GOVERNOR'S

volunteerism & community service

AWARDS

2022

Virginia Service

STRENGTHEN THE SPIRIT OF VIRGINIA TOGETHER

Thank you

For more than 20 years, these awards have honored individual seniors, adults and youth, as well as community and faith-based groups who serve their communities in extraordinary ways without expectation of reward, recognition, or compensation. These Virginians exemplify the spirit of service and foster the virtues and skills of civic engagement and social responsibility, demonstrate sustained commitment to meeting community needs, and utilize unique and creative approaches to meeting those needs.

In partnership with the Virginia Service Commission, the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism is charged by the Governor with saluting Virginians who have significantly contributed to the life and welfare of the Commonwealth and its people. The Virginia Service Foundation generously provides the sponsorship for this special awards reception.

"We are proud to recognize the incredible efforts of the volunteers donating their time and talents to make an impact on communities across the Commonwealth. Virginia celebrates these individuals and organizations through these awards."

Governor Glenn Youngkin,
Commonwealth of Virginia

"Start where you are, use what you have, do what you can."

ARTHUR ASHE

2022 honorees

Outstanding Youth Volunteer
Jay Rachakonda, Fairfax

Outstanding Young Adult Volunteer
Justin Stimpson, Farmville

Outstanding Adult Volunteer
Walter Camp, Virginia Beach

Outstanding Senior Volunteer
Karen Cullen, Richmond

Outstanding Family Volunteers
David and Judy Fuller, Mechanicsville

Outstanding Community Organization
Kids Give Back, Fairfax

Outstanding Educational Organization
Patriot FCCLA, Nokesville

Outstanding Faith-Based Organization
Highlands Fellowship, Abingdon

Outstanding Corporation
OrthoVirginia, Fairfax

Jay Rachakonda

OUTSTANDING YOUTH VOLUNTEER

Jay Rachakonda has always loved building things, from robots to community partnerships. Jay fell in love with robotics and engineering from a young age and wanted to make sure his peers had the chance to see the fun in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) as well.

Jay built on his long standing passion for STEM and robotics by taking a leadership role in his school's Funbotics Club. "Jay's passion for community impact drives his continuous desire to take Northern Virginia Funbotics to new heights," describes Pranav Avasarala, the founder of Funbotics. He continues to stretch beyond the school walls to make sure programming is widely available virtually and through local libraries, as well as garnering support from local companies and grant programs. "As part of Funbotics, outside his organizational and leadership duties, Jay has influenced numerous students as an outstanding teacher," says Tonya Kirkland, a community partner that worked with Jay to host a summer camp program.

Justin Stimpson

OUTSTANDING YOUNG ADULT VOLUNTEER

Justin Stimpson knows the difference a bike can make to a middle school student in Cumberland County--it wasn't so long ago that he was in their shoes. Now a member of the Hampden Sydney College class of 2023, he has led the "Cares for Kids Taking Flight" program to give back to students in his hometown.

Seeing the challenges facing middle school students today, Justin saw an opportunity for the program to empower middle school students and promote positive behaviors. He organized a program to reward Cumberland Middle School students for their hard work with a chance to win a bicycle in an end-of-year raffle; however, the impact of the program extended beyond the donated bicycles. "During the time of running the program, we saw a drop in discipline and uptick in positive behaviors," said Cumberland Middle School Principal Andrew Hoyt. The program's influence continues beyond rewarding positive behaviors. Justin's relatability and shared experience of growing up in this rural community demonstrated to the students what strong citizenship and civic engagement can look like after graduation.

Walter Camp

OUTSTANDING ADULT VOLUNTEER

Descriptions like “tireless” and “dedicated” are often applied to volunteer efforts, but Walter Camp’s commitment to service gives these expressions a new level of meaning. Those who work alongside Walter know that when he serves a cause, he doesn’t just talk about it. He is known for putting in the hard work to make things happen no matter the task at hand.

Walter leads a busy professional life as an attorney but always finds time to devote to improving the quality of life in Virginia Beach, having provided more than 1,000 hours of volunteer service in 2021-22 with various boards, commissions, and initiatives. In describing his service, his colleagues say: “He uses his intellect to find creative solutions and works persistently through any and all challenges that get in the way.” His contributions through hours of volunteerism are only part of the legacy. Walter is also known for being extremely generous with his appreciation for others, making folks feel as though their contributions helped him personally, when, in fact, it was for the good of the community. His nominator warns, “Though Walter is overwhelmingly deserving of this recognition, he will be humbled should he receive it and will likely try to share the credit.”

Karen Cullen

OUTSTANDING SENIOR VOLUNTEER

Those who know Karen are quick to clarify that what makes her so special is her dedication to serving others with compassion, not just the impressive quantity of her activities. “Anybody can give out food. The difference is Karen’s belief that her life’s work is to serve people with dignity and respect. Her steadfast energy is inspiring," says Sue Murdock, a fellow volunteer.

Karen Cullen has served Virginians for many years through her career in social services and by her lifelong community service. Karen has most recently served as Food Pantry Director at Three Chopt Presbyterian Church. Under her leadership, the food pantry has gone from serving 25 families to 3,055 individuals each month. Karen’s innovative spirit is credited for the pantry’s growth, meeting increasing levels of need. Many volunteers that work with Karen use words like transformative, significant, selfless, devoted, and heartfelt to describe her. Others reiterate that they would not have volunteered if it were not for Karen’s leadership. “I am not prone to volunteering, but I’m inspired by the love Karen shows to the people she serves,” says one regular volunteer. “Because of Karen, every week we provided food to more than 160 households in a little over two hours. And because of Karen we do it with joy.”

Dave & Judy Fuller

OUTSTANDING FAMILY VOLUNTEERS

Life in Hanover County is better as a result of Dave and Judy Fuller. Known for their passionate commitment to the community, their impact can be found in virtually every corner of the county.

Their enduring commitment to Hanover neighbors exemplifies Dave and Judy's belief in the importance of serving others.

In addition to their careers in local economic development and public service, they are respected for their commitment to serving others through volunteering. Currently, Dave and Judy are most known for their leadership in the award-winning Project Lifesaver and Motorist Assist programs in Hanover County. “The caring nature of the relationships they have forged is priceless. David and Judy truly understand what it is to be a part of the community that the Hanover Sheriff's Office serves," contributes Sargent Tim Sutton with the Hanover Sheriff’s Office. In addition to their service with the Hanover Sheriff's Office, they serve on numerous boards, foundations, and with an array of nonprofit and government groups that make life better for residents and visitors alike.

Kids Give Back

OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

Established as a nonprofit in 2019, Kids Give Back grew out of an afterschool club and a realization that there were not enough opportunities for children between 6 and 12 years old to volunteer. Since then, over 300 volunteers have completed over 3,000 volunteer hours, contributing over 2,000 in-kind donations in 2022.

Youth are engaged in virtual volunteer events, Family Volunteer Days, Summer Volunteer Camps, and more. Every project completed meets an identified need in the community, while inspiring the next generation of volunteers. Volunteer leadership ensures that students are actively engaged in projects that make a difference and provide an inspiring experience for the youth. One partner organization said, "Kids Give Back does a wonderful job connecting our local youth to service opportunities while educating them on any nonprofits doing important work in our communities." Students develop leadership skills, practice fine motor and basic academic skills, and cultivate a passion for helping others at the same time. Founder Denise Gavilan shares that some youth participants report they've never been asked to help before, and that they feel so proud of their accomplishments when they are able to share the impact of their contribution.

Patriot FCCLA

OUTSTANDING EDUCATIONAL GROUP

Students at Patriot High School are encouraged to develop their full leadership potential, demonstrate integrity, and understand the importance of character. Members of the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) Club exemplified these values as they answered the call to serve in their local community.

Each year, the students engaged in the Patriot FCCLA Club come together to contribute their time and talent to support the local community. By hosting events and service projects, club members seek to make a difference and leave a legacy that contributes to the common good. In addition to serving local families throughout the year, the FCCLA club designed a service project called "No More Trashbags." The students identified a need to support children in foster care, organized a supply drive, and donated backpacks filled with items to be distributed to youth in need. Students were active in service and also educated others and advocated for youth in care. Their accomplishments were recognized by the national FCCLA organization and awarded grant funding as a result of the students' hard work.

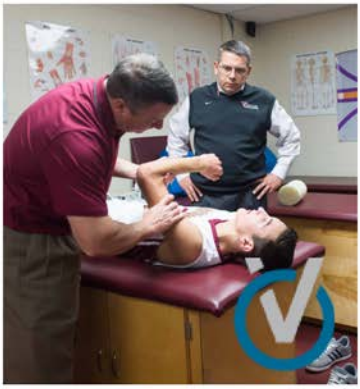
Highlands Fellowship
OUTSTANDING FAITH COMMUNITY

Respected for their commitment to making a difference, the impact of Highlands Fellowship is felt through their dedication to those most vulnerable in Southwest Virginia. Over 2,500 individuals have acted as catalysts in the community, expanding the available resources for youth and families in foster care and kinship care networks.

Their continually evolving wraparound approach has made a far-reaching and long-lasting impact by building relationships, strengthening systems, and inspiring others in the community to take action. Highlands Fellowship recognized an unmet need to support the children, families, and service providers. They soon set out to raise awareness, provide programmatic and service support, and leverage their resources across three campuses, as well as made deep and lasting relationships between families to strengthen the social fabric of the community. “Highlands Fellowship takes their role of serving the community and promoting the needs of foster families and child caregivers very seriously, and has taken crucial steps forward to support Virginia's foster care and adoptive families,” says Kathy Johnson, Director of the Washington County Department of Social Services.

OrthoVirginia

OUTSTANDING CORPORATION



Commitment to community has been embedded as a core value for OrthoVirginia, even before its formal founding as a practice. At any given time, over a third of the physicians at OrthoVirginia volunteer as athletic trainers and team physicians, primarily in the Northern Virginia region.

As a result of their commitment, they singlehandedly support 18 public high schools as well as a number of private schools, taking time to answer questions, provide guidance, and help in the care of the students. School leadership readily identifies the positive impact of the partnerships with OrthoVirginia as crucial for their programs. “These relationships are critically important to the operation of our school-based athletic programs,” says John Ellenberger, Director of Student Activities at Annandale High School. “It's safe to say our Athletic Trainers would not be able to do their jobs without the vital support provided by OrthoVirginia volunteer team physicians." The legacy of OrthoVirginia physicians demonstrates a strong commitment over several decades to supporting youth athletic programs in a multitude of different ways benefiting schools, students, and athletics programs many times over.

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VirginiaService Foundation

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