



Protecting Children by Strengthening Families

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# media release

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## **Ordinary People Doing Extraordinary Things: Children Services Recognizes Volunteers**

Volunteerism is now being encouraged throughout the nation and many people are looking at ways where they can be of service in their own communities. In recognition of the contributions of all Franklin County Children Services volunteers and mentors, Children Services recently held its 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Volunteer Reception. FCCS recognized the efforts of over 500 volunteers and mentors, and honored those with 3, 5, 10, 15, and 20 years of service.

Friendship Volunteer Noelle LeCrone Fields received the top honor as Outstanding Volunteer of the Year. By being a caring friend, a consistent source of support and an unwavering educational advocate, LeCrone Fields has literally transformed the lives of two sisters that she mentors. She has helped them—as well as their family—realize the priceless value of education. By believing in these girls, LeCrone Fields has helped them to believe in themselves and most importantly, the tremendous opportunities their futures hold.

Malaika Mentor Denise Furtick was awarded the Most Inspirational Volunteer of the Year. Furtick's involvement has given her mentee an opportunity to see the world from a different set of eyes, where she is accepted for who she is and mentored for who she can become. Furtick drives an hour each way to expose her mentee to positive cultural activities, to increase her self esteem and to enhance her image as a young lady. The imprint of Furtick's committed mentorship may not always be readily apparent but it is embedded in the heart of this grateful mentee.

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Cheryl Harger was named Outstanding Advisory Committee Member for her service on the Volunteer Service Advisory Committee (VSAC). Harger is consistently involved in special activities – like ice skating and the fall outdoors event – that VSAC organizes for volunteers and their matches. She also gives hours to the Holiday Wish program and speaks at the new volunteer orientations each year. Additionally, she recruits others to become volunteers.

Volunteers can serve in many of Children Services' programs, such as the Friendship Program, or as a Simba, Malaika, or College Bound Mentor where they provide not only the gift of time, but the gift of friendship to youth who need that special person in their life. Volunteers can also serve in other capacities, such as at the Crisis Center, in the Holiday Wish program, or by providing invaluable input and resources as an Advisory Committee Member or as a Board Member. For more information on volunteering with Franklin County Children Services, call 614-275-2690 or visit [franklincountyohio.gov/children\\_services](http://franklincountyohio.gov/children_services).

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