



Commonwealth of Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services

Andy Beshear, Governor

Eric Friedlander, Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Governor's Service Awards Will Honor 10 Individuals, 10 Groups

***Prestigious annual event will be presented virtually for the first time in its
25-year history***

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Oct. 24, 2020) – Governor Andy Beshear and Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) Secretary Eric Friedlander will honor 10 individuals and 10 groups from across Kentucky for their volunteer and service contributions at the 25th Annual Governor's Service Awards. This year's award ceremony will be broadcast on Serve Kentucky's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/ServeKY at 7 p.m. Eastern Time on Saturday, Oct. 24, to coincide with Make a Difference Day, which emphasizes community service and volunteerism.

"It is our honor to show appreciation for those who give their time to better the lives of Kentuckians," said Governor Beshear. "Volunteers such as these award winners embody the spirit of our state. These winners did not allow even the global pandemic to stand in the way of doing services for others. These volunteers have made great impacts."

"Volunteers truly make our communities better places," continued Secretary Friedlander. "Their commitment to service, particularly during COVID-19, is perhaps more important than ever. Many of these volunteers had to make

changes to their normal way of serving, relying on technology, physical distance and ingenuity in terms of getting things accomplished.”

Serve Kentucky, an agency within CHFS, coordinates the annual awards. The Governor's Office launched the program in 1975; however, Serve Kentucky has managed the awards program since 1995.

“Today’s winners represent the heart of communities across Kentucky,” added Joe Bringardner, Serve Kentucky Executive Director. “This group represents a small number of the exceptional people from all over the state who do whatever it takes to help our families, friends and neighbors.”

In addition to coordinating the Governor’s Service Awards, Serve Kentucky currently administers 22 AmeriCorps program grants with more than \$7.6 million in federal grant funds along with supporting other community service programs across the Commonwealth. State Service Commissions oversee the annual grant competition that awards funding to AmeriCorps State programs, determine social needs in their states, set policy and program priorities, provide training and assistance, support national days of service, and promote service and volunteering.

For more information about the Governor’s Service Awards, Kentucky’s AmeriCorps programs or volunteerism, call Serve Kentucky at (502) 564-7420 or visit their website at www.serve.ky.gov.

A list of honorees and their hometowns follow.

2020 Governor’s Service Award Recipients

Volunteer Service Award

- **Earl D. Twinam** – Russell/Greenup County

Earl has been involved in his community for a number of years by volunteering with civic clubs such as the Russell Rotary Club & Ashland Lions Club and serving on several community boards. He has helped lead drives for coats, canned goods, blankets, and eyeglasses; collected more than 300 backpacks and school supplies for grade school students in Greenup and Boyd Counties; and assisted an afterschool meal program for local students for a decade.

- **Miranda Wyles** – Paris/Bourbon County

Miranda has played a key role in the expansion of Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) from Lexington into Bourbon County, working to ensure community support and a shared vision, plan, and commitment to the program. In addition to her CASA service, Miranda also leads and participates in numerous other community service programs and organizations.

- **Claudette W. Patton** – Louisville/Jefferson County

Claudette has recruited and is currently advising more than 75 young people in Kentucky for The Congressional Award. Her commitment as an Advisor to each youth encompasses a two- to four-year period, coaching them as they earn their Gold Medal, presented by Congress.

Youth Service Award

- **Andrew Dunn** – Louisville/Jefferson County
- Andrew founded Random Acts of Kindness (RAK) Louisville in 2013 as a fifth grade student. Since then, he has grown the organization into a strong and notable nonprofit in Metro-Louisville with a Student Advisory Board of 10 students who help lead and coordinate projects. RAK works closely with Jefferson County Public Schools and various grassroots organizations in the city to directly impact underserved populations.

Veteran Volunteer Service Award

- **Tom Little** – Lexington/Fayette County

Tom has been involved with Lexington Habitat for Humanity and has logged more hours than any volunteer in the organization's history. He has helped serve more than 260 families during his tenure on the Board of Directors and also volunteers at the Lexington ReStore location.

Senior Volunteer Service Award

- **Linda Firebaugh** – Ashland/Boyd County

Since serving as executive director, Linda has become a volunteer at Ashland's Hillcrest-Bruce Mission, and has been instrumental in receiving four consecutive years of the Good Samaritan Grant, totaling \$450,000, which has allowed the

mission to provide dental and vision services, prescription co-pays, hearing aids, and diabetic supplies to community members.

National Service Award

- **AmeriCorps Member: Susie Nevitt** – Owensboro/Daviess County

Over four years, Susie has served more than 5,250 hours with the AmeriCorps Seniors Foster Grandparents Program (FGP) at the Helen Sears Child Development Center in Owensboro. At the end of 2018-19 academic year, 100% of her students improved in social-emotional and/or cognitive skills and 98% of the children assigned to her were ready to progress to their next learning level.

National Service Alumni Award

- **Stacy Usher** – Campton/Wolfe County

As an AmeriCorps member of UNITE Service Corps, Stacy completed two years of service at Campton Elementary in Wolfe County, during which she sponsored the UNITE Club for community service, volunteered for the Archery club, taught soccer, and helped her students' test scores soar upwards of 30% in math knowledge. Stacy also helped to successfully receive a 2019 Drug Free Communities Grant on behalf of Wolfe County.

Group Service Award

- **Henderson Habitat for Humanity T-Crew** – Henderson/Henderson County

Henderson's Habitat for Humanity's T-Crew is a volunteer group who perform a variety of tasks, including painting, putting up exterior walls, putting up trim, hanging siding, putting on house wrap and setting trusses. In addition, their sub-crew, known as the Barn Building group, builds yard barns for each new Habitat home. The Barn Builders also raise money to build more houses by making and selling yard barns as well as birdhouses, children's playhouses, crates and doghouses made of their scrap materials.

- **Youth: Seneca RedHawk Rangers** – Louisville/Jefferson County

Seneca RedHawk Rangers is a community service group formed in 2014 out of Seneca High School. The high school members participate in more 1,000 service hours each school year, planning and implementing projects that benefit the

school's food pantry, raise money for local nonprofits, and collect school materials and eyeglasses for students in other countries, among other things. In total, the group has helped donate \$42,000 dollars to nonprofits and \$17,000 worth of technology for their school.

Group Service Award – Faith Based

- **Baptist Health Lexington, Volunteer Services** – Lexington/Fayette County

Baptist Health Lexington Volunteer Services strategically places skill-based volunteers to improve the patient experience. The "gold star" program coordinates volunteers in most departments of the hospital ranging from the ER to the cancer infusion center, and palliative care to pet therapy. These volunteers improve the care given to the countless patients they serve, providing a bright light in some of their darkest days.

- **The Mustard Seed** – Walton/Boone County

The Mustard Seed Ministry has grown from its initial food-based ministry of the Walton First Baptist Church to help with utility bills, provide food for families going through crisis situations, and rent assistance. Through its service, the group has found there is also a need for fellowship, so it strives to create an atmosphere of encouragement and acceptance where no one is ever turned away.

- **Vanceburg Church of God** – Vanceburg/Lewis County

Vanceburg Church of God leads a volunteer-run food bank providing food to an average of 400 people a week. The church recognized that the lack of public transportation and the high poverty rate in rural Lewis County made it difficult for residents to both travel to pick up groceries and to afford groceries and created its Food Bank to meet the need.

Nonprofit Service Award

- **Honor Guard of Man O'War, Post #8, The American Legion** – Lexington/Fayette County

The Honor Guard of Man O' War Post #8 of the American Legion is a Veterans Service Organization whose members have served honorably during wartime. Post #8's Honor Guard consists of volunteers from The Legion, Sons of the American Legion, and the American Legion Auxiliary. The 15 active members of

the Post #8 Honor Guard provide and average of 250 Military Burial Honors for area veterans and their families each year.

- **Sickle Cell Association of Kentuckiana** – Louisville/Jefferson County

The Sickle Cell Association of Kentuckiana is an all-volunteer organization that serves as a support and advocacy group for those managing this debilitating disease. The organization pursues its mission of “Conquering sickle cell disease, one patient at a time,” by providing financial assistance, support groups, events, and education about Sickle Cell Anemia's impact on the physical, mental, and psychosocial components of the body and is the only sickle cell support organization in Kentucky.

- **The Moses Basket** – Paducah/McCracken County

The Moses Basket was founded by Kristen Beck and Lacey Baker and is a donation-based, volunteer-led organization serving children placed in foster homes in 11 western Kentucky counties. In order to comfort children being removed from their homes, the organization provides baskets of clothes, toys, books, arts and crafts, bibles, blankets, shoes, and other age appropriate items. The Moses Basket works with social workers, foster children, foster parents, and the community to ensure the region's foster children are getting a good start to a new beginning.

Business Service Award

- **Cardinal Office 360** – Frankfort/Franklin County

Cardinal Office 360 is a locally owned office supply, furniture, and janitorial product company, located in Frankfort. Through the company's Partners for Giving Program, the business has given more than \$300,000 to local nonprofits.

- **Abound Credit Union** – Radcliff/Hardin County Abound Credit Union, formerly Fort Knox Federal Credit Union, is committed to serving military families and strengthening the local communities it serves. In November 2019, the Credit Union announced a \$1.5 million long-term investment to support military and community health in Radcliff. The ten-year financial commitment and partnership, made through the Hardin Memorial Health (HMH) Foundation, is expanding services at HMH Medical Group's Radcliff Family Medicine clinic.

Lifetime Achievement Award

- **David Cozart** – Lexington/Fayette County

David is the Director of the nonprofit Lexington Leadership Foundation's Fatherhood Initiative and has spent the last 20 years working with fatherhood engagement programs. He was instrumental in the successful launch of Kentucky's first ever Fatherhood Summit in 2019. David has dedicated his career to improving his community and state, specifically seeking to address the effect of father absence on children, families and communities.

- **Jill Robinson** – Frankfort/Franklin County

Jill has served on the Kentucky Commission on Women and been an active leader on the Franklin County Council on Family Abuse and spearheaded the efforts to establish The Franklin County Women and Family Shelter. The shelter has since assisted hundreds of women and children in getting back on their feet with housing assistance, job placement, skills training, and health services. She has also been actively involved with the Kings Center, a nonprofit providing afterschool and summer care. In addition to all of her service to these organizations, Jill has also given back through several terms of service as a Franklin County magistrate.

Photos of the winners may be viewed and downloaded [here](#).

- 30 -

The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and health care programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services the Department for Public Health, the Department for Aging and Independent Living and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.