

2020 Annual Report

BE KIND

Covid-19



Welcome

Greetings!

As we bring 2020 to a close, we are so thankful for the amazing staff, Commissioners, AmeriCorps members, volunteers, and partners, who make National Service and volunteerism work in our state. In a year defined by social distancing – you brought West Virginians together.

When new needs arose, you stepped up. You collected donations, delivered meals, made masks, built blessing boxes, played the fiddle at a distance for people living in assisted care when family could not visit, mentored children virtually, wrote letters to people in isolation, and so many more things I don't have space to mention. We are amazed by all of you, and together our impact is big. In 2020, all 55 counties in West Virginia were reached by Volunteer West Virginia programming! This is the first year we have ever reached this goal. This would be a great accomplishment in any year, but even more so in 2020. It could only have happened because West Virginians gave their time and talents to their communities, and to their neighbors, when they saw great needs around them.

In this year's Annual Report, we are proud to highlight the AmeriCorps members, volunteers, and community organizations that have helped West Virginians during COVID-19. We hope this report inspires you to Be Kind, #VolunteerWV.

As we look towards 2021, we hope for brighter days, but we have no doubt that we will make it through together, stronger. We've seen the incredible things accomplished in 2020 and we couldn't be more honored to share them with you.

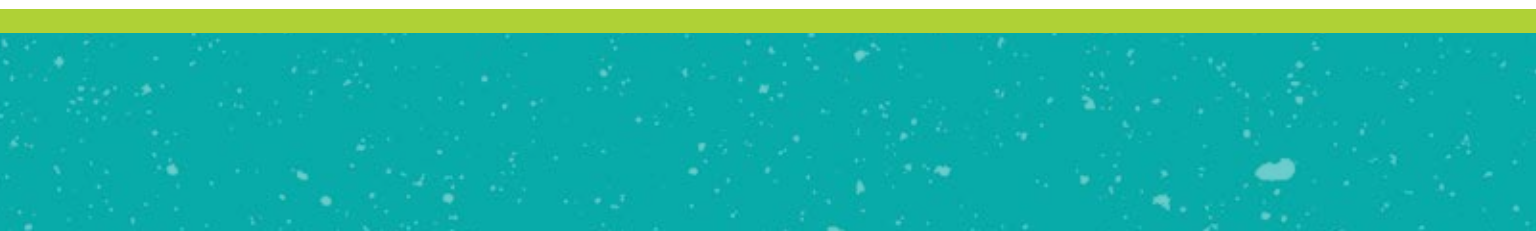


Yours in Service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Hawley Carlson". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue rectangular background.

Hawley Carlson

Executive Director



A Message from the Board Chair

Dear Volunteer West Virginia 'Family' Members,

I hope this finds you well and surviving this most unprecedented time in the history of our state, nation, and world. In spite of the challenges we have faced and endured, Volunteer West Virginia continues to move forward and make a truly important difference throughout our state. We are proud of the efforts of our staff and those with whom they work; and are honored to highlight their contributions in this year-end report.

In 2020, COVID-19 became our reality. We all know we have faced tremendous challenges; but Volunteer West Virginia has moved forward in progressive and innovative ways. Various staff members stepped up and did Herculean work. We are all proud of and impressed by their efforts and success. And we are most thankful.

On behalf of the Board of Commissioners for Volunteer West Virginia, I warmly thank all who have served, supervised, supported or cheered on those who have made a difference in the lives of our fellow West Virginians. We are a state that heartily supports our neighbors in meaningful ways. This is done so very well through Volunteer West Virginia!



In Service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie Keehner". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Julie Keehner

Board Chair



2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Volunteer West Virginia programming reached all 55 counties.
- Granted over \$3.3 million dollars to support volunteer programs and AmeriCorps programs.
- Awarded \$1.8 Million dollars in AmeriCorps Education Awards.
- In 2020, for every state dollar invested in Volunteer West Virginia, the state received an additional \$18.23 from federal, local, and private sources.



CONTENTS

What We Do PG 1

Be Kind, COVID-19 PG 2

AmeriCorps PG 5

Volunteer Generation Fund PG 11

CERT PG 12

Special Mentions PG 13



WHAT WE DO

1. Make it easier for West Virginians to volunteer.
2. Provide funding and support to AmeriCorps programs.
3. Support and strengthen West Virginia's nonprofits & volunteer programs.

OUR PROGRAMS



BE KIND

Covid-19

To promote volunteerism during COVID-19, Volunteer West Virginia started the Be Kind, COVID-19 campaign. As part of the project, Volunteer West Virginia provided mini-grants to local organizations to host COVID-19 related volunteer projects. The goal of the campaign was to safely engage volunteers and promote kindness throughout the state.

The response to the mini-grant program was overwhelming. In total, Volunteer West Virginia granted \$14,000 to host 44 volunteer projects.





Volunteers with the Brooke Hancock Family Resource Network deliver thinking-of-you cards for residents living in nursing facilities in Brooke and Hancock counties and thank you cards for the staff of these facilities. The project reached over 500 residents and staff.



Volunteers team up to assemble masks and safety gear for children in foster care with CASA For Kids of Monongalia and Preston Counties. The children were so excited to receive their kits, and as quickly as they could, they were trying on their masks. One child even said, "This mask is my favorite color!"



Volunteers with Faith in Action deliver Porch Packages to seniors in the Kanawha Valley to check in on them during COVID-19 and to remind them they are loved. The Porch Packages have been well received by recipients and volunteers.



To spread kindness during COVID-19, the Hinton Historic Landmarks Commission hosts a community litter cleanup and wellness day.

COVID-19 impacted drug treatment facilities in significant ways. Recovery staff were placed under great stress as relapses rose and facilities self-isolated. To thank these staff, volunteers from Hope Recovery Manor write kind notes and deliver them to recovery agencies throughout Parkersburg.



Bryant Anderson, A Lifebridge AmeriCorps member, tries out a new hand sanitizing station at Catholic Charities Neighborhood Center in Wheeling. Members of the community are now able to wash their hands before meals and after they pick up food pantry boxes.



Natasha Albino decorates birthday posters for residents in Clarksburg-Harrison Regional Housing Authority's senior living facilities so they feel recognized and loved during COVID-19.



As the rates of COVID-19 rose in their community, Sherri James and Florence Cox helped deliver 100 "Homeless Helper Bags" in the Clarksburg area. Bags included face masks, hand sanitizer, a pair of warm gloves, socks, Chapstick, a toothbrush, and hand warmers. The project was started by Kelly Miller Community Center, a program of the West Virginia Black Heritage Festival.

Scouts with Boy Scouts of America Troop 152 pack notecard kits for volunteers to send handwritten cards to nursing homes. Through their careful organization volunteers were able to send 500 cards to seniors throughout northcentral West Virginia.



Volunteers from the staff at Ramage Elementary school, the Foster Grandparent Program, along with WV Extension Family Nutrition Program work together to paint a social distancing physical activity trail for the students at Ramage Elementary in Danville.



Volunteers with the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) assemble Blessing Bags for seniors in Monroe County. One of the volunteers personally delivered a bag to Virginia Rorrer, who is a 100 years young! She was very appreciative of the project which was organized by the United Way of Central West Virginia.



Students learn how to sew masks at the Playmates Child Development Center in Huntington. They donated the masks to a local Blessing Box in honor of their "Keep Calm and Mask On!" project. Within minutes, all the masks were gone!



Volunteers with the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine sew and deliver bee themed masks for children throughout Greenbrier County. As part of the "Be Safe, Be Happy, and Be Kind" project, volunteers educated students on the importance of wearing a mask and being kind.

AMERICORPS

Each year, more than 900 volunteers serve as AmeriCorps members in West Virginia. Many members serve in their hometowns, while others come across the country to make West Virginia their home for a year. Likened to the domestic Peace Corps, AmeriCorps members serve throughout the state at nonprofits, schools, and public agencies.

Benefits

- Monthly living stipend
- Education Award for College or Student Loans
- Health Insurance
- Student Loan Forbearance
- Career Experience



2020 Americorps Programs



AMERICORPS PLEDGE

AmeriCorps members take the following pledge:

I will get things done for America -
to make our people safer, smarter, and healthier.

I will bring Americans together to strengthen
our communities.

Faced with apathy, I will take action.

Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground.

Faced with adversity, I will persevere.

I will carry this commitment with me
this year and beyond.

I am an AmeriCorps member, and I will get things done.



AMERICORPS COVID-19 RESPONSE

During the COVID-19 pandemic, AmeriCorps members continue to serve West Virginia in many creative ways. From sewing masks to delivering hot meals, AmeriCorps members are there to help.

AmeriCorps COVID-19 Impact

152,361 Meals Served

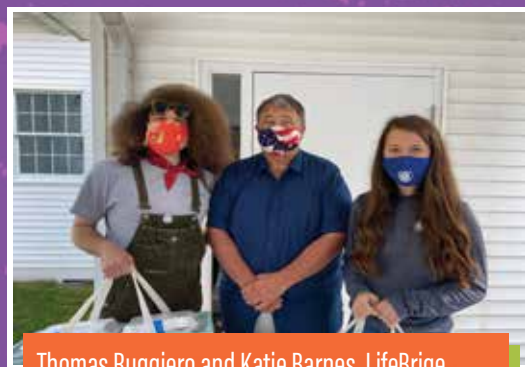
173, 443 Pounds of Food Collected

6,321 Hours Spent on COVID-19 Relief Activities

32,966 Donations Collected, Including: Food,
Notecards for Seniors, Masks, and Hand Sanitizer



Caleb Rusk, an Education Alliance VISTA, leads the way at Lincoln County High School to create more than 2,400 3D printed masks for medical professionals in the school's Maker Space.



Thomas Ruggiero and Katie Barnes, LifeBrige AmeriCorps members, deliver meals in Lewisburg.



Brandy Harvey makes masks in Philippi for the West Virginia Mask Army.

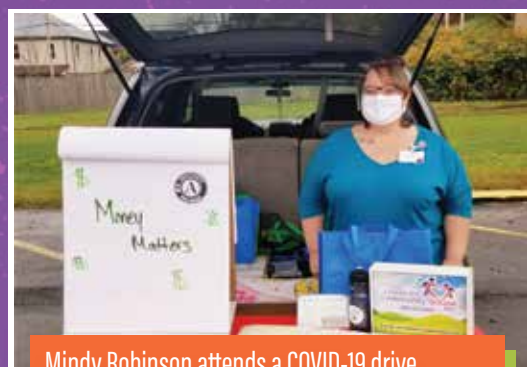
Patricia Beasley, an Education Alliance AmeriCorps VISTA at Peterstown Preservation Group, helps to serve more than 3,000 meals to students in Monroe County.



Robin Sargent, an Education Alliance AmeriCorps mentor, serves meals at Lincoln County High School.



Lauren Griffin packs meals alongside her fellow Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area AmeriCorps members at the Preston County Food Pantry.



Mindy Robinson attends a COVID-19 drive through Baby Shower in Weston and offers financial education to new or expecting mothers.

Bryant Anderson prepares Thanksgiving dinner to be delivered to the homeless and homebound residents in Wheeling.



Cheryl Workman hands out free masks and meals at the Hub Student Café in Lewisburg.



Margaret Budik is tending to newly planted vegetables at one of Grow Ohio Valley's urban farm sites, Farm18.



Lily Lower packs locally grown vegetables to be distributed in the Wheeling area through Grow Ohio Valley's Community Supported Agriculture program.



AmeriCorps members serving in Energy Express read to students in Monroe County.

AmeriCorps members with Grow Ohio Valley distribute food in Wheeling through their mobile farmers market.



Ksenia Bradner, a Preserve WV AmeriCorps member, starts a neighborhood food bank from the safety of her home.

AmeriCorps: Continuing to Serve During a Pandemic

When schools first closed for the COVID-19 pandemic, I couldn't even begin to understand how I, as an AmeriCorps mentor, could reach out and help our students effectively. This sounded very far-fetched and even impossible.

When I returned to school, I decided to take it one step at a time. I started going on food deliveries with the school staff. Along the bus routes, I started interacting with my students. The first question they would ask was, "How am I going to get help?", or they would ask if they could call me. I realized I did not need a big plan to help, I just needed to let them know I was still there.

Over the next few days, we started contacting as many students as we could. I woke up the next morning to several messages from students. Seeing the overwhelming response made us realize the impact we could still have on their lives.

During this time, we learned that two students lost their dad to a drug overdose. We were able to connect with them over FaceTime to see how we could help. Although they initially denied needing help, they later reached out about groceries. I was able to get groceries and drop them off in front of their house and set up a way for them to receive the food and supplies they would need to get through this.

I am thankful that students could reach out to us and that we were able to help. Being at home is sometimes the worst thing for kids who live in undesirable situations. My hope is that knowing we're here for them will help in some small way.



Angela Collier

LifeBridge AmeriCorps

Boone County, WV



Volunteer Generation Fund

Volunteer West Virginia supports volunteer programs in the state by providing grant funding through the Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, VGF grantees found innovative ways to engage volunteers by starting letter writing campaigns, collecting donations for care packages, and building Blessing Boxes.

COVID-19 Volunteer Trend: Blessing Boxes

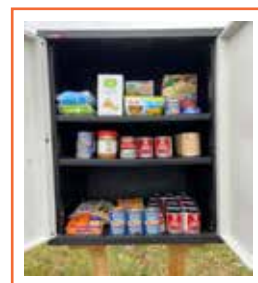


The most challenging times inspire the most creative solutions! During the COVID-19 pandemic, Community Connections, Inc., a Volunteer Generation Fund grantee, came up with a simple, yet effective idea to meet the need of food security across Mercer County.

Through a partnership with Volunteer West Virginia, Community Connections, with the help of staff and volunteers, purchased and installed fifteen Blessing Boxes throughout Mercer County and one in Summers County. These boxes are filled with nonperishable food items and the motto is: "Take what you need, Give what you can."



Through the generosity of volunteers, faith-based organizations, civic groups, collegiate groups, first responders, law enforcement, and local leaders, Community Connections keep the boxes stocked with food products. Many volunteers and nonprofit took note of this creative project and now Blessing Boxes can be found throughout the state!





Community Emergency Response Teams

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) played an important role in West Virginia's response to COVID-19. The program trains volunteers in basic disaster response skills, such as first aid, search and rescue, and disaster preparedness. Here are some of the many ways CERT volunteers helped West Virginians in 2020.

- **Clay County CERT** - In partnership with local response agencies, Clay CERT volunteers help to set up and assist with a Senior Citizen helpline and weekly check ins, local Red Cross Blood Drives, distribution of COVID information and sanitizers, and the set-up of a WV Mask Army Hub, which has produced over 1,000 masks for first responders and public health officials.
- **Hardy County CERT** - In partnership with the ministerial association and other volunteers, Hardy County CERT members serve as "Grocery Gofers." They pick up and deliver groceries to homebound residents in the Moorefield area.
- **Beckley CERT** - The Beckley CERT program has partnered with the American Red Cross to assist with several local blood drives. CERT members help with registration, take temperatures, work the canteen, and sanitize the rooms. They also assist the Raleigh County Health Department's COVID testing sites by conducting traffic and handling intake forms.
- **Mid-Ohio Valley Health Dept. (CERT)** – Mid-Ohio Valley Regional CERT volunteers support the health department with COVID-19 safety measures. CERT volunteers conduct daily temperature checks for all staff and clients coming into the facility. They assist with intakes at COVID-19 drive thru testing sites in Parkersburg and conduct temperature checks for homeless clients who visit the Salvation Army for meals.



Volunteers from Clay County CERT help to host a Red Cross Blood Drive.



Volunteers with Hardy County CERT pick up donations at the Moorefield Active Caring Food Pantry.



Chris Graham, Beckley CERT Program Coordinator, volunteers at an area Red Cross Blood Drive.



Mid-Ohio Valley CERT volunteers help with temperature checks at the Wood County Health Department.

SPECIAL MENTIONS

Staff

Hawley Carlson, Executive Director
Krista Bradshaw, Finance and Operations Director
Dana Bryant, Outreach Officer
Christina Cochran, AmeriCorps Training & Outreach Officer
Gina Namay, Disaster Services & Planning Lead
Pam Mellot, Statewide Director of West Virginia's Promise
Hannah Stone, AmeriCorps Program Officer
Pamela Watts, Office Manager

Commissioners

Julia Keehner, Chair, Buckhannon
Leslie Baker, Beckley
Quinten Burton, Charleston
Angela Beblo, Charleston
Mercedes Jones Castle, Scott Depot
Dwight Coburn, Huntington
Monica DellaMea, Charleston
Kim Good, Charleston
Michael Hooper, Wheeling
Blake Humphrey, Morgantown
Philip Keith, Buckhannon
Erica Mani, Charleston
Susie Nelson, Wheeling
Margaret Ann O'Neal, Charleston
Gregg Puckett, Princeton
Jane Tabb, Kearneysville
Michelle Teare, Charleston

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer West Virginia would like to thank all the volunteers that helped us this year by reviewing grants, planning trainings and events, and helping with the AmeriCorps Swearing-In Ceremony.

April Elkins-Badtke
Dale Bowyer
Gregory Chase
Callie Cronin Sams
Erin Hurst
Jennifer Johnson
Janet Jones
John Kee
Carrie Kidd
Lily Lower
Lois McCutcheon
Erin Reid
Mindy Robinson
Beth See
Abi Smith
Erin Susman
Jennifer Waggener
Josh Wanstreet
Brett White
Cheryl Workman
Kayla Wright

Mission Statement: Volunteer West Virginia, the state's Commission for National and Community Service, challenges West Virginians to strengthen their communities through volunteerism and service. We identify and mobilize resources, promote an ethic of service, and empower communities to solve problems and improve the quality of life for individuals and families.

v♥lunteer
WEST VIRGINIA

www.volunteer.wv.gov

600 Capitol Street, Charleston, WV 25301



@VolunteerWV

Grants and Partners

AmeriCorps

Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area Statewide	\$512,000.00
Grow Ohio Valley Wheeling	\$195,920.00
High Rocks Educational Corporation Statewide	\$549,342.00
Preservation Alliance of West Virginia Statewide	\$283,960.00
The Education Alliance Statewide	\$289,378.00
United Way of Central West Virginia - LifeBridge Statewide	\$751,225.00
West Virginia University Research Corporation - Energy Express Statewide	\$300,000.00
Washington Co Health Dept - Appalachia HealthCorps Statewide	\$158,010.00
Step By Step - StrengthCorps Statewide	\$121,597.00
WVU Center for Service Learning Morgantown	\$0.00
Planning Grant- Appalachian Recovery Corps Statewide	\$50,000.00

Grants and Partners

Volunteer Support Grants - Volunteer Generation Fund

City of Shinnston Harrison	\$9,900.00
Conservation Legacy Raleigh	\$6,240.00
Empty Bowls Monongalia Monongalia	\$6,912.00
Faith in Action of the Greater Kanawha Valley Kanawha	\$9,687.00
Friend of Blackwater Tucker	\$5,201.00
Girl Scouts of Black Diamond Summers, Mercer, McDowell, Wyoming, Boone, Lincoln, Wirt, Calhoun, Gilmer, Braxton, Webster, Pleasants, Tyler, Weitzel, Marion, Barbour, Tucker and Pendleton.	\$10,000.00
Golden Girl Home Wayne	\$6,220.00
Good Samaritan Free Clinic Berkeley	\$8,650.00
High Rocks Educational Corp Pendleton, Fayette, Summers, Webster, Wyoming, Pocahontas, Nicholas, Raleigh, Monroe, Randolph	\$9,156.00
Literacy Volunteers of Kanawha County Kanawha	\$10,000.00
United Way of Marion and Taylor Counties Marion and Taylor	\$8,000.00
WV Botanic Garden Monongalia	\$9,973.00

Grants and Partners

Be Kind, COVID-19 Mini-Grants

Brooke Hancock Family Resource Network, Inc. Brooke and Hancock County	\$300.00
WVU- Extension Roane County Roane County - Spencer	\$250.00
Aurora School Tucker County - Cortland	\$500.00
Boys Scouts of America Troop 152 Statewide	\$468.00
CASA For Kids - Monongalia and Preston County Monogalia and Preston County	\$250.00
Catholic Charities Neighborhood Center Ohio County - Wheeling	\$250.00
Clarksburg - Harrision Regional Housing Authority Harrison County - Clarksburg	\$250.00
CONTACT Rape Crisis Center Cabell County - Huntington	\$250.00
Cowen Public Library Webster County - Cowen	\$250.00
Doddridge County Family Resource Network Doddridge County	\$200.00
Faith in Action of the Greater Kanawha Valley Kanawha County	\$200.00

Grants and Partners

Be Kind, COVID-19 Mini-Grants

Grayhound Youth Sports McDowell County - Northfolk	\$250.00
Grow Warwood Pride Ohio County - Warwood	\$500.00
Hardy County Health and Wellness Center Hardy County	\$250.00
Hinton Historic Landmarks Commission Summers County - Hinton	\$250.00
Hope Recovery Manor Wood County - Parkersburg	\$245.00
Hospice of Southern West Virginia Raleigh, Fayette, Summers, & Wyoming Counties	\$250.00
Kelly Miller Community Center Harrison County - Clarksburg Area	\$250.00
Lincoln & Boone County Family Nutrition Program Lincoln & Boone County	\$250.00
Mid Ohio Valley Health Department Wood County - Parkersburg Area	\$250.00
Monticello Ongoing Revitalization Effort (M.O.R.E.) Harrison County - Clarksburg Area	\$500.00
MountainHeart Community Services Wyoming County - Pineville	\$482.36

Grants and Partners

Be Kind, COVID-19 Mini-Grants

Ohio County Virtual Lions Club Ohio County	\$500.00
PATCH Roane County Roane County	\$500.00
Peterstown Preservation Group Monroe County - Peterstown	\$250.00
Playmates Preschool & Child Development Center Wayne County - Kenova	\$250.00
Pleasants County Neighborhood Network Pleasants County	\$250.00
RSVP United Way of Central West Virginia Monroe County	\$400.00
Southern Appalachia Labor School Fayette County	\$200.00
St. Mary's United Methodist Church Pleasants County	\$250.00
Stop Abusive Family Environments McDowell County - Welch	\$250.00
The Council of the Southern Mountains McDowell County	\$250.00
Wayne County 4-H Leaders Wayne County	\$272.10
West Virginia Horse Network Kanawha County	\$250.00

Grants and Partners

Be Kind, COVID-19 Mini-Grants

West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine and Rural Health Greenbrier County	\$500.00
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Wind Dance Farm Morgan County	\$250.00
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WIRT Recovery Wirt County	\$500.00
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Wood County Society Wood County	\$400.00
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WVU Monongalia County Extension Monongalia County	\$250.00
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Grants and Partners

Volunteer Centers

Fayette County Family Resource Network Inc.

Tucker Community Foundation

Big Ugly Tri-County Volunteer Center - Step by Step, Inc.

Greater Greenbrier Long-Term Recovery Committee

City of Buckhannon

United Way of the River Cities

Community Connections Inc.

Main Street Ripley

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)

Beckley CERT

Clay County CERT

Dunbar CERT

Greenbrier Valley CERT

Rhema Christian Center Team

White Sulphur Springs Team

Hardy County CERT

Jefferson County CERT

Mason County CERT

Mid-Ohio Valley Regional MRC

Monongalia County CERT

Monroe County Health Dept. CERT

Pendleton County CERT

Pleasants County CERT

Raleigh County CERT

Tucker County CERT

Tyler County Search and Rescue & CERT

Upshur County CERT