



SERVE OHIO
Ohio Commission on Service and Volunteerism

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On MLK Day, Ohioans Use ServeOhio Grants to Advance Economic Opportunities

Grants support seven local community service projects and over 1,200 volunteers throughout Ohio

Columbus, OH –ServeOhio, the Governor-appointed commission on service and volunteerism, announces mini-grant awards to support seven local Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service projects on January 18, 2016. The grants, made possible through their Stewards of Service corporate partners Honda of America MFG., Inc. and AEP Ohio, honor Dr. King’s legacy by increasing economic opportunities through service and volunteer activities. Service projects will take place in Bowling Green, Cincinnati, Dublin, East Liverpool, Granville, Jackson, and North Canton.

Each project commits to bringing volunteers together to create or improve community assets or infrastructure, and supports local community engagement that advances economic opportunity. The various projects include collaborative partnerships among businesses and nonprofits. Finally, they all include an education component to create long-term, sustainable change on issues and people.

“As the need for service continues to grow, we honor Dr. King by supporting local organizations that give back and make a real impact on our communities,” said William Hall, ServeOhio Executive Director. “Ohio volunteers will use the power of service to strengthen economic security and make a difference in our local communities.”

ServeOhio awards these grants with support from their 2015-2016 Stewards of Service corporate partners Honda of America MFG., Inc. and AEP Ohio. Each grant totals between \$500 and \$1,000.

The 2016 MLK Day mini-grant recipients:

Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green– Bowling Green students will celebrate MLK Day by participating in 30 service projects aimed at fighting hunger and malnutrition in northwest Ohio. Over 500 volunteers will work in teams to accomplish service challenges such as stocking food pantry shelves, cooking/serving meals, sorting clothing donations, and much more. At the conclusion of the projects, students will come together to reflect about the legacy of Dr. King and the importance of community service.

City of Dublin, Dublin – 75 volunteers will participate in the “I’ve Been in Your Chair” project by creating fleece blankets and distributing them in-person to cancer patients receiving chemotherapy in central Ohio. Many of the volunteers are cancer survivors who know how important it is to be comfortable and warm while receiving chemotherapy.

City of East Liverpool, East Liverpool – The City of East Liverpool will convene over 40 community volunteers to build ten wooden raised garden beds for neighborhood families, ensuring community-wide access to fresh produce. The

volunteers will build the raised beds on MLK Day, but the project will last throughout the year, engaging an additional 60 volunteers to install, plant, and maintain the gardens throughout the summer and fall.

COAD/RSVP of the Ohio Valley, Jackson— On MLK Day, 90 volunteers will participate in the “Dreamscape: Books on the Bus” Project, serving youth in Wheelersburg, Pike Eastern, Wellston, and Jackson City Schools. Volunteers will install canvas pouch bags over the seat backs of school buses which will hold books that students can take to their seats and read on their way to and from school each day.

Denison University, Granville— 150 Denison students will celebrate MLK Day by participating in four campus-wide service projects that will raise awareness of hunger and food insecurity in their community. Students will create and distribute bag lunches, healthcare products, and fleece blankets for the local Salvation Army, homeless shelters, and afterschool programs in the community.

Habitat for Humanity of Greater Cincinnati, Cincinnati – Over 50 Mount St. Joseph University students, AmeriCorps members, and community volunteers will come together to help eliminate substandard housing in Cincinnati. Volunteers will build tool sheds for Habitat for Humanity partner families from the ground up, learn about the issue of substandard housing, hear testimony from families receiving services, and learn about greater ways to get involved in the cause.

Walsh University, North Canton – 320 students are teaming up with North Canton Character Counts to help area nonprofits complete 12 short-term, labor-intensive projects. The projects will address several needs in the Stark County community including child safety, health and wellness, environmental sustainability, civic engagement, and hunger.

According to the [Volunteering and Civic Life in America report](#) released this month, Ohioans contributed \$6.2 billion through 267.1 million hours of service in 2014. Find out more about volunteer engagement in Ohio at 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 AmeriCorps and volunteer engagement. Interested participants may learn more about ServeOhio at www.serveohio.org or visit them on Facebook and Twitter.