

Franklin Tomorrow Exemplary Volunteer Award
2021 Volunteer Spirit Award

FrankTown Open Hearts is a nonprofit ministry in Franklin, TN that spiritually, emotionally, and physically enhances the lives of at-risk youth. Through 'hands on' programming, we teach life skills, to inspire confident, empowered young adults to lead fulfilled lives.

Wayne Howell is one of the primary founders of FrankTown Open Hearts. He served on the FrankTown Board of Directors for 12 years and has been known as the CCM (Chief Cheerleader and Motivator). He has been the "heart and soul" of this ministry for many years. Wayne is an avid spokesperson for FrankTown in Williamson County and a dedicated volunteer and donor. Wayne has been actively involved in this vital, life-changing program since its inception in 2001. FrankTown became an official 501c3 in 2005. That means Wayne has been making an impact in the lives of youth for 20 years!

After growing up poor in Williamson County himself, local plumber and volunteer football coach **Wayne Howell** was frustrated to see so many athletes from poor neighborhoods used for their athletic ability and then ignored after high school. They had no prospects for college and no marketable job skills. They were dying- "not so much physically, but mentally and spiritually" as Wayne puts it. He got together with a few friends and invited several youth to come for meals and just hang out. Due to Wayne's tireless work, the organization wrote a strategic plan, elected a Board of Directors, and completed the requirements to be recognized as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. He continues to address community groups often to get more volunteer support.

Wayne has been active with FrankTown Open Hearts from its inception. It started with about 12 kids, all boys. Today, more than 170 young men and women (ages 8 – 18) are involved in the program which provides tutoring, mentoring, recreation, and a hot meal three nights a week. Many churches and individuals in the Franklin area are actively involved in working together to build a positive future for these young people. The program will assist them in entrance test-preparation, college applications, and in finding scholarships. Students now can experience a College Spring Tour where up to 30 youth visit 10-12 college campuses. This is something most would not experience without FrankTown. Many of these young people will be the first in their family to graduate from college. In addition to the educational focus, FrankTown gives students the opportunity to experience vocational skills. They offer programs in culinary arts, automotive, plumbing along with various internships.

Wayne Howell is deeply involved in the lives of FrankTown youth. He leads recreation night once a week, year-round, oversees the outdoors programming (hunting, fishing, camping) multiple times a year, leads devotions and moral character-building lessons. Wayne has teens apprentice with him in his plumbing business. He goes into their homes, addresses behavior issues, mediates family disputes and encourages responsible decision-making. Once, he left his family during a holiday meal to be with a boy whose mother had just passed away. Wayne maintains high expectations for respect, behavior, and academic progress. He loves and in turn, the students love and respect him.

Recently, Wayne started working with former FrankTown graduates - mentoring them and recruiting them to come back to FrankTown and 'give back' to the community - training them to work with the teens in the community where they grew up. Wayne has volunteered thousands of hours over the years. In 2021 Wayne has volunteered 200+ hours with a value in excess of \$5700.

He is making a historic difference in our community. We proudly support the choice of **Wayne Howell** of Franklin for the Exemplary Volunteer Spirit Award.