



**Global Youth  
Service Day**

Your Story Starts: **April 17th-19th**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Youth from Seven Ohio Cities Lead Community Change on Global Youth Service Day**

*ServeOhio grants support eight service projects that will mobilize over 1,300 volunteers in communities across Ohio.*

**Columbus, OH** – On April 17-19, more than 1,300 volunteers will participate in service projects organized for Global Youth Service Day, which will be supported by ServeOhio mini-grants. Established in 1988, Global Youth Service Day is the largest service event in the world, and the only day of service dedicated to children and youth. Eight youth volunteer projects will take place in seven Ohio cities – Columbus, Dayton, McArthur, Peninsula, Sidney, Toledo, and Youngstown.

The grants, made possible through ServeOhio's Stewards of Service corporate partners Honda of America MFG., Inc. and AEP Ohio, total \$1,000 each. The recipients will organize the following service projects:

- **Columbus State Community College, Columbus** – Members of Columbus State's Student Leadership Society will join neighborhood youth to prepare the Highland Youth Garden for spring planting. The Highland Youth Garden is located in the Hilltop neighborhood, which has been classified as a "food desert" by the USDA Economic Research Service. 20 volunteers will spread mulch, prepare raised beds, plant produce seeds, and paint existing structures in the garden.
- **East End Community Services, Dayton** – Members of East End Community Center's Youth Advisory Council and families in the Twin Tower Neighborhood will come together for a day of service at the Ruskin School. On Global Youth Service Day, over 100 volunteers will prepare beds in the school's community garden, remove graffiti, build and assemble benches, and collect litter on the grounds of the school. The completion of this project will provide a safer, more welcoming school and neighborhood.
- **Five Rivers Metro Parks, Adventure Central, Dayton** – Adventure Central, an urban 4H and out-of-school time program, will partner with the University of Dayton and Five Rivers Metro Parks to engage 100 youth, parents, and partners in a park clean-up at Wesleyan Metro Park. Adventure Central teens will lead groups of volunteers to spread mulch, turn garden beds, plant seeds, and remove invasive honeysuckle species.
- **Vinton County Middle School, McArthur** – After conducting a community needs assessment, the students of Vinton County Middle School saw a need for fresh vegetables in the community. Vinton County is the only county in Ohio without a grocery store. The students will address this need on Global Youth Service Day by

creating a school garden and compost system. Over 500 students will partner with community stakeholders to build garden boxes and plant produce seeds. The garden will support the school and the Vinton County community by providing greater access to fresh produce.

- **Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Peninsula** – On Global Youth Service Day, 200 youth and adult volunteers will plant more than 200 trees, clean up trash, and perform maintenance activities at the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. By planting trees, volunteers will help to revegetate the native habitat that has been recently cleared of invasive plants, and improve the water quality of the Cuyahoga River watershed.
- **Shelby County Junior Leaders, Sidney** – Due to the destruction of trees caused by the Emerald Ash Borer, 90% of the trees on the Shelby County Fairgrounds have been removed over the past 10 years, leaving little shade or aesthetic beauty for the space. On Global Youth Service Day, 30 Shelby County Junior Leaders (youth aged 14-18 from 8 county schools) will plant semi-mature trees and shrubs around existing buildings on the fairgrounds.
- **East Toledo Family Center, Toledo** – On Global Youth Service Day, 300 volunteers will clean up 19 East Toledo community parks and surrounding neighborhoods. Teams of youth and adult volunteers will clean up debris, trim bushes, cut down weeds, and mulch the parks. The community residents and other stakeholders will reap the benefits of this project by working together to form a cleaner, safer, and healthier green space in the community.
- **Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation, Youngstown** – Community volunteers of all ages will come together on Global Youth Service Day to transform the Glenwood community in the Historic Idora neighborhood in Youngstown. Over 60 volunteers will clean trash and debris in the park, stain and varnish the playground fence, and plant flowers in front of the playground sign.

Visit [www.serveohio.org/events](http://www.serveohio.org/events) for specific project times and locations.

“Involved youth do so much to make our communities stronger,” said William Hall, Executive Director of ServeOhio, Ohio’s Governor-appointed commission on service and volunteerism. “Research demonstrates that youth volunteers become civically engaged adults. This is an investment in Ohio’s future.”

Now in its 27th year, Global Youth Service Day recognizes the positive impact that young people have on their communities 365 days a year. GYSD is celebrated in more than 100 countries with youth-led service projects.

According to the [Volunteering and Civic Life in America report](#) released in December, 2.26 million Ohioans contributed \$6.4 billion through 283.2 million hours of service in 2013. Find out more about volunteer engagement in Ohio at [www.serveohio.org](http://www.serveohio.org).

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ServeOhio is Ohio’s Governor-appointed Commission on Service and Volunteerism. Their mission is to strengthen Ohio communities through service and volunteerism by supporting and funding programs and initiatives that engage thousands of Ohioans of all ages. Interested participants may learn more about ServeOhio at [www.serveohio.org](http://www.serveohio.org) or visit them on Facebook and Twitter.