

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
January 14, 2020

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## **Ten Statewide Service Projects Taking Place on MLK Day Thanks to ServeOhio Grants**

*These grants support local community service projects and over 2,286 volunteers in nine Ohio cities*

**Columbus, OH** – ServeOhio, the Governor-appointed commission on service and volunteerism, announces grant awards to support ten local Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service projects on January 20. Much like Dr. King’s legacy, these grants will help nonprofits across the state better their communities through service and volunteer activities. The grants will fund service projects in nine Ohio cities.

Each project commits to bringing volunteers together to create or improve community assets or infrastructure and supports local community engagement and impact. The various projects include collaborative partnerships among businesses and nonprofits. Finally, they all include an education component based on Dr. King’s message of peace, unity, and service to create long-term, sustainable change on issues and people.

“In the words of Dr. King, ‘The time is always right to do what is right,’” shared William Hall, ServeOhio executive director. “His dedication to humanity inspires us to continue to better our communities by supporting organizations and volunteers across Ohio that are truly making a difference.”

ServeOhio awards these grants with support from their 2019-2020 partners American Electric Power Foundation and the Corporation for National and Community Service’s Volunteer Generation Fund. Each grant totals between \$750 - \$2,000.

- **Canton City School District, Canton** – 30 student volunteers will improve the physical condition of the Monroe Neighborhood Community Center by providing a deep-clean of the interior and painting a mural inside the center.
- **College Now Greater Cleveland, Cleveland** – 300 volunteers and AmeriCorps members will collect, package, and distribute care packages that will be delivered to college students in Greater Cleveland who are at high-risk of poverty/hunger.
- **Hamilton Urban Garden Systems (HUGS), Hamilton** – 40 volunteers will winterize the HUGS community garden by cleaning out raised box beds, preparing berry beds for winter, trimming and removing tree and shrub growth along the perimeter, and removing larger gardening materials and waste not needed for the 2020 growing season.
- **I Know I Can, Columbus** – 40 volunteers and AmeriCorps members will participate in an intergenerational service project in which students at Easthaven Elementary School and seniors at the Martin Janis Community Senior Center will exchange letters of encouragement and assemble care packages to be delivered to fourth and fifth grade students at Easthaven.
- **Ohio Hi Point Career Center/Bunsold Middle School Career Connections, Bellefontaine** – 34 students at Bunsold Middle School will create and launch, “The Monarch Food Locker,” an inconspicuous food pantry for students who are at high risk of hunger.

- **Ohio University, Athens** – 37 volunteers and AmeriCorps members will host a community market in the Trimble area of Athens County. The market will provide free clothing, hygiene products, food, and books for any community member in the area of the Trimble Local School District.
- **Otterbein University, Westerville** – 250 students will participate in a stop-and-serve event to build community while educating students on strategic efforts to address social issues. Students will assemble trail mix packets for food-insecure elementary school children, create stuffed animal dogs to give to children at a local shelter, and make plarn mats for the homeless in Franklin County.
- **Shaker Schools Foundation, Shaker Heights** – 1,500 students in the Shaker Heights School District will participate in the Shaker Schools MLK Day of Service. Kindergarten through fourth graders will make fleece blankets to give to the homeless, and fifth through eighth graders will assemble personal care and cleaning kits to donate to Bellfaire JCB, Family Promise, and Fostering Hope. High school students will coordinate a volunteer fair where students and community members can sign up to volunteer at a nonprofit, and several high school clubs will have a bake sale that generates funds to donate to one of the District's nonprofit partners.
- **The RIDGE Project, McClure** – 30 volunteers from the student leadership group, Ohio Youth Congress, will support and encourage students at Holgate Local Schools by decorating 51 bathroom stall doors with positive quotes and/or phrases.
- **YMCA of Central Ohio, Columbus** – 25 volunteers and AmeriCorps members will prepare and serve a pancake breakfast for the male residents in the Downtown YMCA transitional housing shelter. Additionally, volunteers will design and paint a mural symbolizing MLK's commitment to serving others with YMCA residents contributing their handprints to symbolize the continuing connection to the legacy of MLK's work and spirit. Finally, volunteers will engage residents in a service project assembling Blessing Bags to be distributed as part of the YMCA health worker outreach.

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### About ServeOhio

ServeOhio is the state's Commission on Service and Volunteerism created to empower local communities to mobilize AmeriCorps members and volunteer resources for the purpose of building a stronger Ohio. ServeOhio increases the effective utilization of AmeriCorps members and community volunteers working to address the state's frontline issues in education, health and economic opportunity. Interested participants may learn more about ServeOhio at [www.serveohio.org](http://www.serveohio.org), or on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).