

32 Individuals and Groups Will Receive the Governor's Outstanding Volunteer Awards Oct. 29 in Dover Ceremony

NEW CASTLE (Sept. 30, 2019) – Thirty-two individuals and groups will be honored with the 2019 Governor's Outstanding Volunteer Award on Oct. 29 at Dover Downs Hotel. The recipients will be recognized for significant contributions, engagement and impact in diverse activities, including mentoring children, supporting people with disabilities, protecting the environment, and assisting seniors, people who are homeless and veterans.

"Each day across our state, thousands of volunteers come together with the common purpose to make a difference in the lives of the people they serve," Governor John Carney said. "Their selfless work on behalf of others is helping us to build a stronger and better Delaware for everyone. We appreciate all those who volunteer their time and talents in Delaware, and it is my privilege to honor 32 individuals and groups with the 2019 Governor's Outstanding Volunteer Award."

"I am grateful for the generous spirit of volunteers up and down our state," said Department of Health and Social Services Secretary Dr. Kara Odom Walker. "They provide invaluable service to vulnerable people and communities, and though they do this work without thought of reward or recognition, these annual awards are a chance for us to say thank you for their incredible passion in serving our neighbors in need."

The Governor's Outstanding Volunteer Awards, administered by the State Office of Volunteerism, honor the contributions of individuals and groups in Delaware who have made a positive

impact in their communities or across the state through service and volunteering. The State Office of Volunteerism reports that 17,815 Delaware adults volunteered in 2017 through Volunteer.Delaware.gov, contributing more than 700,000 hours of service to nonprofits and community organizations. The value of their service is estimated at more than \$17.4 million.

“We have updated the categories in which the Governor’s Outstanding Volunteer Awards are presented from previous awards,” said Kanani H. Munford, Senior Administrator for the State Office of Volunteerism and the Executive Director of the Governor’s Commission on Community and Volunteer Service. “This has allowed us to consider a broader range of volunteer service and gives flexibility for our selection committee in evaluating the volunteer projects performed by the nominees. This update was made to increase the diversity of volunteers considered and allows for a more inclusive experience for all involved.”

On Oct. 29, more than 325 people are expected to honor the volunteers for their outstanding service. The event at Dover Downs Hotel will begin with a reception at 5 p.m., followed by the ceremony starting at 6 p.m. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the award recipients and other attendees will celebrate with a dinner in honor of the 2019 Governor’s Outstanding Volunteers. The event is open to the public. Tickets are \$40 per person and are available online via Eventbrite. Information on the event and the recipients is available at Volunteer.Delaware.gov.

The Governor’s Outstanding Volunteer Service Awards are sponsored by the Office of the Governor, the Department of Health and Social Services’ Division of State Service Centers, the State Office of Volunteerism, as well as the Governor’s Commission on Community and Volunteer Service.

The recipients of the 2019 Governors Outstanding Volunteer

Service Award are:

PAUL WILKINSON LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

- Anthony Bosworth, New Castle County
- Merry Jones, Kent County
- Patrina Spiezio, Kent County

INDIVIDUAL WINNERS

New Castle County

- Louise Cummings, An exceptional individual over 18 who volunteers
- Robert Bolton, An exceptional individual over 18 who volunteers
- Richard Forsten, Esq., An exceptional individual over 18 who volunteers
- Thomas A. Gears, An exceptional individual over 18 who volunteers
- Susan Hannell, An exceptional individual over 18 who volunteers
- Helene Johnson, An exceptional individual over 18 who volunteers
- Ladaye Johnson, An exceptional individual over 18 who volunteers
- Thomas Jones, III, An exceptional individual over 18 who volunteers
- Mary Anne Korant, An exceptional individual over 18 who volunteers
- Robert Koury, An exceptional individual over 18 who volunteers
- Tara Quinn, An individual over 18 who has demonstrated exceptional leadership abilities

Kent County

- Sara Pletcher, An exceptional individual over 18 who volunteers

Sussex County

- Terry Andrews, An exceptional individual over 18 who volunteers
- John Austin, An exceptional individual over 18 who volunteers
- Dr. Dennis Bartow, An exceptional individual over 18 who volunteers
- William Collick, An individual over 18 who has demonstrated exceptional leadership abilities
- Charles Gillean, An exceptional individual over 18 who volunteers
- Joan Loewenstein, An exceptional individual over 18 who volunteers
- Col. Michael McFarlin, An individual who has served or is serving in the armed forces and volunteers in a Delaware community in a capacity outside of their military role
- Debbie Short, An individual over 18 who has demonstrated exceptional leadership abilities
- John D. Sykes, An exceptional individual over 18 who volunteers
- Diane Twining, An exceptional individual over 18 who volunteers

GROUP WINNERS

New Castle County

- Harvey Hanna & Associates, Inc., A nonprofit whose volunteers have shown exemplary service in carrying out the mission of the organization through direct service to the community
- Virtual Reality Volunteers, A group or team of two or more people who volunteer together on the same project(s) under a group or team name

Sussex County

- Good Ole Boy Foundation, A nonprofit whose volunteers have shown exemplary service in carrying out the mission of the organization through direct service to the community
- Joshua M. Freeman Foundation Volunteer Corps, A nonprofit whose volunteers have shown exemplary service in carrying out the mission of the organization through direct service to the community
- Meals on Wheels Lewes – Rehoboth, A group or team of two or more people who volunteer together on the same project(s) under a group or team name
- Nanticoke Creekwatchers, A group or team of two or more people who volunteer together on the same project(s) under a group or team name
- The Glades Quilters, A group or team of two or more people who volunteer together on the same project(s) under a group or team name

Mini-bios of all the honorees follow.

Paul Wilkinson Lifetime Achievement Award

Patrina Spiezio – Kent County

Patrina has volunteered with Bayhealth since 1978. Now 91, she continues to volunteer three days a week, six hours a day greeting and welcoming patients to Bayhealth. She personally escorts patients to their destination and walks in excess of 6,000 steps, or 3 miles. It is not out of the ordinary to see her pushing a patient in a wheelchair or calming a person nervous about a procedure. You can also find her on “her days off” volunteering at Modern Maturity Center and anywhere else she sees a need to fill. At Bayhealth’s 2108 Volunteer Appreciation breakfast, Patrina won an award for most hours given by any volunteer at Kent General. She had to stop serving in order to accept the award and then gave the cash gift the award came with to the Bayhealth Foundation in order

to help others. Her years in military service shine through in her role as well, performing each task with precision and ensuring everything is done up to her high standards. She has a spine of steel and a heart of gold, and her love for people shines through in everything she does.

Merry Jones – Kent County

Merry has been a volunteer with Special Olympics Delaware for more than 30 years. She has had a lifetime dedication to persons with disabilities. She coaches various sports and volunteers at two overnight summer camps where she is a Sous Chef. She helps to prepare meals for more than 125 campers, counselors and volunteers at each meal. After an extremely accomplished career serving persons with disabilities, and life challenges as a licensed speech pathologist, she continued her service to persons with disabilities through her dedicated volunteer work. Her service included, but was not limited to, many years of service to both Special Olympics and The Arc of Delaware. She serves on the Board of Directors of Arc of Delaware, serves as a parent mentor, and support group leader. In addition to the Special Olympics and the Arc of Delaware, she also volunteers at Easterseals and a cancer support network. Merry works quietly behind the scenes, always there with a helping hand, a smile and an offer of assistance. She helps to create socials and family events that give those she meets hope that the world is truly a kinder, gentler place. She has touched so many lives with grace, dignity and respect, and fostered a legacy of understanding that will last a lifetime.

Anthony Bosworth – New Castle County

Tony is extremely active in the Kalmar Nyckel Foundation volunteer community that operates the 17th century square-rigged ship Kalmar Nyckel in Wilmington. He started volunteering more than 20 years ago as a member of the first volunteer sailing crew-training classes before the construction was complete. Between time served in the U.S Navy

and time spent racing sail boats, he brought 25 years of maritime experience to the Kalmar Nyckel. It takes great personal investment to remain highly active in an organization for more than 20 years. As a longtime sailing crewmember and helmsman, Tony allows for safe navigation of the ship through the narrow waters of the Christina River. He serves as a mentor to new volunteers and an educator for school field trips. He has seen the organization through all aspects of its maturity, and has been a part of the fabulous growth on the operational level, as well as the strategic level. He continues to put in numerous hours annually and reached his 10,000-hour milestone in mid-August. He is a friendly, diplomatic shipmate whose dedication is deeply anchored in the Kalmar Nyckel Foundation, and will be for a long time to come.

2019 Governor's Volunteer Service Award Recipients

Individual: Exceptional Individuals over 18

Terry Andrews – Sussex County

One of the many ways Terry Andrews meets the needs of Delaware Hospice patients is by delivering medications to homebound patients whose caregivers are unable to leave their side. He provides transportation to appointments, as well as transportation for caregivers who are unable to drive. Last year alone, Terry drove 1,091 miles to support Delaware Hospice patients, their families and the staff. He also provides transportation to non-driving family members of patients who are in the hospice center. Without Terry providing this service, some patients might not get a chance to visit with their loved ones during their final hours of life.

John Austin – Sussex County

Soon after retiring from a 33-year career with the Federal

Environmental Protection Agency, John Austin began his volunteer service as a consultant and member of both the Delaware Center for the Inland Bays Citizens Advisory and the Science and Technical Advisory Committees. His outreach then expanded as a founding member of the Inland Bays Foundation, and as a participant in the Protecting Our Indian River organization. In addition to using his knowledge and expertise to help influence the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control to define the containment and treatment of polluted storm waters, he also addressed Sussex County's need to remediate the severe, long neglected pollution of its groundwater and inland waterways. Prior to his unexpected death in July 2018, John displayed hundreds of hours of selfless dedication to apply his professional knowledge to helping to solve the issues of water contamination in Sussex County. He will be sorely missed, but we take comfort in knowing that his service will benefit Delaware communities for years to come.

Dr. Dennis Bartow – Sussex County

As a volunteer for the Delaware Center for the Inland Bays Citizen Science program, Dr. Dennis Bartow enlists other volunteers to conduct citizen science surveys on fish and horseshoe crab population in the inland bays. The surveys engage the community around their ecosystem while providing the center with valuable information about population growth and/or decline, which are helpful indicators of water quality and watershed health. Dennis' work on the horseshoe crab survey allowed the center's environmental scientist to publish a research article on the migratory habits of horseshoe crabs in the Inland Bays in a national scientific journal. Dennis' work has truly made an impact on the center's understanding of the Inland Bays, which will ensure many more years of protecting and restoring this treasured Delaware estuary.

Charles Gillean – Sussex County

Charles Gillean primarily volunteers at Bayhealth as a

greeter, but goes to several other departments to help patients. Known as Charlie by the patients and families that he encounters at Bayhealth, his primary concern is always the comfort and needs of the patients and families that are scared, anxious, and, at times, very ill. Charlie also serves as a member of the Patient Advocate Department, where he provides information to patients and visitors, coordinates special requests, and assists with patient concerns and issues. He was an integral part of the visitor management team during the planning phase of the move to the new Sussex Campus, spending countless hours assisting staff, patients, and visitors to ensure the move was safe, and patients and families were not separated. Charlie has a love for baking and volunteers his time in the hospital kitchen twice a week baking cookies for patients and staff. Charlie's mix of passion for serving others and professionalism reflect in every task he does.

Joan Loewenstein – Sussex County

Joan Loewenstein established a thrift store at the Frankford Presbyterian Church, where she serves underserved, vulnerable populations by providing them with clothing and furniture. She also began an adult literacy program at the Frankford Public Library, where she conducted outreach to many organizations by obtaining reading and instructional materials to assist the adult literacy program, as well as other library patrons. Joan also volunteers as a volunteer coordinator for Literacy Delaware and as a personal tutor. She expanded her service across the state, and also now includes those who are learning English as a second language. Through her volunteer efforts, Joan's students are now able to read medicine labels, fill out job applications and simply enjoy reading. Joan has helped make Sussex County a more welcoming community and works tirelessly to help others share her love for reading.

John Sykes – Sussex County

John Sykes' faith and volunteerism have gone hand-in-hand as

he has unflaggingly strived to protect the environment and address climate change while helping low-income households to live more sustainably. He spearheaded the founding of Delaware Interfaith Power and Light, which is made up of several different faith communities. The group's goal is to address the cause and impacts of climate change. John was instrumental in the creation of Windows of Hope, a program that builds and installs effective storm windows for people with limited resources whose energy bills were high due to poor-fitting windows. More recently, John reached out to Meals on Wheels of Sussex County to identify additional homes in need of the kinds of upgrades that Delaware Interfaith Power and Light can provide. In addition, he is reaching out to other organizations to recruit young adults who could learn carpentry skills while helping with the much-needed construction.

Diane Twining – Sussex County

Diane Twining is a Volunteer Host for Trap Pond State Park. She lives in the campground and assists the Nature Center with Environmental Education and programs. Diane addresses the need for engaging and stimulating environmental education for children and the community at large. She is always thinking of new educational material and displays that could be added to the Nature Center to make the experience more enriching for visitors. One of many such examples is when Diane made a display of bird nests so children could not only learn about the habits of nesting birds, but also see the differences in the nest structure and design of different birds. Without Diane's volunteer contributions, Trap Pond State Park would not be able to make available to the public the same variety of quality environmental education.

Louise Cummings – New Castle County

Louise Cummings devotes her time to multiple organizations, including, but not limited to, Ballard Reading Buddies, Tower Hill School, Delaware's Women's Workforce Council, and the

National Association of Black Law Enforcement. She spends many hours raising awareness of social issues that affect Delaware women, children and families through community development. The United Way of Delaware, with Louise as the lead volunteer, has partnered with schools to bring in Ballard Reading Buddies, which addresses critical literacy needs of elementary school students. Ballard Reading Buddies provides teachers with extra hands of support and relief needed to allow them to serve all of their students. Tower Hill School, in Wilmington, is another organization that has benefitted immensely from Louise's talents and passion for service. She assists not only the school staff, parents and students, but also the community as a whole, by supporting the Summer Camp Fair, helping with fundraising and outreach, and networking with groups outside the Tower Hill School family to benefit the community as a whole.

Robert Bolton – New Castle County

As the volunteer Safety Ambassador for St. Patrick's Center in Wilmington, Robert Bolton enriches the lives of neighbors who are experiencing homelessness and seniors. He maintains safety in the busy parking lot, which serves both St. Patrick's Center and another nearby agency. He welcomes everyone to the center, accepts donations, unloads food trucks, assist seniors on and off buses, and will always carry items for the seniors. Robert shows extraordinary goodwill, love, respect and dignity to every person he encounters. The mission of St. Patrick's Center is to build community, address poverty, and restore hope by meeting basic needs with respect and dignity. Robert's volunteer service exemplifies that core value and he is invaluable to both the staff and the members of the local community who are served by St. Patrick's Center.

Richard Forsten, Esq. – New Castle County

Multiple communities are the beneficiary of Richard Forsten, Esq. His primary volunteer service is with Appoquinimink School District, where he has been a board member since 2011.

He is active in many aspects of education in the school district, including working with officials, school leaders, teachers and students to continue the excellence for which the school district is known. Richard has made and continues to make significant contributions that make a real difference in leadership and stressing excellence in education. Through his service and contributions to the Ministry of Caring, he helps provide housing for individuals experiencing homelessness. Through his work with the Everett Theatre, low-income families are provided opportunities to experience the joy of the arts. Richard, an experienced and well-respected attorney, has made pro-bono work a cornerstone of his career and his life. Because of this, the Delaware Supreme Court recognizes him for exemplary Pro Bono Public Service.

Thomas A. Gears – New Castle County

Thomas Gears serves Historic Red Clay Valley, Inc., in Wilmington where passengers can board a 100-year-old passenger car for a trip down the tracks. Thomas oversees the educational programs, and operates and restores the trains of the Wilmington & Western Railroad. He serves on the Board of Directors and is the editor of the organization's newsletter, The Lantern. Through his work as Education Chair for Historic Red Clay Valley, Thomas leads the efforts to increase outreach and educate the local community about the rich history of Red Clay Valley. He teaches historic railroad skills to new volunteers and teaches railroad Summer Camp. Thomas is relentless in his efforts to educate and strives to find ways to connect with and inspire the community to learn the rich history of Red Clay Valley and Wilmington & Western Railroad.

Susan Hannell – New Castle County

Susan Hannell volunteers with the New Castle Historical Society Museum where she wears many hats. She preserves the community's history by directing teams of volunteers and interns to make sure items are properly cataloged and stored. This ensures artifacts and archival materials are available to

researchers. Being a retired educator, everything Susan does leads back to education. She is heavily involved in every event the New Castle Historical Society has and is a wealth of information about the collections. Her dedication allows the small staff to get more tasks accomplished throughout the year knowing that Susan is taking care of so much for the society.

Helene Johnson – New Castle County

Helene Johnson worked as a phlebotomist at the Blood Bank of Delmarva and took on volunteer scheduling as part of her job. At the age of 80, she retired and then stayed on as a volunteer. She has single-handedly been leading the canteen volunteers at the Christiana Blood Bank of Delmarva. The canteen volunteers serve an important role at the Blood Bank, not only do they serve drinks and snacks to the donors, they watch the donors and call for appropriate help if needed. By doing this, they free up the staff to collect and process blood to the 19 hospitals in Delmarva. The volunteer role is an integral part of the process and Helene is key in making sure enough volunteers are available.

Ladaye Johnson – New Castle County

In his efforts to help children, Ladaye Johnson started Cool Shoes Inc., a summer camp for kids ages 5 to 13. He knows that families living in his childhood neighborhood face many struggles and challenges. Growing up in Wilmington's East Side, he faced many difficult times himself, but because Ladaye had many community members help him, he was able to change his life for the better. The summer camp is a way for Ladaye to give back to his community. Easter egg hunts, toy giveaways, and turkey drives have been a fundamental part of Cool Shoes. He has been able to provide book bags for students returning to school and thousands of toys have been collected and distributed. Ladaye went from being a high school dropout to a camp director and is now able to give back to his childhood neighborhood.

Thomas Jones, III – New Castle County

Thomas Jones, III joined Tri-State Bird Rescue & Research in 2001 where he contributes through many roles. He administers medication and care to injured birds, transports birds in the "Bird Ambulance" to the clinic and releases them back into the wild. He is a vital member of the Yard Sale Committee, and personally prepares items for sale. As a highly trained volunteer, Thomas responds to oil spills and rescues contaminated wildlife. Each of his roles is equally important in supporting the mission to provide professional, compassionate rehabilitation to injured and orphaned wild birds. In 2018 alone, Tom drove approximately 6,000 miles and rescued 80 birds. Not only does Tom donate his time and abilities, but also his personal vehicle including gas, mileage and tolls. With Tom's help, Tri-State is able to provide a second chance for more wild birds in need.

Mary Anne Korant – New Castle County

Mary Anne has been an active board member and treasurer of the Friends of Bellevue Delaware. Through civic engagement and outreach, Mary Anne secured funds to restore the Victorian-era Mount Pleasant Cemetery and to guide an interpretive audio walking tour of the historic graveyard. She also was instrumental in the oversight of the restoration of the adjoining Mount Pleasant Parsonage and Methodist Episcopal Church, which are listed on the National Register of Historic properties, and the recent recipient of a Delaware Historic Marker. Mary Anne's efforts have contributed to the restoration of three Civil War soldiers' gravesites that now stand upright and gleaming in the sunshine.

Robert Koury – New Castle County

Robert maintains the very popular "Auburn Valley Railroad" in Yorklyn. This is the last steam railroad in Delaware, which was built by T. Clarence Marshall in 1960. The railroad is exceedingly popular with kids from age 2 to 102. Robert's continued leadership has helped the railroad crew catch up on deferred maintenance, and enhance the view of the riders with

new landscaping and features. Additionally, Robert's efforts have made new cars available that can accommodate patrons with disabilities. His leadership, commitment to the operation, and maintenance and safety of the railroad have preserved the legacy of the Marshalls and the enjoyment of the public for years to come.

Tara Quinn – New Castle County

Tara's leadership and volunteer hours at the Ministry of Caring are focused on helping people who are homeless and poor by providing food, emergency shelter, clothing, health care and job training. She provides supportive services to help community members escape poverty and become self-sufficient and contributing members of the community. With Tara's efforts, men and women who are homeless are given emergency shelter and the help to find "new beginnings" through supportive services. Children of parents who are homeless and poor are provided 5-star child care. The Ministry of Caring dining room served 161,000 meals – 12,000 of which went to children. Tara is extremely passionate and energetic about bringing resources to change the lives of young people, with the goal of helping them reach their full potential.

Active Military/Veteran

Col. Michael McFarlin – Sussex County

Monarch butterfly enthusiast, retired Army Col. Michael McFarlin initiated and directed the "Monarch Highway Habitat Project." This project identifies and monitors sites on Sussex County roads with abundant native milkweed for "no mow zones." Col. McFarlin has created public awareness and inspired people to protect and provide native habitat for Monarch butterflies and pollinators. His enthusiasm was the springboard for protecting secondary road highway habitat with DelDOT's support. Identification of Native milkweed plants for attracting Monarch butterflies and local sources for those plants has increased. Sussex County residents are creating pollinator habitat on common open space and gardeners are

adding native plants to their landscape. His calm demeanor as a citizen-scientist encourages neighbors to ask questions and ignites their passion.

Volunteer Leader

William Collick – Sussex County

As the president of Pathways to Success Board of Directors, William leads and mentors members of the board. His expertise and skills lend themselves to this volunteer position. He has guided Delaware State University's football program through the most celebrated period in team history. He served as the Dean of Students and Head Football Coach at Sussex Technical High School. He personally helped Pathways to Success reach the 98 percent graduation level, with 96 percent of the graduates attending college, entering the military or workforce. The difference lies in the leadership and understanding of youth. William is a humanitarian who genuinely cares about others.

Sara Pletcher – Kent County

Sara has been an integral part of Downtown Milford, Inc., a multi-faceted economic development organization that works with businesses and property owners to beautify and preserve the Historic Riverside District. Sara started as an Administrative Assistant and immediately joined the promotional committee. She then joined the Board of Directors and eventually became the Board President. She implemented a new three-year strategic plan and guided the overall direction of four Main Street committees. During her presidency, 14 new businesses have opened or expanded, creating more than 40 jobs. She led the Lady Bug Music Festival, which brought more than 2,500 people to Milford and, raised \$25,000. Sara has a passion for all things to be better, and truly cares about her town.

Debbie Short – Sussex County

Debbie started a nonprofit transition home called "Barbara K.

Brooks Transition House,” which provides a safe, sober and structured living environment for women who have completed drug or alcohol rehabilitation. She is a strong leader and advocate for these women, offering mentoring and guidance to them while they transition back into society. Debbie’s goal is to create positive outcomes, which include helping women break the cycle of addiction, helping women find and live meaningful lives in recovery, and encouraging the reunification of broken families. Debbie’s heart is a reflection and perfect example of someone living to serve others.

Nonprofit Volunteer Program

Harvey Hannah and Associates, Inc. – New Castle County

Thomas Hannah and the team at Harvey Hannah and Associates created the Delaware KIDS Fund in 2008. Delaware Kids in Distressed Situations is dedicated to providing goods and services to children at risk in distressed situations, including financial support for essential needs, such as clothing, shelter, and food. Financial support is provided for counseling and mentoring for children who are abused, grief stricken or suffering from a chronic or acute disease. Scholarships and education grants for students in K-12, including support for children with special needs and learning disabilities are made available. Harvey Hannah and Associates does this through a series of events that support the fund and meet the needs of at-risk children in Delaware. Last year alone, Thomas and his team were able to raise enough money to provide 2,000 coats for students. Delaware KIDS Fund has made distinct, positive changes in the lives of many children in Delaware.

Good Ole Boy Foundation – Sussex County

The Good Ole Boy Foundation was founded to assist families in time of unforeseen difficulties. The foundation was created out of a single tragedy of a house fire, and has continued to help hundreds of families. The foundation uses the power of a willing and caring community, with the reach of social media

to bring in resources throughout Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore to help with these efforts. The Good Ole Boys simply bring the public to see a story and that creates an impact. A 4-year-old boy who uses a wheelchair needed a ramp. Working in the rain and snow, the group provided not only a ramp, but also a bridge to his very own clubhouse. Members heard of a young girl with a rare disease who was in need of a bigger room to house her medical equipment. They posted a call for help on Facebook, and received commitments of volunteers and donations. The foundation completed a new room for the child. These are just a few examples of the great work the Good Ole Boy Foundation does. Their main priority is to preserve the spirit of a child.

Joshua M. Freeman Foundation Volunteer Corps. – Sussex County

The Joshua M. Freeman Foundation Volunteer Corps is made up of 288 volunteers who have touched the lives of a tremendous number of mid-Atlantic residents and seasonal visitors. The group's primary service is to support the foundation's mission: "Partnering to present memorable performances and inspired arts education for all." The volunteer program at The Freeman Stage is diverse and offers opportunities that are inclusive and tailored to a variety of skill sets. In addition to serving at the Freeman Stage, a group of volunteers works in schools in the Delmarva region through the foundation's arts and education program. The program's vision is to partner with schools to build a relevant and impactful arts and education program that provides a layered approach to the current curriculum of schools. In 2018, thanks to the commitment and passion of the Volunteer Corps and staff, 78,748 people experienced the arts.

Group/ Team

Virtual Reality Volunteers – New Castle County

The chemotherapy suite can be a stressful environment for patients; they often present with anxiety, which can be magnified by the sights, sounds and scents they encounter.

Christiana Care Health System Volunteer Services partnered with the infusion team at the Helen F. Graham Cancer Center and the Health Technology Innovation Center to provide a positive distraction to cancer patients while receiving chemotherapy. The Virtual Reality program was developed to address this need. This innovation has improved the quality of the patient experience. In 2018, 468 patients received positive distraction and it has greatly reduced their anxiety during chemotherapy treatments. Providing technical assistance is only a small part of the role of the volunteer. More importantly, the volunteers provide a social interaction for the patients they may not otherwise have experienced. The volunteers are unique in that they need to be comfortable with providing technological assistance and be comfortable with cancer patients in an infusion environment. The volunteers who offer the Virtual Reality experience exemplify a sense of care and compassion. As Maya Angelou once said, "People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." These volunteers have brought this magic to the patients.

Nanticoke Creekwatchers – Sussex County

The Nanticoke Creekwatchers are directly responsible for obtaining high water quality data from the Nanticoke River and its creeks. This data has provided the Nanticoke Watershed Alliance, partners, and government agencies with the ability to observe trends to pinpoint problem areas and water quality issues, and enact restoration projects and outreach programs that address these issues. These data are crucial for measuring progress in meeting water quality goals. Nanticoke Creekwatchers follow an EPA-approved protocol and monitor 35 sites in the Nanticoke River watershed; 15 of them in Sussex County. In 2018, 36 volunteers participated in the program. Creekwatchers visit their adopted sites every other week from late March through early November. These volunteers take up to three samples, which partner labs analyze. Without Nanticoke Creekwatchers collecting data 17 times per year, agencies,

nonprofits, and residents would not have means of understanding long-term trends or short-term issues present in local waterways.

The Glades Quilters – Sussex County

For more than 16 years, the Glades Quilters has provided quilts to local community organizations, as well as directly to those in the Sussex and Kent counties. What started out as one or two women, has turned into a dynamic nine- to 10-person assembly line. Each woman uses her particular talents in what she does. The result is an individual work of art for the recipients to cherish for years to come. Not only have Bayhealth hospital patients benefited from this generosity, but many veterans and people who are homeless have as well. The Glades Quilters also set aside quilts for donation to nonprofits who then auction the quilts at fundraising events. Members have helped many people at all stages of life in a variety of ways. Their donation of quilts to Mother-Baby in Bayhealth, teens who are homeless, nonprofit fundraisers, and veterans' homes ensures those in need receive a quilt. The women from Glades quilters all have a need to make this world a better place, and do so by using their talents to help others through their quilts.

Meals on Wheels Lewes – Rehoboth Delivery Drivers, Sussex County

Clients who live at home receive nutritious meals, which improves their health and helps them remain in their homes living relatively independently. This meal delivery also improves their overall well-being. In addition to delivering delicious meals, volunteers socialize with the seniors, brightening their day and helping them feel connected to their communities. The volunteers usually have the same routes, which allows them to know their clients. They are able to do an assessment and notify the office outreach workers to request assistance for clients as needed. Many of the volunteers go beyond delivering meals by going back to the

client's home after all of the meals are delivered to help the clients with yard work, shopping and doing small repairs. These drivers spend numerous hours enriching the lives of our seniors.