoke detectors in homes in our community, and facilitated preparedness



events to adults and children and conduct orientations for our local Disaster Action Teams. By ensuring that volunteers are physically and mentally prepared for the rigors of service in difficult conditions, this duo provides a critical and essential service not only to the Fairfax community, but the entire country.

Fairfax County Government Volunteer

Steven Richardson

In case of an emergency you want Steve Richardson on the call! He is one of three, primary volunteers qualified to drive the Canteen, which is a frontline support unit, called out to aid firefighters, EMTs, command staff and police department personnel on large scale events such as a 2 (or more) fire alarm or search and rescue or a police hostage situation. Only 4 fire stations in Fairfax County have Canteens assigned, so they cover a lot of territory and support neighboring jurisdictions. In calendar 2018, Steve recorded over 900 hours of service for the Greater Springfield Volunteer Fire Department, Fire Station 22. Steve is a Boy Scout adult leader, volunteer at ECHO (Ecumenical Community Helping Others) and a HOA Director, providing many hours of service and support to his community.



Fairfax County Government Volunteer Program

Fairfax County Public Library

Oft forgotten in the age of Google - public libraries play an essential role in providing safe, accessible, and 100% free educational resource centers for communities across the county. The Fairfax County Public Library system is one of the dynamic links that connects residents to local and global resources for lifelong learning and self-enrichment. Here are some quick stats - In 2018 over 1,500 volunteers selflessly gave of their time donating over 107,000 hours of service; a staggering 11.1 million books and other materials were circulated within the Fairfax Library system and nearly 1.3 million items were placed on hold by library customers. Handling a volume this large would certainly be an overwhelming task without the library's circulation volunteers who spend hours every day processing materials, scanning items individually and using computers to properly process each item.



Corporate Volunteer Program

Mt. Vernon Center for Dentistry

Imagine experiencing extreme pain in your mouth that stems from your teeth and not being able to get any relief because you don't have dental insurance. The practitioners at the Mount Vernon Center for Dentistry recognize this as a problem and have committed to setting aside one hour a week to treat residents who are in dire need of dental work, in pain, or need procedures that community clinics do not provide. In 2018, the Center donated over \$35,000 in free dental care to formerly homeless and disabled residents of New Hope Housing. On May 11th, the dental group hosted a free dental service day, where they treated 21 adults and children and others residing in a nearby shelter. They have provided everything from x-rays and basic checkups through to creating complete sets of dentures for clients who cannot afford them. It was noted that from the receptionist to the doctors - each person at Mount Vernon Center for Dentistry was welcoming and courteous and helped patients understand everything that was happening at each appointment.



Rising Star

Stephanie Bridgewater

A shelter can feel like the furthest place from home for a stray animal. To bring a little bit of warmth to the Fairfax County Animal Shelter, Stephanie has lovingly handcrafted many decorations and comfort items to enhance the animal areas at the shelter. Her amazing talents have helped shape many different events at the shelter such as FUR-rassic World, Mad for Plaid, Cat Canna-wanna-go-home, and the ever-popular A-Cat-Amy (Ay-CAT-am-ee) awards. These events help to generate traffic to the shelter, so that the community can take part in the events, enjoy the amazing talents of our volunteers and learn about pet adoption and care. Stephanie is one of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter's biggest contributors with her ideas, resources, talents and generosity.



Lifetime Achievement

Kevin Holland

When the Hidden Oaks Nature Center faced closure due to budget cuts, Kevin found a way to keep the doors open. When he saw that a valuable community resource was threatened, rather than looking away - he welcomed the opportunity to make a personal impact in Fairfax County. The nature center was due to be closed to the general public and only open for scheduled programs during the week. During an exhibit renovation, the center was also due to be



"mothballed." Using his business acumen, Kevin started the Friends of Hidden Oaks grassroots organization to mobilize a campaign to reopen Hidden Oaks to full hours. After a successful campaign that included presentations to the county's Board of Supervisors, the center completely reopened within six months. In 2018, Kevin was honored for 25-years of service to Fairfax County's Park Authority. His commitment to volunteering in Fairfax County is reflective of the superlative standard which merits the Volunteer Service Lifetime Achievement Award.

For more information about the Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards, visit www.volunteerfairfax.org.

About Volunteer Fairfax and the Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards

For more than 40 years, Volunteer Fairfax has mobilized people and resources to improve the Washington Capital Region. The Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards were established in 1993 and serve as a community-wide celebration of volunteerism.