

FRANKLIN TOMORROW'S 14<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
**EXEMPLARY COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER AWARDS**

November 17, 2020



## **VOLUNTEER SPIRIT AWARD**

### **Mike Alday**

Nominated by: NFP



Mike Alday has been actively involved in the Franklin and Williamson County community for nearly 30 years. He was one of the founders of Franklin Tomorrow and served as one of the organizations first presidents. He was also a founder and first president of the Downtown Franklin Rotary Club, one of the fastest growing clubs in the country. He currently serves on the board of Williamson, Inc. Over the past year, Mike has been involved as a volunteer on three significant projects including: Leadership Franklin/One Generation Away, Find Hope Franklin, and the Downtown Franklin Rotary Club. Mike is an asset to the Williamson County community as both a business leader and a community volunteer. He is passionate about where he is engaged and is willing to dive into projects to better the environment around him. He is a servant leader who leads by example. He has not slowed down in 2020 but has used this year as an opportunity to restructure the traditional mode of operations and has worked to help community organizations survive in the midst of challenging circumstances.

## **Chris Beck**

Nominated by: Habitat for Humanity - Williamson Maury



Chris Beck began volunteering with Habitat for Humanity in 1986 in Louisiana with his company there. His career then took him to Williamson County where he began working with Habitat for Humanity - Williamson Maury. Chris participated in a fundraiser and volunteered for some build days, and he was hooked. Chris joined the Habitat board in 2010 and still serves to this day.

Chris Beck not only puts in time as a board member for HFHWC but shares his time and talent other and the community associations including: The National Science Foundation, The Nashville Technology Council board and Economic Development and Education Committees, The Center for Information Technology in Education (CITE) of Tennessee, Nashville State Community College Foundation Board, and the EDS Tennessee - Marketing Support Council. In addition, Chris and his family are members of Saint Philip's Catholic Church in downtown Franklin, where Chris serves on the Knights of Columbus.

Chris' favorite part of the Habitat experience is volunteering out on build days. Chris says that there is a sense of accomplishment when he's worked hard and can look back at the home and know that his efforts helped a family improve their lives today and for generations to come. Chris said: "Habitat for Humanity is all about changing people's lives for the better and building a stronger community through volunteering. It also allows you meet and connect with people in our community who enjoy giving back." Chris' estimated volunteer hours are over 5,000.

## **Martha Bryant**

Nominated by: The Heritage Foundation



Martha retired almost 7 years ago and at that time she began searching for something fun that would keep her busy, besides shopping at Chico's.

Martha lives in Franklin and loves downtown. She especially loves the Franklin Theatre. So much so, that she began volunteering there as soon as she retired. She loves meeting new people and hearing about where they are from and what brought them to Franklin. She is a wonderful ambassador of our beautiful city and our organization.

Her love for the Franklin Theatre is evident by the hundreds of hours she has given as an usher. She has a way of becoming a friend to everyone she meets. Her warm smile and cheerful heart glow through her as she walks theatre attendees to their seats before a show.

## **Larry Darnell**

Nominated by: GraceWorks Ministries



Larry Darnell was introduced to GraceWorks from the very beginning when GraceWorks was founded in 1995. He and his wife, Alice, moved to Franklin three years earlier with his job as a 4H Club Agent. They bought some land and built their home, which is conveniently located 10 minutes from GraceWorks Ministries, where they both volunteer. Larry is a Food Rescue Driver, and his wife, whom he lovingly calls his "sweetie," is a GraceWorker.

Larry served with Cheryl King, the first Director of GraceWorks, at his church and she introduced him to a new nonprofit that was working to serve our local community by pooling resources into one location. He started by helping with food drives at an old gym.

After Larry retired to a part-time post, Larry became a Food Rescue Driver for GraceWorks, where he picks up food donations for local grocery stores for GraceWorks Food Pantry. Over Larry's ten years of service, he has picked up at least 320,000 pounds of food for GraceWorks food pantry. This would have filled about 3,000 carts of food for families and provided thousands of meals for 10,000+ families.

In 2018, Larry was recruited to help lead the efforts to pick up toys for GraceWork's Manger program, Williamson County's largest Christmas gift distribution event for neighbors experiencing poverty or crisis. Larry is a volunteer leader of the Toys for Tots committee. He works hard to distribute collection boxes to hundreds of sites across the county and pick up 13,000+ units of gifts for this event.

This year, Larry's experience, optimism and bravery to continue serving as a Food Rescue Driver during the onset of COVID was invaluable. He helped GraceWorks keep pantry shelves stocked when serving more people in need of food than ever before. This year alone, Larry has served at least 672 hours already, which would have cost GraceWorks around \$10,000 in staffing costs.

Larry's service to GraceWorks has provided thousands of meals for families who may otherwise had empty pantries, provided thousands of joyful Christmas memories for children across the county, and blessed the many people who have the honor to work alongside him.

### **Bryan Doleshel**

Nominated by: Williamson, Inc.



As the Chief Community Development Officer at Williamson, Inc., Bryan Doleshel is an amazing leader and mentor to his staff. Bryan encourages collaboration and community involvement amongst his staff and peers and feels strongly that his staff should be visible and active in the community. Previously, Bryan served as National Vice President of Field Relations for Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), where he made a significant contribution by leading a team of 7 Regional Operations Directors and

a budget of 22 million dollars. Bryan is passionate about serving in all arenas of life. Whether it's at his church, his kid's schools, his neighborhood association, mentoring troubled youth or serving on non-profit boards, Bryan is always willing to help where needed. Bryan currently serves on the Downtown Franklin Association (DFA) and Heritage Foundations.

Bryan Doleshel is also in his 2nd year of service on The Refuge Center for Counseling, which offers affordable, professional counseling services in order to empower, educate and support individuals, couples and families in need. Bryan serves on the Board of Directors and currently serves as the Board Vice President. As well as being very active on their capital campaign committee.

### **Dawn Garcia**

Nominated by: The Refuge Center for Counseling



Dawn Garcia, Attorney at Law, has been faithfully serving as a volunteer for The Refuge Center for Counseling for the past nine years. She served on the Board of Directors for six years and has been on the Advisory Board for the past three years. Throughout all of that time she has offered her legal expertise to the Refuge Center completely pro bono.

Dawn's educational experience includes Law school at Vanderbilt University College. She is a Middle Tennessee State University Member, Tennessee Bar Association Member, and part of The American Immigration Lawyers Association. She has over 10 years of experience in family law and immigration law.

Dawn has worked extensively to protect The Refuge Center and its clients since 2012. In 2020 so far she has donated 12 hours of legal service time and her normal hourly rate is \$350/hour. Because of Covid, this year has been a bit different though, and typically, on average she donates 20-30 hours annually of time to The Refuge Center for Counseling.

### **Lorrie Graves**

Nominated by: Patrick Shairs



As an instructor for over 30 years, former parents of Lorrie Graves' students described her as "someone who inspired her students to become critical thinkers, pushing boundaries so they can see what they're truly capable of achieving." The former *Tennessee Science Teacher of the Year* has done many things in the Franklin community. As Service Committee Co-Chair for the Downtown Franklin Rotary, one of the most time-demanding roles a Rotarian can undertake, Lorrie helped lead the following in 2020: "Build Her a Bridge," "Tornado Relief," "Bear Hugs" for the

Davis House, "Read with Rotary," "Harpeth River Clean Up," My Friend's House: Christmas in July," and "Mind the Gap" for One Gen Away. As an avid runner, Lorrie has run for the Wounded Warrior Project Charity miles since 2018 and has run over 263 miles in 2020 to help her team raise money for them. Also, she is simultaneously running the "Epic 444 Mile Virtual Challenge" from September through the end of May with Franklin Road Runners Team.

Through all these endeavors, both for local, district, and educational causes, Lorrie has spent over 450 hours of her 2020 year dedicated to these events, and this does not include the countless hours writing emails, creating necessary documentation, and training for her veteran-based charity runs.

### **Janice Hardrath**

Nominated by: Habitat for Humanity Williamson-Maury



Janice has volunteered with Habitat for Humanity Williamson-Maury since 2016. She was introduced to the nonprofit through St. Philip's Church, which she attends with her husband, Ron. Janice is a humble, quiet, hardworking volunteer who is exceedingly generous with both her time and resources. She not only fundraises for Habitat year-round; she helps build alongside our homeowners. Janice makes sure the volunteers, homeowners and staff are fed and hydrated on site, gathers donations for a housewarming gift of a washer and dryer, and makes the family a homemade quilt. As if all that weren't enough, Janice volunteers weekly at the Habitat office doing whatever needs to be done. She is truly a gem and we are so grateful for her. Janice's estimated volunteer hours are over 200.

### **Martha Johnson**

Nominated by: Williamson County CASA



Martha has advocated for abused and neglected children for Williamson County CASA for 11 years and epitomizes a CASA volunteer. She provides exceptional compassion and support to each child, family member, and every individual in the child's life. She carefully observes each child's individual needs and moves efficiently to provide key information, recommendations, and direction. Martha has served 36 families at Williamson County CASA, and formed relationships with even more children than that. Martha goes above and beyond in every case that she is involved in. Most recently, we are especially proud of her work on a case that is currently moving from foster care to adoption. Martha has been the CASA for this case for 4 years and followed the child through placement in 4 foster homes and 1 state facility, driving to Madison, West Tennessee and all points in between.

In addition to going above and beyond in her role as a CASA, Martha demonstrates an extraordinary commitment to her community by selflessly volunteering throughout our county in countless other nonprofit organizations. Outside of Martha's commitment to Williamson County CASA, she is currently involved in volunteering at Brightstone, a program for adults with intellectual disabilities. She is involved with various organizations through her church, including mission trips for disaster relief. She helps with Room in the Inn on Wednesday evenings from November through March. She regularly takes part in their Second Saturday program, where they volunteer for a different group one Saturday a month. She has enjoyed working with food distribution for One Gen Away, collections/backpacks and the Manger for Graceworks, cleaning for the St. Andrew's Society, and Habitat for Humanity. Martha also volunteers at Better Decisions, an educational program,

at the Tennessee State Prison for Women where she serves as a mentor in their 9-week program to teach better decision-making skills to incarcerated women. Martha has made a difference at Williamson County CASA, exemplified the mission of the organization, and has positively impacted every child and family she has served. Since January 2020, Martha has dedicated 190 hours to serving Williamson County CASA children and families.

### **Charlene Kimmel**

Nominated by: Franklin Lion's Club



Charlene Kimmel began volunteering while in high school and has continuously helped others since then. She is currently very active in programs with the Franklin Lions Club Charities and St. Philip Catholic Church; and along the way, she has volunteered at schools and served as a Williamson County School Board Member. So far in 2020, she has served over 420 hours. Charlene is a key spokesperson for the Franklin Lion's Club and is the Communications and Marketing

Chairperson. She coordinates a partnership with the American Red Cross for blood drives and helps lead the annual Lions Pride Breakfast and Tag Sale held during Franklin's Christmas celebration. She volunteers with the Lions Vision Screening for Kindergartners and Preschool children, including working at the Williamson County Fair. Faith is very important to Charlene and she volunteers extensively with the St Philip Catholic Church. She served as the chair of the Welcoming Committee for 5 years and either founded or served on many other ministries. Charlene is a dynamic member of the Franklin Lions Club and many members look to her as an unofficial cheerleader.

### **Dr. Robin Lapre**

Nominated by: Williamson County Animal Center



Dr. Robin Lapre is a lead volunteer for the Williamson County Animal Center. She has given over 235 hours this year (a monetary equivalent of over \$6,300) to the dogs of WCAC. During the pandemic, WCAC's volunteer program came to a screeching halt as they put animals in foster and closed the doors to the public. When WCAC slowly reopened, their "sunrise crew" of volunteers had sort of fallen apart. This is a dedicated group of early morning dog walkers who come to the shelter by 6:30 AM every single day of the week to make sure the dogs get a quick potty break. Robin made it her mission to put this crew back together and even recruited some new volunteers to help with the morning walks. She is the queen of the sunrise crew and everyone turns to her with questions about pretty much everything. She leads a dog playgroup one to two mornings per week, in addition to coordinating supporting personnel for those playgroups. In addition to her work with WCAC, Robin volunteers her time as a phone screener for People for Animals. This is a commitment that requires two days a month for her to answer phone calls, screen applicants, and find spay/neuter solutions for members of the community throughout Middle Tennessee. PFA helps citizens get their pets sterilized and is open to residents of any county in the area.

Robin is a tireless volunteer for RARE. She wears many hats for that organization. She has written grant applications, she drives transport to get dogs out of shelters, to vet appointments, and to meet transport vans for sending dogs to shelters throughout the northern United States (where there are typically less stray animals due to more stringent licensing laws). Robin also walks dogs three days each week for RARE at their facility in Maury County. As if all of these things weren't enough, Robin has been heavily involved with the Cheatham County Animal Center. She started their volunteer program from scratch over a year ago and has helped coordinate the program through the change of Directors for that organization. Robin is a great connector of people in the service of her true passion, finding homes for shelter animals! All of these things, she has maintained while also being a physician in the midst of a pandemic, raising a family, and finding time to move a son to college. If anyone ever deserved recognition for their dogged determination in pursuit of a goal, it's Dr. Robin Lapre.

**Jennifer Leonard**

Nominated by: My Friend's House



Jennifer Leonard has volunteered at My Friend's House long before any of the current staff were employed there, but she came back around in a very intentional and consistent way in 2017. It began innocently enough with her wanting to provide a meal for its Chef for the Night program, in which an individual or group plans a meal and comes on-site to cook and eat with the boys. Her small group from church, Walker Memorial Baptist, became a staple every month, providing delicious meals, friendship and encouragement to the eight boys at My Friend's House.

Her interest in the boys at MFH grew with each month, as her heart was long-ago committed to helping and serving children in foster care and/or state custody. She approached My Friend's House about doing 'Skill Set Saturdays' with the boys. Once a month she would present to the boys a 'skill' for independent living, i.e. sewing, baking, simple DIY house projects and easy car maintenance. She sweetened the gig by offering to prepare a meal and get a movie for them afterwards. My Friend's House speaks to Jennifer's heart, not only from the perspective of her own family, but also in the ability to encourage the boys to know that today's circumstances do not define their future. One of her personal mottos is, "We can do hard things." And she speaks it often to the boys to remind them that the situation does not define you - you can work hard and believe in yourself. Yes, it is hard, but you can do it and you are worth it.

## **Jennifer Morrison**

Nominated by: The NOOK



Jennifer Morrison has been serving the Franklin community in many ways since she moved here in 1995. Today, she provides meaningful leadership in the Franklin community through the N.O.O.K. (Needs of Our Kids). Jennifer's passion, which is evident by how she spends her time, and mitigating poverty and specially, meeting the needs of children who are impacted by poverty or neglect.

She is one of the founders and the Executive Director of The N.O.O.K. Jennifer saw the needs of children in our school, and realized that those needs were bigger than just one school. She founded the N.O.O.K to engage community organizations and resources in support of students who sometimes arrive at school without basic needs met. Immediate daily needs N.O.O.K serves can range from improper or inadequate clothing, inappropriate shoes for physical education classes, eyeglasses and food provided by their partner, and another organization which she serves, One Generation Away. The N.O.O.K. has established resource centers that will provide new shoes, socks, underwear, jackets, basic hygiene and feminine hygiene that will be delivered by a volunteer on demand at the request of a teacher, nurse, counselor or social worker.

## **Brent and Tami Peterson**

Nominated by: Sarah Critchlow, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints



Brent and Tami Peterson have lived in Franklin since 1998, when they moved here from Detroit after Brent retired from a long hockey career. In 2003, Brent was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease and from there, Brent and Tami's volunteer careers really began. In 2009, Brent and Tami started a non-profit organization called The Peterson Foundation for Parkinson's (PFP). The goal of the foundation is to support and enhance the lives of people with Parkinson's, their Care Partners and families, and to achieve their highest possible quality of life through awareness, education and programs within a caring community. The Peterson Foundation for Parkinson's has raised over \$1 million for Parkinson's research in hopes of finding a cure. They support Active with Parkinson's groups in Franklin and other cities for those who are newly diagnosed and their families. They also host an annual expo with national speakers discussing pertinent topics related to Parkinson's Disease.

The Petersons have spent close to 18,000 hours volunteering with their foundation since its inception. This year they will spend over 1,700 hours volunteering. They said they do it to help cure Parkinson's and to help people along the way.

## **Susan Phelps**

Nominated by: Polar Grove School



Susan Phelps joined the Poplar Grove Elementary School community five years ago and she has taken the school by storm since she arrived. She promptly joined the PTO and continues to make significant volunteer contributions to the school. She jumped into the PTO and taking on numerous leadership roles and never looked back. She has served as the PTO Chairperson for the past four years. Susan not only volunteers for her son's classroom but she regularly spearheads several of Poplar Grove's annual school events.

Each year Poplar Grove's major fundraiser is a daylong fun run, in which students secure pledges for laps run during a 30-minute period. The event requires set up of the running field, along with a bake sale, and Spirit Shoe contest. Susan spends the full day at school helping with set up, logistics and tear down not to mention the countless hours spent in preparation beforehand. She also assists with counting the pledge money as it comes in, awarding prizes, and preparing the Awards Ceremony.

Susan single handedly coordinates Poplar Grove's Father-Daughter Dance doing everything from organizing the event, choosing a theme, communicating to our families, ordering refreshments, making corsages, decorating for the event, DJing the dance, and staying after to clean everything up. She also does all of this for the Poplar Grove Middle school homecoming dance.

As a skilled seamstress, Susan has created patches with the PGS logo to be placed on their Be Nice ambassadors' blazers, made aprons for our PTO, and is quick to use her talents to help our school in any way that she can. Her contributions have helped to sustain the established traditions at Poplar Grove and introduce new traditions to bring the school community together.

### **Mary Lee Bartlett & Robin Puryear**

Nominated by: The Land Trust for Tennessee



This year, Mary Lee Bartlett and Robin Puryear served as 2020 Co-Chairs of the Land Trust for Tennessee's largest annual fundraiser - Once in a Blue Moon. Their combined time, energy, flexibility, and volunteer service has truly been above and beyond. In a year full of uncertainty and change, Mary Lee and Robin have guided The Land Trust to reimagine our signature

fundraising event into a successful remote campaign that engaged community members from their respective homes. Mary Lee and Robin didn't bat an eye when the Land Trust decided to re-imagine this year's event into something that everyone could participate in at home. They immediately got to work on curating an incredible Once in a Blue Moon at Home "Donor Celebration Kit" that encourages supporters to celebrate from home this year. They leveraged their networks and relationships to assemble favor boxes that include fixings for s'mores, a special outdoor activity, local honey, recipe ideas, custom branded tumblers, and more! At the time of submission, more than 200 boxes have been spoken for with tens of thousands raised for land conservation in Tennessee. Mary Lee and Robin have both dedicated countless hours to ensure the campaign's success, including time spent reviewing invitation lists, calling friends to support, hand delivering favor boxes, engaging sponsors, working on promotional items, and more. They have helped raise the profile of this year's event through social media outreach and by speaking with members of the local media about the importance of our work.

### **Bob Rudman**

Nominated by: Mercy Community Healthcare



Bob Rudman has been a part of Franklin since 2004, when he moved here with his wife, Missy. Soon after moving to Franklin, Bob and Missy joined the Heritage Foundation where they began volunteering at street festivals. From there, Bob began fundraising for the Franklin Theater renovations. Bob has also served as a Board member for several years with GraceWorks Ministries and St. Matthew School in Franklin. He is a Board member for The Children's Kindness Network, a charitable organization that fosters Kindness to all.

Most recently, Bob has been a gift to Mercy Community Healthcare. He has been an instrumental, active member on Mercy's preparatory Task Force for a potential Capital Campaign assisting with donor introductions. Bob's heart to serve this community is evident and reaches far and wide.

### **The Stinson Family**

Nominated by: One Generation Away



In March of 2020 when the COVID lockdown went into place, One Generation Away's demand for emergency food boxes went up dramatically. These boxes held about 40 pounds of non-perishable food that will help families for a couple of weeks. OneGen went from sending out 40 boxes a week to needing 400 a week. To keep up with the need, OneGen was desperately seeking help packing these boxes. Due to the pandemic they knew many were concerned about being out. OneGen reached out to a few families to see if anyone would be comfortable packing boxes in their

warehouse. That's were Kim Stinson, and family stepped in. She recruited her friends Rob and Elisa Baughman and their family. They wanted to be active during this time of crisis and wanted to volunteer their time in any way needed. Not only did these two families respond to the need but they committed to volunteering on a weekly basis. They volunteered in OneGen's warehouse 4-8 hours a week for three months straight during the pandemic. This involved packing food into boxes, making sure the shelves were stocked with the food, and sorting items to be packed. These food boxes would be sent out into our community to help feed those families impacted by COVID. The Stinson and Baughman's commitment to taking care of this need allowed OneGen to focus on the overwhelming demand for food rescue from hotels, restaurants, and others who had to close due to the pandemic.

### **Rusty Wright**

Nominated by: Habitat for Humanity Williamson-Maury



In 2016, Rusty Wright took the lead to organize volunteers and fundraise through his employer, Community Health Services (CHS). In 2017 he chaired the CHS giving committee and began adding a variety of events with ever-increasing goals. In 2019 Rusty planned and implemented the Inaugural CHS Charity Golf Tournament and raised more than \$45,000. In 2020 funding nearly doubled and benefited Habitat for Humanity Williamson-Maury, the American Heart Association, and Safe Haven. Rusty joined the HFHWM Board in 2019. He chooses to support Habitat not only financially, but also through hands-on building alongside future homeowners. Their hard work to improve the lives of their families is inspiring to him and is something he wants to share with his son.