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## **The 2019 ServeOhio Awards Honor Statewide Service and Volunteerism**

*Five outstanding volunteers, groups, and initiatives presented with cash award for impactful service throughout Ohio*

**Columbus, OH** – ServeOhio, Ohio’s Commission on Service and Volunteerism, along with their Stewards of Service corporate partners Honda of America MFG., Inc. and American Electric Power Foundation, will honor five exemplary volunteers, volunteer groups, and service initiatives in each region of the state. Each award recipient will receive a cash award of \$1,000 to support the organization of their choice.

ServeOhio Commissioners and staff will present the awards to recipients during National Volunteer Week, April 7 - 13, in Toledo, Perry, Columbus, Cincinnati, and Amesville. Recipients were chosen in the following geographic locations in Ohio: Northwest, Northeast, Central, Southwest, and Southeast.

“ServeOhio recognizes that volunteerism and service improves lives in Ohio every minute of every day,” Executive Director William Hall said. “We are honored to celebrate the impact of everyday citizens who reach beyond themselves to help their neighbors and communities – shaping who we are as individuals and a state.”

The 2019 ServeOhio Award recipients are:

### **NORTHWEST OHIO: Judy Hanes, Toledo**

After retiring as a kindergarten teacher in the Toledo Public School system, Judy Hanes knew she wanted to combine her passion for working with children and her love of gardening. She enrolled in the Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program offered through The Ohio State University local county Extension office and promptly returned as a volunteer to Hawkins Elementary School where she spent so many years in the classroom. Judy created a garden outside the school doors which has turned into an outdoor classroom and garden club with Hawkins students. The garden club meets monthly during the school year and weekly during the summer to plan and maintain the garden. Judy invites community partners and leaders to meet with the students to engage them in educational programming. All youth in the garden club take the harvest home to enjoy with their families which, for most families, is their primary source of produce during the summer. Judy has volunteered over 550 hours for the garden club and recruited other volunteers who gave over 300 hours of service. From seeds to plants and youth to adults – Judy’s garden club is growing both produce and people.

### **NORTHEAST OHIO: Pirate Power Pack Program, Perry**

The Pirate Power Pack Program is a school-based weekend food program that is coordinated by students in Perry High School’s Perry Service Learning Program. As part of their efforts to address hunger and poverty in their community, student coordinators Abby Anderson, Alexis Beckwith, Sarah Estvanko, Cristen Keller, and Sheridan Wade designed, implemented, and coordinated this program which replaces the school meals that children miss during weekends and extended breaks from school. Each “power pack” contains enough food for two breakfasts, two lunches, three dinners, and one snack. This year alone, the student coordinators have collected, packed, and delivered nearly 7,000 meals for the 48 students participating in the program, invested over 400 hours of service, and recruited more than 50 additional volunteers who have contributed over 100 hours of service. Additionally, they’ve raised over \$3,000 and collected 4,300 pounds of food to support the program.

### **CENTRAL OHIO: Sisters of Empowerment, *Columbus***

Sisters of Empowerment was founded by three tenacious and dedicated women who have worked diligently to change the economic position and foster self-sufficiency for the people in the most impoverished area of Columbus – Linden. Margaret Rembert, Lois Ferguson, and Alice Ferguson saw great needs in their community and took action, creating Sisters of Empowerment in 2011. The organization has helped countless Linden residents with financial, emotional, and social barriers through their PowerUp! Programs. They provide job readiness training, financial empowerment, productive life skills training, and home buyer education programs. Margaret, Lois, and Alice model hard work, tenacity, and most of all heartfelt commitment to the people and community of Linden.

### **SOUTHWEST OHIO: Andy Rupley, *Cincinnati***

Andy Rupley began serving as a devoted volunteer with Habitat for Humanity of Greater Cincinnati in 2014. In 2016, he launched the Habitat Young Professionals (HYP) chapter of Greater Cincinnati. HYP is comprised of young, dynamic individuals ages 21-40 who seek to make affordable housing in Cincinnati a reality. The group participates in every arm of the Habitat mission, and Andy's dedication to sustaining a thriving group is incredible. HYP now boasts 1,057 members and hosts over 64 volunteer projects, social events and fundraisers per year to benefit Habitat Cincinnati. The increased volunteer support from HYP members helps Habitat homeowners achieve the strength, stability, and independence they need to build a better life. Andy Rupley cares deeply about this need and works tirelessly to aid in the success of these individuals and families.

### **SOUTHEAST OHIO: Gary Goosman, *Amesville***

Gary Goosman has devoted his life to serving others. He has served on countless boards and committees in his community and currently serves as the Mayor of Amesville. After retiring in 2017, Gary has given hundreds of hours to multiple groups and initiatives, serving as the President of the Board of Village Productions, Volunteer Coordinator for the senior center, Program Chair for The Amesville Grange, Governing Board Member for the Center for Campus and Community Engagement at Ohio University, Board Chair of Rural Action, and Board Member of Southeast Ohio History Center - just to name a few! His wife, Mary Ann said "I don't know how he found the time to have a full-time job!" Gary is willing to get his hands dirty doing construction, cleaning, cooking as well as fundraising and planning. The Village of Amesville was voted "Best Small Town in Athens County" four years in a row and this is in no small part because of Gary's many volunteer activities.

Nominators submitted award forms based on three criteria: accomplishments, data and supporting documents. For more information about the ServeOhio Awards, visit <https://www.serveohio.org/Volunteering/Volunteer-Administrator-Resources/ServeOhio-Awards>.

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ServeOhio is Ohio's Governor-appointed Commission on Service and Volunteerism. ServeOhio strengthens local communities through service and volunteer engagement. Through programs and initiatives funded and supported by ServeOhio, such as AmeriCorps, thousands of Ohioans of all ages engage in and are recognized for their service. Interested participants may learn more about ServeOhio at [www.serveohio.org](http://www.serveohio.org), or find us on Facebook and Twitter.