



*2025 Honoree
Celebration*

March 8, 2026

An initiative of





2025 Welcome

Distinguished Honorees and Esteemed Guests,

It is with great pleasure that the Volunteer Tennessee Commissioners extend a warm welcome to you as we gather to celebrate the remarkable achievements of students, schools, and honorees across our state. This past year, service has woven a powerful thread through each of our communities—strengthening connections, uplifting those in need, and inspiring hope in countless ways.

From mentoring younger students, supporting disaster relief, and addressing difficult social issues, to building hiking trails, caring for nursing home residents, and leading environmental efforts, the spirit of service has been alive in every corner of our schools. Students have organized food drives, partnered with nonprofits, supported individuals with special needs, and even inspired inclusive business ventures. Their collective dedication reflects the highest ideals of leadership, compassion, and civic responsibility.

As we celebrate this special occasion, let us honor the collaboration, kindness, and perseverance that drive our students to do great things. Together, we continue building a community where service is celebrated, innovation thrives, and every achievement is valued.

Thank you for joining us. We hope you find this event both inspiring and deeply meaningful.

Sincerely,

Terry Silver

Volunteer Tennessee Commission Chair





Welcome

Recognition of Sponsors, Elected Officials, County
Coordinators, Volunteer Tennessee Commissioners
& Other Special Guests

Governor Lee's Congratulatory Video

Celebrating the 2025 Award of Excellence Winners

Celebrating the 2025 Governor's Volunteer Stars
Award Honorees

Businesses * Nonprofits * Individuals

Closing Remarks

Special Thanks to GVSA Gold Sponsor:





2025 Speakers

(In order of Appearance)



Miss Lucy Cowart

Miss Iris Tennessee Teen

Lucy Cowart, Miss Iris Tennessee Teen, is a dedicated advocate for animal welfare. Through her platform, "Adopt Not Shop," she promotes responsible pet ownership, shelter adoption, and awareness of overpopulation. She volunteers regularly with local shelters and community outreach programs.

At school, Lucy serves as SGA Public Relations Coordinator and Teen Board Social Media Coordinator. She is active in Mock Trial, BETA Club, Rho Kappa, FCA, YoungLife, and varsity golf. Her achievements include Region Mock Trial Best Plaintiff Advocate and Intermountain Athletic Conference Golfer of the Year.



Ava Hunter

Miss Davidson County Iris Teen

Ava is a member of the track team, a Student Ambassador, and part of the Prom Committee. Currently, she serves as a Prom Ambassador for The Clothes Tree Nashville.

Ava began volunteering at age seven through her platform, "Pretty Is As Pretty Does," which encourages community service. She has earned two Presidential Volunteer Service Awards for her commitment. Inspired by her grandmother's Alzheimer's diagnosis, she created a second platform, "Don't You Forget About Me," advocating for patients and caregivers. As an Alzheimer's Impact Movement Ambassador.



Macy Strader

Master of Ceremony

Macy Strader is a senior at East Tennessee State University, graduating with the 1911 Society honor of "Most Distinguished Graduate". She is a media and communication major with minors in psychology, marketing, and creative writing. A Roan Scholar, she serves as executive editor of the *East Tennessean* newspaper, has organized celebrity concerts, and helped reinstate her campus news show. Macy has both given a TEDx Talk and served as a TED Conferences organizer for four years. She has completed non-profit internships in foster youth and anti-bullying advocacy, as well as a communications internship for Volunteer

Tennessee. She was also a previous GVSA award recipient in 2022.

Encouraging Volunteerism & Community Service

www.tn.gov/volunteer-tennessee





2025 Speakers

(In order of Appearance)



Crista Whitney
Volunteer Tennessee Commissioner
Department of Education

Crista Whitney has served as the Executive Assistant to the Commissioner at the Tennessee Department of Education since 2022. As an IAAP Certified Administrative Professional with over 20 years of experience across public and nonprofit sectors, she strives to elevate organizational effectiveness and foster collaborative, mission-driven work. Guided by clarity, integrity, and service, Crista champions strong leadership and

meaningful public impact, and is building upon her influence in state-level education leadership by contributing to systems that empower communities and improve outcomes for all Tennessee students.



Terry Silver
Volunteer Tennessee Commission Chair

Terry recently retired as a professor of Educational Studies at the University of Tennessee at Martin. She is a service-learning trainer and a Lions Quest curriculum trainer. Terry has taught using the service-learning methodology, and she has studied and written extensively on service-learning. She regularly works on committees for the Tennessee Conference on Volunteerism and Service-Learning and volunteers at Second Harvest Food Bank.

**Terry (right) is pictured here with Volunteer Tennessee Commissioner Jason Scott (left).*





Award of Excellence 2025

The Volunteer Tennessee Award of Excellence honors K–12 schools that demonstrate exceptional commitment to student volunteerism and community service. This annual recognition celebrates schools that empower young people to strengthen their communities through service and leadership. The initiative highlights outstanding school efforts that integrate service, volunteer engagement, and service-learning into student life, encouraging youth to address local needs and build a lifelong ethic of service. This year’s emphasis on food security, safe housing, and youth mentorship reflects Volunteer Tennessee’s mission to meet essential needs and inspire lasting change. We proudly celebrate these remarkable schools.



Award of Excellence - Gold Winner St. Mary’s Episcopal School, Memphis

At St. Mary’s Episcopal School, service is not an occasional activity. It is part of the learning experience at every grade level, from early childhood through graduation. Students dedicated more than 10,000 hours to serving others, leading

philanthropic initiatives that were entirely student driven. Their impact extended well beyond philanthropy. Students mentored younger peers, delivered holiday gifts to families, organized campus-wide food drives, and offered hundreds of tutoring sessions to help fellow students succeed. At St. Mary’s, service becomes a pathway to leadership. Girls graduate not only prepared for college but prepared to strengthen the communities they enter as changemakers, collaborators, and compassionate leaders.





Award of Excellence 2025



Award of Excellence - Silver Winner Central Magnet School, Murfreesboro

At Central Magnet School, service stands at the heart of the mission to educate the whole child. The school believes that strong communities are built by dedicated volunteers, and students exemplify this belief

through a wide range of meaningful projects. Middle school cheerleaders supported the Alzheimer's Association, while Faith40 partnered with another school to provide backpacks for children in need. HOSA and biomed students organized six blood drives, contributing to hundreds of lives saved. Beta Club led a canned food drive collecting thousands of items, and teams and clubs coordinated coat drives, hygiene kits, greenway cleanups, and meals for Journey Home. Students raised \$4,700 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society and honored wounded soldiers.



Award of Excellence – Bronze Winner Fairview Elementary School, Fairview

Fairview Elementary School demonstrates exceptional commitment to service. Students took part in a remarkable range of service-learning initiatives—from food and coat drives to environmental stewardship through the Green Team Recycling Initiative and the Student Garden Crew. Fairview Elementary

School honored veterans through heartfelt letters, banners, and a schoolwide celebration, and supported local families through programs such as Fuel Bags, Thanksgiving Baskets, and the Holiday Assistance Program. Fairview students also led major community events including the Raise Craze Kindness Challenge, contributing more than 1,600 acts of kindness. Together, students dedicated nearly 5,000 hours to serving others.





Award of Excellence 2025



Award of Excellence - Bronze Winner Springfield High School, Springfield

During the 2024–2025 school year, volunteerism served as a powerful connector between students, faculty, community partners, and the greater Springfield community. Through outreach programs,

peer-support initiatives, and service projects, students demonstrated leadership, empathy, and a strong sense of civic responsibility. Social media helped amplify these efforts by promoting events, celebrating student accomplishments, and gathering community support that's consistently met with generosity. They also partnered with local businesses to support students in building life and work skills. Each experience shaped students into compassionate, capable citizens—ready to strengthen their community far beyond the school walls.





2025 Business Honorees



Franklin & Kyle Elder Law East Tennessee - Business

Franklin & Kyle Elder Law is a small but exceptionally community-minded law practice whose impact far exceeds its size. The organization actively supports RSVP, AmeriCorps, the Office on Aging and many other local programs dedicated to serving older adults and vulnerable populations. Employees volunteer consistently, serve on boards, sponsor events and lead fundraising efforts throughout the region. Their partnership with the Alzheimer's Tennessee Association and the Office on Aging demonstrates their deep commitment to

advocacy, education and compassionate care. Franklin & Kyle Elder Law embodies what it means to be a true community partner, strengthening lives through service, leadership and unwavering generosity.



United Communications Middle Tennessee - Business

United Communications, Middle Tennessee's premier locally based internet provider, is dedicated to serving the same communities its team members and customers call home. The company's volunteer efforts directly support key regional organizations, including GraceWorks Ministries in Franklin, Second Harvest Food Bank in

Smyrna, Veterans 2 Veterans of Middle Tennessee, and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Rutherford and Bedford counties. These partnerships benefit families in need, students seeking digital access and others who rely on community-driven support to thrive. In 2025, United assembled 356 food boxes for Second Harvest, created toys for GraceWorks' Manger program and collected Christmas gifts for economically disadvantaged families. Many initiatives are led by team members involved in Women United and Vets United. Beyond traditional volunteerism, United donates specialized labor and free fiber service to 11 volunteer fire stations and two Boys & Girls Club locations, strengthening emergency readiness, educational access and long-term community growth.





Sylvamo West Tennessee - Business

At Sylvamo, the team believes the well-being of each depends on the well-being of all and supporting childhood education is a core 2030 Goal. As the world's paper company, Sylvamo transforms renewable resources into products people rely on for learning, communication and entertainment. The company advances childhood education through global programs that support students, teachers and education partners. Though its operations span three continents, Sylvamo's world headquarters is in Memphis, Tennessee. Sylvamo made the promise of paper by donating 12 pallets of paper, revitalizing schools within the community, sponsoring the "Read to Achieve – Grizz Goes Back to School" event for ESL

students, supporting a schoolwide reading pep rally and hosting book distribution events with Reading Is Fundamental. Sylvamo's volunteer program leverages its people, products and resources to address community needs, promote literacy and uplift its adopt-a-schools in the community it calls home.





2025 Nonprofit Honorees



Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10904 East Tennessee - Nonprofit

The organization's mission is to assist veterans, their families and the broader community by educating the public, honoring military service and supporting schools, students and teachers. Its volunteers create and lead impactful programs that preserve local history, strengthen patriotism and provide direct support to those in need. The nonprofit established the Veterans Hall of Honors in Coffee County, restoring and displaying more than 300 veteran photos. It also created the Solar Cross Memorial Day Project, the Veterans Flag Project and numerous countywide ceremonies, including the annual Veterans Day

Parade and the Vietnam-Era Veterans Honors Dinner. Volunteers support veterans, schools, scouts, first responders and community programs through donations, events and classroom engagement. They also perform funeral honors for local families. All initiatives are developed and carried out by members who meet regularly to plan new projects and address community needs. The organization's creativity and commitment have earned multiple state and national awards recognizing its outstanding service.



Read to Succeed Middle Tennessee - Nonprofit

Read to Succeed recruits volunteers through civic groups and social and print media, engaging them in tutoring adult basic education and English as a Second Language. Volunteers also read to children in schools, support family literacy strategies, and assist with school and community events. Their work spans Rutherford County, including Murfreesboro, Smyrna, LaVergne, Eagleville and the surrounding communities of Christiana and Rockvale. All volunteers receive training tailored to the programs offered. A volunteer board of directors helps guide the organization's growth and expansion. Together, volunteers address the needs of non-English-speaking learners and individuals striving to improve their literacy skills. All programs are provided at no cost, giving participants opportunities to pursue education and a better quality of life. Read to Succeed meets learners where they are by distributing free books at events, supporting home libraries, and





offering hybrid learning options for adults facing transportation or time barriers.



Sleep in Heavenly Peace West Tennessee - Nonprofit

Sleep in Heavenly Peace is driven by a simple but profound mission: to ensure no child in Jackson, Tennessee sleeps on the floor. Through volunteer support and community donations, the organization provides safe, comfortable beds to families who need them most. A bed may seem ordinary, but for a child it offers dignity, stability and hope. The chapter's work is powered entirely by volunteers—including residents, students, churches and businesses—who build, assemble and deliver complete bed sets directly to homes. In its first six months in Jackson in 2025, the organization built and delivered 74 beds. During the Bunks Across America 2025 build event, more than 100 volunteers constructed 50 additional beds, with plans

to build more than 200 in 2026. Through this hands-on, community-driven approach, Sleep in Heavenly Peace transforms children's lives and unites Jackson through compassion, service and a shared commitment to ensuring every child has a place to sleep.





2025 Individual Honorees



Brandi Smith
Bedford County Adult

Brandi Smith exemplifies the heart of volunteerism. From leading children's activities at the Bedford County Fair to serving on her elementary PTO board and supporting church events and community fundraisers, Brandi consistently steps up to make a difference. Her creativity and leadership help local programs thrive, and her commitment inspires others to get involved. By actively supporting children, families, and community initiatives, Brandi demonstrates the power of service and the positive impact of simply showing up.



Nicholas Higgs
Bedford County Youth

At just seven years old, Nicholas Higgs saw a need and acted. After noticing gaps in food access for unhoused individuals, he wrote a grant at age six, raised funds, and created 36 food bags and 36 care kits. Nicholas' initiative filled critical gaps and inspired peers and leaders alike, proving that compassion and creativity can drive change at any age.



Danielle Reggio
Blount County Adult

Since 2001, Danielle Reggio has strengthened Blount County through leadership, fundraising, and volunteer coordination. Her service spans child safety, animal welfare, environmental care, veteran support, and local initiatives. She volunteers with New Hope Children's Advocacy Center, Townsend Animal Clinic/Blount County K9 Association, Keep Blount Beautiful, Rocky Top Veterans Foundation, and United Way of Blount County. Through creativity and collaboration, Danielle raises funds, builds awareness, and fosters lasting connections—demonstrating compassion and leadership across every organization she supports.





Alice Bramblett
Blount County Youth

Alice Bramblett's passion for service began early and shines through her work at Coram Deo Baptist Church. For the past four years, Alice has volunteered weekly as a childcare worker, planning and leading educational programming that impacts both children and their families. Her dedication creates a safe, nurturing environment where kids thrive and parents feel supported. Alice's commitment to her church community reflects the power of consistent, meaningful volunteerism.



Glennis Monday
Campbell County Adult

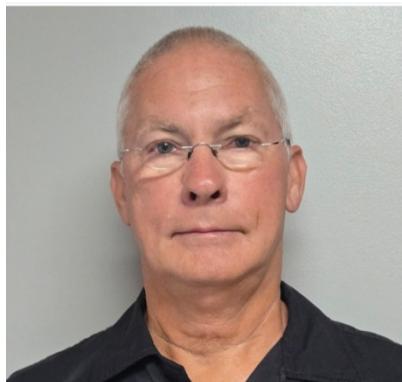
For decades, Glennis Monday has championed environmental protection in Campbell County. As Environmental Officer, he leads cleanup efforts across roadsides, mountainsides, and waterways—often tackling the hardest jobs himself. Since 2003, Glennis has organized the annual Great American Cleanup and partnered with the Norris Lake Project to mobilize volunteers and promote sustainability. His blend of enforcement, education, and hands-on leadership has created cleaner landscapes and inspired a culture of stewardship. Through his example, countless volunteers return year after year, proving how one committed leader can spark lasting community change.



Sam Sexton
Campbell County Youth

Sam Sexton is tackling youth mental-health needs in Campbell County through his work with Community Health of East Tennessee. He supports outreach events, peer programs, and awareness campaigns that promote emotional wellness and reduce stigma. As a founding member of Club America—a student-led group focused on service and inclusion—Sam has created new opportunities for youth to lead through cleanups, supply drives, and mentorship. His efforts strengthen resilience, expand access to support, and inspire peers to serve, showing how compassionate leadership can transform communities.





Jimmy Crossett
Carroll County Adult

Jimmy Crossett has spent decades serving Carroll County with humility and dedication. Known as the busiest “retired” person in town, he quietly meets needs through building, organizing, and mentoring. Since 2002, Jimmy has served on the Carroll County Inclusion Park Board, ensuring children of all abilities can play and belong. He also supports local fundraisers, his church, and student mentorship programs. Though he never seeks recognition, Jimmy’s steady leadership and hands-on work have created lasting

impact across the community.



Katherine Meggs
Carroll County Youth

Katherine has devoted her school years to meaningful volunteer service. As a freshman, she completed fifty-three hours through Beta Club service opportunities, followed by forty-six hours as a sophomore. Now, midway through her junior year, she has already contributed twenty-three additional hours to Beta Club.

She has also dedicated twenty-two hours to Lights, Camera, Fashion — a program empowering young women and raising funds for St. Jude Children’s Hospital in Memphis. In addition,

Katherine furthered her leadership development by participating in the Hugh O’Brien Youth Leadership Seminar.



Travis Tyler
Carter County Adult

Pastor Travis Tyler demonstrated extraordinary leadership and compassion following Hurricane Helene, working tirelessly to comfort, feed, and care for survivors. His calm presence and steady guidance helped many navigate the earliest stages of recovery. Beyond meeting immediate needs, Travis played a pivotal role in launching the Long-Term Recovery Group (LTRG), strengthening the community during its most vulnerable time. His deep compassion and tireless dedication exemplify what it means

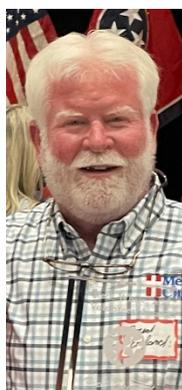
to step forward in a crisis, leaving a lasting impact on countless lives.





Kelly Ellis
Cheatham County Adult

Kelly Ellis, Director of the Cheatham County Chamber of Commerce, is known for connecting people with opportunities to serve. She volunteers with Kiwanis, supports Safe Haven Family Shelter and Colby's Army, and promotes local artists through the Cheatham County Art League. Recently, Kelly helped middle school students prepare and deliver Christmas stockings to those in need. Her leadership and hands-on service strengthen community ties and inspire others to give back.



Fred England
Claiborne County Adult

Fred England has spent years serving Claiborne County through his passion for food and giving back. He launched a Christmas tree and wreath fundraiser to support "Shop with a Cop," providing gifts for children in need. Fred and his wife have served thousands of hot meals to disaster victims and partnered with Mercy Chefs on tornado relief efforts. Seeing a need, he built the "Bubble Wagon" dishwashing trailer to support large-scale meal service. Fred's creativity and compassion show how simple acts—like a meal offered with dignity—can bring hope in life's darkest moments.





Jazzmin Duverney
Claiborne County Youth

Jazzmin Duverney has dedicated countless hours to service through Beta Club and FFA. She organized food drives for her school pantry, donated clothes to her church giveaway, and supported Children's Hospital by volunteering at Clay's for Children events. Jazzmin also helped with a major beautification project at White River State Park and spends Saturdays assisting at local little league basketball games. Her commitment to helping others reflects leadership, compassion, and a strong sense of community.



Carla Rich
Clay County Adult

Carla Rich has devoted decades to serving Clay County through leadership and volunteerism. Since 1997, she's served on economic development boards, helped launch the Chamber of Commerce, and revitalized the Clay County Fair, where she now serves as President. Carla supports 4-H, Farm Bureau programs, and the Community Garden, and serves on the Park Board and E911 Board. Her latest initiative, Hot Meals Express, provides meals to students when school is out. Carla's lifelong commitment reflects her belief in using her talents to strengthen and uplift her community.



Miley Kirk
Clay County Youth

At just 17, Miley Kirk became a pilot through determination and hard work. But her true impact comes from a unique mission: collecting damaged stuffed animals from yard sales and thrift stores, repairing them, and donating them to local police departments. Officers give these toys to children during difficult calls, offering comfort in scary moments. To date, she has provided over 4,000 stuffed animals to law enforcement. Her creativity and compassion show how one person's dedication can bring hope and healing to countless children.

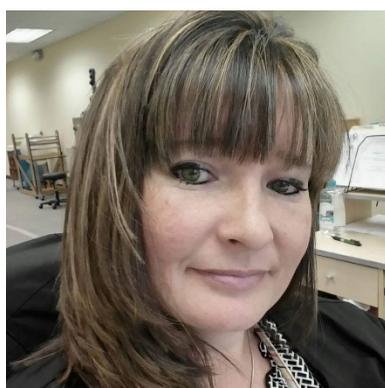




Marta Cogburn
Cocke County Adult

Marta Cogburn, Board Secretary and founding member of the Cocke County Long-Term Recovery Group, has volunteered thousands of hours since Hurricane Helene to support disaster recovery. She coordinates communication, advocates for survivors, and serves on the Emotional and Spiritual Care Committee. Marta also leads Recovery Ministries at First United Methodist Church, directing Celebrate Recovery programs for substance use, codependency, and grief. Her compassion and leadership have

strengthened individuals and built lasting systems of support, embodying the heart of volunteerism in Tennessee.



Jennifer Simmons
Coffee County Adult

Since 2003, Jennifer Simmons has served Coffee County as a dedicated volunteer with the Coffee County Rescue Squad. Alongside her husband Neal, she coordinates equipment maintenance, fundraising, and training to keep the all-volunteer squad ready for emergencies 24/7. Jennifer also leads the Gene Taylor and Steve Graves Christmas Foundation, providing food and toys to children in need. Her tireless commitment and willingness to sacrifice personal time reflect her deep devotion to keeping

residents safe and cared for year-round.



Carolyn Jozwiak
Cumberland County Adult

Since 2002, Carolyn Jozwiak has brought creativity and leadership to countless projects in Cumberland County. A Master Gardener and former Chair of the Spring Flower and Garden Show, she also served as President of the Master Gardener Association. Carolyn has led Downtown Crossville initiatives, organized the annual Christmas tree lighting, and supported events like Taste of Crossville and 4th Grade Walking Tours. Most recently, she spearheaded the revitalization of Veterans Memorial Park, adding ADA-compliant features and a bronze eagle to honor local heroes. Her vision and

dedication continue to strengthen her community.





Seth Troglin
Cumberland County Youth

Seth Troglin has served Cumberland County through FFA, contributing hundreds of volunteer hours to agricultural education and community projects. His most impactful effort, the Spread the Light Livestock Show, created inclusive opportunities for youth with special needs at the county fair. Seth organized, promoted, and led the event, turning an idea into a new tradition that fosters belonging. His leadership and compassion meet a vital need for inclusivity, inspiring others and exemplifying the true spirit of volunteerism and youth leadership.



Torja Middleton
Davidson County Adult

Torja Middleton serves as a Disaster Volunteer Leader with Hands On Nashville, completing extensive training and leading recovery efforts since the Madison tornadoes in December 2023. She has supported survivors through debris removal, home construction, and resource distribution, while also staffing outreach tables and providing first aid kits. Her ongoing involvement with Hands On, the Davidson County Long-Term Recovery Group, and Nashville VOAD reflects her commitment to efficient, compassionate disaster recovery. Torja's leadership accelerates rebuilding and strengthens community resilience long after the initial crisis.



Nicholas Joy
Davidson County Youth

Nicholas Joy volunteers with Vanderbilt University Medical Center and Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital, meeting patients and families during their hardest moments. From providing phone chargers and warm blankets to offering a kind word, Nicholas ensures dignity and comfort in times of stress. His commitment extends beyond service—he trains new hospital volunteers, multiplying his impact and shaping the future of compassionate care. Nicholas exemplifies how small acts of kindness and mentorship can bring hope and healing when it matters most.





Tom Leitch
Decatur County Adult

Tom Leitch has provided steadfast service to the Parsons–Decatur County Higher Education Foundation since 2009, offering guidance, scholarship support, and dependable leadership to UTM Parsons students. A veteran, business owner, and committed civic contributor, he consistently addresses community needs with humility and integrity. Through his work with local organizations and his unwavering dedication to educational access, Mr. Leitch has made a profound and lasting impact on Decatur County.



Mary Jane "Janie" Jones
Dickson County Adult

Janie Jones' lifelong dedication to service continues beyond her 43-year career in teaching and coaching. She serves on her church's ladies' ministry team, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes board, and the Charlotte Lions Club, while contributing hundreds of hours to the Family Community and Education Club. Janie organizes donation drives, leads county health fairs and baby showers, and supports programs like Women Are Safe and the Help Center. She has judged regional fairs and held leadership roles at county, regional, and state levels. Her tireless energy and compassion inspire others to serve with purpose and heart.



Tashonnie Brooks
Dickson County Youth

Tashonnie Brooks shines as a dedicated volunteer meeting real community needs. She has packaged Thanksgiving meal boxes, gathered hygiene items for students, and supported the YMCA Warming Station. Her leadership in MOVE2STAND and Youth Leadership Dickson includes organizing coat drives, fundraisers for the Child Advocacy Center, and managing her school's Compassion Closet. As a 4-H All-Star, she serves as a Healthy Living Ambassador and STEM leader, while promoting literacy as an Imagination Library ambassador. From hot chocolate stations at the Gobble 5K to donation drives, Tashonnie's efforts bring dignity, care, and lasting impact across Dickson County.





Neil Gibson
Fayette County Adult

Since December 2022, Neil Gibson has contributed over 3,600 volunteer hours with the American Red Cross. As Community Disaster Program Manager Volunteer Partner, he has deployed seven times across five states, driving Emergency Response Vehicles, conducting assessments, and teaching Disaster Cycle Services courses. Neil leads fire victim outreach through the Pre-Connect Notification Program and manages the Sound the Alarm campaign, impacting more than 1,000 individuals. Combining British Army discipline with FedEx logistics expertise, he mentors volunteers and strengthens disaster systems. His reliability and compassion make him a vital leader in community safety.



Randy Roysden
Fentress County Adult

Randy Roysden has shaped youth sports in Fentress County for generations through tireless leadership and commitment. A driving force behind local baseball, he has ensured thousands of children enjoy meaningful athletic experiences. Randy's steadfast support of the Kirby Johnson Memorial Baseball Field and numerous leagues reflects his passion for community and sportsmanship. His influence inspires players, parents, and volunteers alike, leaving a lasting legacy that strengthens youth athletics and fosters teamwork and integrity throughout the county.



Joy Gallagher
Franklin County Adult

Joy Gallagher's passion for history began in 1980 and has led to publishing three genealogy and local history books. A dedicated member of the Franklin County Historical Society since 2002, she served as board member, historian, and chairman for over two decades, leading projects like Winchester's Main Street recognition and documenting local business history. As registrar for the General James Winchester Chapter, DAR, Joy has helped many trace lineage to Revolutionary War patriots. Her leadership and research preserve community heritage and inspire others to explore their roots, making history accessible and meaningful for generations.





Calli Alonso
Franklin County Youth

Service is the heartbeat of everything Calli Alonso does. She teaches kitchen safety, nutrition, and drug-free lifestyles through Clover Chefs classes and school programs, and organized the donation of 150 sports balls to local schools. Calli created a Healthy Living Summer Day Camp, reached 89 students during Ag Literacy Week, and delivered more than 670 holiday meals. She supports Angel Tree gifts, mission trips, and serves as a Tennessee 4-H State Council ambassador, inspiring youth statewide to serve and make healthier choices. Her leadership creates lasting impact through education, wellness, and compassion.



Dr. Tiffany Purnell
Gibson County Adult

Dr. Tiffany Purnell, Assistant Principal at East Elementary in Humboldt, founded S.A.S.H. (Students Against Self-Hatred) in 2015 to promote confidence and self-esteem among young women. Through workshops and the S.A.S.H. Ambassadors program, she has reached hundreds globally, including in England. Dr. Purnell partners with local organizations, organizes fundraisers for WRAP (Women's Resource and Rape Assistance Program), and hosts self-esteem sessions for abuse survivors. Her mission to help individuals embrace their worth and potential continues to inspire and uplift communities worldwide.



Kylee Perry
Gibson County Youth

Driven by a belief that everyone deserves care and support, Kylee Perry has spent eight years serving West Tennessee through initiatives that bring hope and resources to those in need. She founded The Queen's Closet to provide essentials to students across multiple counties and volunteers with Isaiah 117 House, Ronald McDonald House, and Why Not Food Ministries. Kylee has led disaster relief efforts, organized drives for coats, blankets, hygiene items, and holiday cards, and raised funds for St. Jude. Her leadership and compassion create a ripple effect of kindness, inspiring others to serve and making a lasting impact.





Terri Ryan
Grainger County Adult

Terri Ryan served as volunteer president of the Grainger County Chamber of Commerce for two years, launching the county's first Fourth of July Parade to bring the community together. She partnered with Parks and Recreation to host monthly "Food Truck Fridays" and coordinated the annual Grainger County Historic Bus Ride. Terri also championed development of "The Island," a Civil War battleground transformed into a public recreation and education site. Her leadership and vision have created events and projects that strengthen community pride and preserve local history.



Kaycee Pratt
Grainger County Youth

Kaycee Pratt has reached more than 5,000 people across Tennessee, North Carolina, and Texas through her nonprofit combining science education with community outreach. She has donated clothing, shoes, prom dresses, sports equipment, baby formula, and monetary gifts to families in need, while supporting morale for the 82nd Airborne, local police, EMS, and families in crisis. Kaycee has volunteered with the Grainger County Baptist Association, school-wide charitable campaigns, and Hurricane Helene relief efforts. In August, she was named Grainger County's first Knoxville Teen Board Presentee for her leadership, outreach, and character.



Robert Bailey
Greene County Adult

Robert Bailey has been a cornerstone of Greene County's recovery after Hurricane Helene, volunteering hundreds of hours through Aidnet and My Neighbor's House. As a project manager, he oversees rebuilding efforts—from small repairs to complex construction—while mobilizing volunteers and maximizing resources. Robert's adaptability and hands-on leadership have helped families move from displacement to safe homes and reopened community spaces. His tireless service reflects extraordinary dedication, ensuring recovery is not just rebuilding structures but restoring hope and resilience across Greene County.





Jackie Eubanks
Grundy County Adult

Jackie Eubanks has devoted 35 years to rescue squad service, over 20 years as Fire Chief, and 13 years as mayor and city commissioner. Certified in emergency management, CPR, rappelling, and technical rescue, he responds first to emergencies—rappelling cliffs, coordinating river searches, and transporting neighbors to hospitals. Beyond lifesaving work, Jackie delivers food boxes, mentors youth through rappelling experiences, and brings joy to community events. His creativity blends technical rescue with civic engagement, while his servant leadership has saved lives, strengthened local governance, and inspired a multigenerational legacy of faith-centered service. Jackie truly embodies commitment and compassion.



Star Songer
Grundy County Youth

Star Songer excels academically while balancing numerous leadership roles. She is editor of the yearbook and school newspaper, writes a weekly column for the *Grundy County Herald*, and serves as treasurer of HOSA and public relations chair for the National Honor Society. Active in Youth Leadership Grundy, FCA, FBLA, and student council, Star also promotes a drug-free community through SPARK. Last spring, she represented Grundy County on the Washington Youth Tour in D.C. Known for her humility and dedication, Star leads by example, whether reporting student achievements, organizing service projects, or volunteering locally.



Leslie Scott
Hancock County Adult

Leslie Scott began volunteering with Of One Accord Ministry in 2022, leading annual Remote Area Medical (RAM) clinics in Hancock County. She oversees every detail of the two-day event, coordinating 125 medical professionals and volunteers to deliver thousands of services—valued at \$240,000 in 2025 alone. Leslie also co-chairs the Hancock Health Council and organizes flood response along the Clinch River. Her past service includes work with the Hamblen County Substance Abuse Coalition. Through her leadership, Leslie ensures vital healthcare access and disaster relief for some of Tennessee's most remote communities, embodying commitment and compassion in every effort.





Calyn Seal
Hancock County Youth

Calyn Seal, a senior at Hancock High School with a 4.0 GPA, exemplifies leadership and service. For three years, she has volunteered at Shepherd's Corner, assisting with food and clothing distributions for families in need. Calyn teaches Sunday School, leads youth programs at Elm Springs Baptist, and serves as president of both First Priority and Student Council. Despite her busy schedule, she plays varsity softball, basketball, and volleyball. Her dedication to faith, academics, and community service makes a lasting impact on Hancock County, reflecting integrity, compassion, and a commitment to helping others thrive.



Jordan Bills
Hardin County Adult

For four years, Jordan Bills has served on the Catfish Derby & Riverfest Board, coordinating the pageant and ensuring smooth, successful events. She also volunteers for Music on Main, Country Christmas, Christmas on Main, and other community celebrations—always ready to help, whether planned or last-minute. Known for her creativity, leadership, and reliability, Jordan goes above and beyond to make events organized, memorable, and family-friendly. Her dedication strengthens Savannah's traditions and fosters a vibrant volunteer spirit, bringing residents and visitors together through community pride and connection. Jordan's commitment truly enriches her community year after year.



Addie Whitten
Hardin County Youth

Addie Whitten exemplifies servant leadership through her active involvement in HOSA, Student Council, VOLS, and numerous community organizations. She dedicates countless hours to causes such as Cassie's Cause Foundation and the Darryl Worley Cancer Center, demonstrating compassion and a commitment to helping others. Addie's leadership and volunteer spirit shine through every project she undertakes, making a meaningful impact on her school and community.





William "Monty" Emerson
Hawkins County Adult

For 20 years, Monty Emerson has volunteered through his church, Of One Accord's food pantry, and community meal programs, serving thousands of families. During COVID, he stepped into a leadership role to keep food distribution and mission teams operating safely, ensuring uninterrupted services. Monty organizes monthly veterans' food distributions and large holiday efforts—providing Thanksgiving meals to 1,600 families and Christmas meals to 1,200 families. His work supports a system that distributes over a million pounds of food annually, helping Of One Accord serve up to 100,000 people each year. Monty's dedication reflects true compassion, resilience, and servant leadership.



Candace Shearer
Henderson County Adult

Candace Shearer, a Henderson County Leadership graduate, has spent the past year making an extraordinary impact through volunteer service. She helped organize a major fundraiser for the Frances Henley Animal Shelter, supported Carl Perkins Center events to prevent child abuse, and assisted the Chamber with countywide initiatives. Candace brings creativity and initiative to every project, strengthening programs and expanding outreach. As Operations Manager at Henderson County Animal Clinic, she extends her passion for service into her professional life. Her dedication and leadership reflect the true spirit of the Tennessee Governor's Volunteer Star Award, making her a most deserving honoree.



Ava Salmon
Henderson County Youth

Ava Salmon is an active Beta Club member who devotes her time to serving her school and community. As a YSA grant recipient, she demonstrated leadership and initiative by organizing a "9/11 Day of Remembrance" event that inspired attendees with a renewed sense of patriotism and unity. Her efforts reflect a strong commitment to civic engagement and youth empowerment. Through her dedication to service and ability to lead meaningful projects, Ava exemplifies the qualities of compassion, responsibility, and integrity, making her a deserving honoree.





Robert Frame
Henry County Adult

Robert Frame has dedicated countless hours to leading the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program in Henry County, helping elderly and low-income residents file taxes accurately and on time. His leadership makes the process less stressful for those who cannot afford professional services, saving residents thousands in fees. Through patient guidance and unwavering commitment, Robert has built trust and confidence within the community. His compassion and reliability exemplify the spirit of volunteerism, ensuring that vulnerable populations receive essential support. Robert's service reflects integrity and care, making him a truly deserving recipient of the Tennessee Governor's Volunteer Star Award.



Amanda Dixon
Houston County Adult

Amanda Dixon is known for her heart for service and leadership in Houston County. She coordinates volunteers for Irish Celebration Pageants and Carnivals, food drives, school events, and the county fair. Amanda coaches the middle school girls' basketball team and organizes the annual Senior Day, providing scholarships and gifts for every graduating senior. She has served as President of the Houston County Recreation Club and is President-Elect of Erin Rotary. Always ready to respond to community needs, Amanda recruits volunteers, fundraises, and inspires others through her dedication and passion for helping others, making a lasting impact on her community.



Lisa Huff
Jackson County Adult

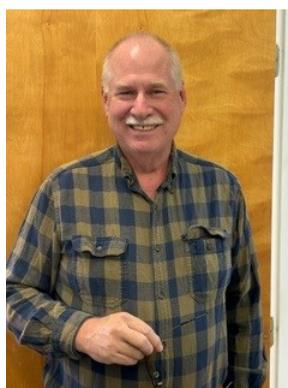
Lisa Huff began volunteering at Sutton General Store in Granville in 2016 and now plays a vital role in Historic Granville's success. After retiring, she expanded her service across all ten historic sites, contributing to programming, exhibit development, and daily operations. Though employed part-time since 2021, Lisa consistently volunteers as many or more hours than she is paid—often working on days off and logging up to 40 volunteer hours a week during festivals and exhibit changes. Her dedication, reliability, and passion for preserving history make her an indispensable part of the Granville community and its continued growth.





Claire Williams
Jackson County Youth

Claire Williams leads through service, ensuring the local Junior Pro Basketball Program runs smoothly. She spends countless Saturday mornings coaching, working concessions, cleaning up, and doing whatever is needed to keep the program thriving. Claire also volunteers at the elementary school and represents her senior class through Student Council. Her willingness to step in wherever needed demonstrates true leadership and a heart for her community. Through her dedication, reliability, and positive attitude, Claire makes a lasting impact on local youth and inspires others to serve.



Dwayne Dickson
Johnson County Adult

Dwayne Dickson has served as pastor of First Christian Church in Mountain City for over 27 years, founding a food pantry ministry that has supported the county for 25 years. Active in health and tourism councils, he has brought vital clinics to the area. Following Hurricane Helene, Dwayne led recovery efforts—organizing shelters, supply distribution, and food for citizens and first responders. He coordinated volunteers for cleanup and long-term rebuilding, raising \$600,000 and recruiting over 2,000 volunteers who donated 80,000 hours to repair or rebuild more than 60 homes. His leadership reflects unwavering compassion and resilience.



Julia Crews
Johnson County Youth

Julia Crews has dedicated her time to serving people of all ages—from elementary youth to senior citizens—through numerous community initiatives. She is also a strong advocate for agriculture, promoting awareness and engagement among her peers and the broader community. Julia's commitment to service, leadership, and advocacy reflects her deep care for others and her desire to make a positive impact.





Stanley Love
Knox County Adult

For the past two years, Stanley Love has been the steady heartbeat of the volunteer driving program, giving his time four days a week to ensure community members reach vital appointments and maintain independence. Last year alone, he volunteered over 430 hours. Beyond the program, he assists his mother-in-law with transportation to medical appointments. What makes him extraordinary is not just his consistency, but the care he brings to every ride—showing up rain or shine with a warm smile, a listening ear, and genuine concern for those he serves.

His dedication truly embodies the spirit of volunteerism.



Gabriel Little
Knox County Youth

Gabriel Little brings curiosity, commitment, and a strong work ethic to every volunteer role. He arrives early, looks for ways to improve processes, and approaches new tasks with a positive attitude. Respectful, friendly, and dependable, Gabriel ensures responsibilities are completed before leaving. His dedication earned him recognition for contributing over 100 service hours annually during his first two years of high school. Gabriel's initiative and reliability make him an outstanding example of youth volunteerism, inspiring others through his

consistency and enthusiasm.



Sonny Holley
Lewis County Adult

Sonny Holley has combined his love for music with decades of community service. In the mid-1980s, he helped reunite The Skyliters for a benefit concert, funding Christmas lights and music scholarships. Later, Sonny and his wife, Shelia, formed a country band, donating equipment and performances to support cancer funds through events like Hee Haw Shows and Relay for Life. He also played a key role in launching Hohenwald Oktoberfest, providing free entertainment and equipment in its early years. For over 30 years, Sonny has continued booking talent for the festival, enriching the community through music and volunteer spirit.





Andie Starcher
Lewis County Youth

Andie Starcher's service journey began in fifth grade with 4-H, where she discovered a talent for public speaking that shaped her leadership path. Today, she serves as State Secretary of FBLA, Vice President of her FFA chapter, and a member of the Student Advisory Committee to the School Board. Andie volunteers at her local library each summer, fostering literacy and curiosity in young learners. She also plays bass drum in the marching band and works part-time, modeling responsibility and dedication. Her leadership and commitment to service inspire peers and strengthen her

community, embodying true volunteer spirit.



Rujena Dotson
Lincoln County Adult

Rujena Dotson has served Lincoln County for over 20 years through the Chamber of Commerce, Livestock Association, and Leadership Lincoln. Beginning as a youth leader, she continues to organize annual retreats and mock interviews for high school seniors, preparing them for future careers. Rujena also coordinates Hamburger Day on the Hill, grilling 1,200 burgers for legislators, and supports agricultural youth programs like FFA and 4-H. Passionate about education, she has secured grants that

create opportunities for youth and adults. Her leadership strengthens community programs and fosters growth across Lincoln County, embodying the true spirit of volunteerism and service.



George McCrary*
Macon County Adult

With a 35-year career advocating for teachers' group health insurance, George McCrary dedicated his life to service and education. He earned a Certificate of National Service from AmeriCorps in 2001, was honored as Volunteer of the Year in 2015, and received the Trustee Award from the Tennessee Library Association in 2022. He partnered with Nestlé Corporation to implement Project WET, promoting water conservation education. George also served three terms on the Red Boiling Springs City Council.

**Posthumous award*





Jayden Hesson
Macon County Youth

Jayden Hesson is heavily involved in several student organizations, including 4-H, FFA, Interact Club, Beta Club, and Student Council. As State 4-H All Star Scribe, Jayden leads and participates in numerous volunteer activities and community service projects. She enjoys planning and attending leadership events, as well as networking with passionate youth and across the state. Her main area of interest is in agricultural advocacy, where she uses her leadership and communication skills to show her passion for agriculture to county, state, and federal lawmakers and leaders. Jayden has accumulated nearly 300 service hours in the last 4 years.



Jonathon Chung
Madison County Adult

Jonathon Chung has been a dedicated volunteer with the STAR Center for years, supporting major events like Dancing with the Stars, Black Tie and Boxing, and the Flint Cox Invitational Golf Tournament. Always ready to help, Jonathon assists with everything from setup to event management. Beyond events, he stepped in to support the IT department during a staffing gap and actively promotes the STAR Center's mission through Leadership Jackson. His reliability, professionalism, and advocacy have made a lasting impact, helping the STAR Center serve individuals with disabilities and strengthen community awareness through his commitment and leadership.



Ashlee Allison
Madison County Youth

Ashlee Allison is a true volunteer leader whose dedication shines across multiple organizations. She spearheads SRP's major fundraisers – Wingfest and Crawfest – raising over \$160,000 annually. She also serves as Social Media Coordinator for Sleep in Heavenly Peace, an active member of Jackson Rotary Club, and a committee leader for the Carl Perkins Center's Telethon and Blue Suede Dinner & Auction.





Naomi Hopper
Marshall County Youth

Naomi Hopper has been an integral part of HOPEtown since high school and now serves as a Registered Nurse. She began volunteering at clothing and food drives and, in 2021, launched a personal campaign to support HOPEtown's Christmas assistance program by requesting donations in lieu of gifts. Since then, Naomi has raised over \$12,500 to help provide presents for hundreds of children, focusing on teens often overlooked by other programs. She personally shops for gifts and organizes distribution for HOPEtown's Wrap It Up initiative, which expects to serve 700 children this year. Naomi's compassion and creativity make a lasting impact.



Robyn & John LaCook
Moore County Adult

Robyn and John LaCook lead the Moore County Resource Center, serving over 900 families and 250 children annually with food boxes, utility assistance, and seasonal programs. They partner with Moore County EMA for disaster relief and are expanding services to include senior food support, transportation vouchers, and a future permanent facility. Beyond the Resource Center, they volunteer at Chamber events, John serves on the volunteer fire department, and both work full-time at Jack Daniel's—all while being proud grandparents. Their dedication strengthens resources and support for Moore County, embodying the true spirit of volunteerism and community leadership.



McKinna Ward
Moore County Youth

McKinna Ward is the cofounder of two nonprofit charity pageants that support families throughout Middle Tennessee. Through her annual fundraisers and volunteer work with several local nonprofits, she has helped provide food, resources, and essential care to community members in need. A dedicated student leader and passionate advocate, she continues to inspire others through her commitment to service and her unwavering drive to make a difference.





Cale Rose
Moore County Youth

Cale Rose is a dedicated volunteer and inspiring leader in Moore County, serving community members of all ages. She represents the county at the Bedford County Fair and supports youth through 4-H, organizing County Weekend Camp for over 90 participants, coordinating the annual banquet, and recruiting 12 new members. She also brings joy to seniors through special events and teaches agricultural education to over 70 third graders. Her leadership and compassion strengthen community bonds throughout Moore County.



Angela Patten
Perry County Adult

Angela Patten has been a dedicated Perry County 4-H volunteer since 2021, contributing over 200 hours to mentoring youth in shooting sports. As an archery and shotgun coach, she brings expertise, patience, and positivity to every practice, creating an encouraging environment where participants thrive. Angela's kind demeanor and willingness to step in wherever needed make her a favorite among youth and a trusted leader in the program. Her commitment goes beyond coaching—she consistently supports events and activities with a smile. Angela's leadership and passion for service make her an outstanding role model and a valued asset to Perry County 4-H.



Sasha Moore
Perry County Youth

Sasha Moore exemplifies leadership, service, and academic excellence. She serves as Sophomore Class President, 4-H Reporter, and is active in FBLA, FFA, FCA, TN Strong, and more, all while maintaining a 4.0 GPA. Sasha has dedicated over 200 volunteer hours in 2024, supporting initiatives like school supply drives, literacy programs, foster child gift distribution, and health education. She helped establish the Youth Advisory Council and leads community projects through 4-H and FFA. A student-athlete in golf and basketball, Sasha also mentors younger players. Her passion for service continues to make a lasting impact.





Diana Burris
Polk County Adult

Diana Burris has been a devoted volunteer with Polk County Parks and Recreation for over 30 years, making her one of the county's most influential community leaders. She has maintained and improved Benton's only park, ensuring safe, high-quality facilities for families and youth sports. Diana's efforts include caring for ball fields, preparing grounds for major events, securing grants, and adding upgrades like playground equipment and walking tracks. She has even coached Little League to keep programs alive. Her unwavering dedication and innovation have created a lasting impact, inspiring others and strengthening recreational opportunities throughout Polk County.



Neeka Payne
Polk County Youth

Neeka Payne has been a driving force in the Polk County Drama Club for four years, dedicating hundreds of volunteer hours to expand arts education. Serving as actress, crew member, mentor, and fundraiser, Neeka's most impactful contribution was creating and leading the stage manager role for elementary drama programs, ensuring continuity and growth. Her efforts strengthened programs across five schools, inspiring students and adults to embrace the arts. Through creativity, leadership, and compassion, Neeka has transformed opportunities for young performers and enriched her community.



Brenda Davis
Rhea County Adult

Brenda Davis has volunteered with the American Red Cross since 2013, contributing over 1,400 hours to disaster relief and preparedness. She has served on four major disaster operations and leads as a Community Volunteer Leader and Disaster Action Team Service Associate, fostering partnerships and coordinating emergency responses. Brenda also mentors volunteers and promotes disaster education. Her compassion and leadership embody the Red Cross mission, bringing hope and protection to communities.





Maretta McNichol
Roane County Adult

Lieutenant Maretta McNichol has served with Roane County Jail since 2008 and led jail ministry since 2010. She volunteers with the Opioid Abatement Council and Anti-Drug Coalition, organizing outreach and building partnerships through Roane Leadership 2025. Maretta coordinates inmate rehabilitation projects, mentors former inmates, and prepares overdose awareness materials. While earning her degree at Clear Creek Bible College, she continues to serve with compassion, making a lasting impact on Roane County.



Lorelai Langley
Roane County Youth

Lorelai Langley has served as a youth ambassador with the Roane County Anti-Drug Coalition for three years, leading peer-to-peer substance misuse prevention at Midway Middle and High Schools. She also represents TNSTRONG, promoting tobacco-free lifestyles and empowering youth to make healthy choices. Lorelai attended the Tennessee Teen Institute leadership program and launched school campaigns to amplify youth voices in prevention efforts. Her work with RCADC and the Roane County Health Department strengthens community outreach and inspires positive change among her peers.



Kevin Kornblee
Rutherford County Adult

Kevin Kornblee has volunteered at The Journey Home for five years, serving individuals experiencing homelessness in Rutherford County. Arriving before dawn, he prepares breakfast, brews coffee, and greets clients with warmth and respect. After meals, Kevin manages The Market, offering free clothing, food, and essentials along with encouragement and prayer. His consistent presence and servant leadership turn routine tasks into meaningful relationships, providing hope and stability. Kevin's compassion has created a lasting impact, inspiring both clients and staff.





Alana Clark
Rutherford County Youth

Alana Clark, just eight years old, serves meals to Murfreesboro's homeless. After noticing a need for extra food, she proposed adding snack bags—an idea that expanded the outreach. Using a \$50 church grant, Alana created and distributed 50 snack bags for “her Tuesday night friends.” She continues preparing treats, serving meals, and cleaning up, showing compassion and initiative beyond her years. Alana's insight and dedication provide meaningful support to vulnerable neighbors and inspire volunteers of all ages.



Kelly Bales
Sevier County Adult

Kelly Bales has been a dedicated Girl Scout leader for 10 years and co-manager of the Smoky Shadows Service Unit for nine. She also serves as Fall Product and Cookie Manager, ensuring smooth operations and meaningful experiences for girls across the county. Balancing multiple roles with tireless commitment, Kelly exemplifies leadership and service, making her an invaluable asset to the Girl Scouts of the Southern Appalachians and a deserving honoree for the Governor's Volunteer Star Award.



Lyra Bales
Sevier County Youth

Lyra Bales completed her Girl Scout Gold Award by leading a countywide event teaching the importance of bats. She provided educational materials, crafts, and guided troops in building bat houses. Lyra donated resources and a bat house to Pittman Center Elementary and expanded her project by creating a website and QR codes for bat houses placed in Norton Creek Preserve. A two-time Sevier County Science Fair Grand Champion, Lyra also excels in music and writing. Her creativity and dedication to conservation and education make her an inspiring volunteer.





Pamela Ishmael-Julian Stubbs
Shelby County Adult

Pamela Stubbs is a dedicated American Red Cross volunteer and youth counselor. Her service includes welcoming guests, securing donations, and building community partnerships. Pamela played a key role in the Red Boa Bash fundraiser, helping raise over \$46,000 in auction items. Even while undergoing medical treatment and caring for her husband, she adapted to virtual service and continued mentoring youth. Known for her resilience and personal touch—like handwritten cards to volunteers—Pamela exemplifies servant leadership and makes a lasting impact on the Memphis community.



Kaitlyn Simpson
Shelby County Youth

Kaitlyn Simpson volunteers with St. Jude Leadership Society, Be Strong (State Ambassador), REACH Memphis, and Dixon Gallery Teen Council. Her service spans fundraising, advocacy, community development, and arts engagement—raising \$500 for St. Jude, creating a South Memphis garden, and organizing teen arts events. Kaitlyn also launched substance misuse and inclusion campaigns while excelling academically in college-level courses. Recognized with the Volunteer Memphis Youth Volunteer Award and Memphis Parent Magazine's 10<20 Award, Kaitlyn's creativity, leadership, and commitment make her a powerful force for positive change.





Jerry Fleenor
Sullivan County Adult

Jerry Fleenor has served Sullivan County for 15 years with the Volunteer Fire Department and over 53 years in public safety roles, including EMS and emergency programs. He helped make the department debt-free, expanded its fleet, and designed a cost-efficient brush truck. Jerry co-founded advanced life support and air medic services, and his heroism includes rescuing a woman from a dangling truck and stopping a robber while off duty. His lifelong leadership and courage exemplify service, making him a truly deserving nominee for the Governor's Volunteer Star Award.



Selena Chavez-Pitzer
Sullivan County Youth

Selena Chavez-Pitzer is a top community service cadet, setting an unmatched record for volunteer hours in 18 years of JROTC instruction. She participates in every event, consistently leading by example and inspiring peers through her dedication. Selena's compassion, drive, and commitment have made a lasting impact on both the program and the community. She truly represents the best of AFJROTC.



Bryson McCarley
Sumner County Adult

Bryson McCarley has become a driving force for service since relocating to Hendersonville in 2020. In 2023, he launched the *Be the Good Neighbor Movement*, investing \$18,000 and raising over \$100,000 for 21 local charities and schools. Bryson provided meals to 1,700 teachers, supported tornado relief, and created a scholarship for local seniors. In 2025, he founded the Bryson McCarley Foundation, a 501(c)(3) focused on education and community building. His generosity, leadership, and vision continue to inspire and empower Hendersonville residents.





Kenneth Perciful
Unicoi County Adult

Kenneth Perciful has led long-term disaster recovery for 13 months as project coordinator for HNDS & FT after Hurricane Helene. He organizes volunteer teams, manages timelines, and works directly with families to rebuild homes and restore stability. Kenneth has completed over 40 projects and helped nearly 50 families secure temporary housing. His collaborative approach, humility, and tireless service ensure safe, efficient recovery efforts. Kenneth's leadership and compassion make him a true servant-leader whose impact on hurricane-affected communities is

substantial and lasting.



Arika Smith
Washington County Adult

Arika Smith has spent over a year supporting neighbors impacted by Hurricane Helene. During the flooding, she risked her safety to rescue horses and assist a neighbor in reaching higher ground. In the months following, Arika volunteered more than 50 hours helping with FEMA applications, mortgage issues, and housing resources through Appalachia Service Project and Mountain Ways. She also coordinated aid with organizations like 72: The Mission and local LTRGs. Her courage,

persistence, and compassion have provided critical relief and hope to her community.



Angela Hall
Weakley County Adult

Angela Hall, a retired chef, devotes her time to serving her community through hands-on volunteerism and leadership. She supports the Weakley County Office on Aging's Second Harvest program, prepares and delivers meals to seniors, and serves on the Habitat for Humanity board. Angela also teaches "Tech Goes Home" classes, helping residents gain digital skills, and volunteers in grief counseling, library programs, and missionary work through her churches in Tennessee and Florida. Her passion and energy inspire others to join her in making a lasting impact across her community.





Annabelle Lovell
Weakley County Youth

Annabelle Lovell has participated in The Weakley County Prevention Coalition and the youth leadership program TNSTRONG from 2020 and 2021 to the present, respectively. She plans, implements and participates in many service programs such as “DARE”, “Drug Take Back DAY” and “Pop-up Prevention” to promote healthy and substance-free lifestyles amongst her peers dedicating over 500 hours. Annabelle has proven to be a truly unique teen advocate as evidenced by her extensive community service hours, local and state level lawmaker presentations, and her undeniable responsible choice to become a more productive citizen by becoming Narcan/Naloxone and CPR certified.



Joy Green
Williamson County Adult

Joy Green has volunteered with Hard Bargain Association for four years, contributing over 400 hours in the past two years. She passionately advocates for attainable housing and serves year-round at events like Spring Cleanup, Blackberry Jam Music Festival, Franklin Juneteenth Celebration, and the HBA Angel Tree. Joy also supports other social impact groups across Williamson County, giving her time, talent, and resources to strengthen the community. Her commitment and servant leadership make her an invaluable asset and a deserving honoree for the Williamson County Volunteer of the Year Award.



Gaye Lynn Wilson
Wilson County Adult

Gaye Lynn Wilson has spent over a decade uplifting older adults in Wilson County through Wilson Rides and partnerships with senior centers, Rotary Clubs, churches, and nonprofits. She delivers food boxes, holiday gifts, and vital resources, organizes wellness initiatives like Walk Across Wilson, and redistributes donated medical equipment. Gaye also coordinates proclamations for centenarians, serves on multiple boards, and advocates year-round for seniors in assisted living, memory care, and independent living.





Isabella Free
Wilson County Youth

Isabella Free has served in numerous programs, including Project Linus, Operation Christmas Child, Hurricane Helene Relief, Mt. Juliet Help Center, Second Harvest, and Shower the People. Her greatest passion is FFA, where she is Chapter President and PLOW Committee Chair, previously serving as Vice President, Secretary, and committee member. Isabella is also Mid-TN FFA Regional Treasurer and has earned top state and regional awards. She leads showmanship clinics to teach children the value of agriculture. Her dedication to service and leadership in FFA

make her an outstanding role model.





***Encouraging Volunteerism and Community Service
in Tennessee since 1994***

tn.gov/volunteer-tennessee