



2025 Governor's Medallion Recipients

Gerry Tygielski

Ashe County

Gerry Tygielski has been involved with Habitat for Humanity since the early '90s and with Ashe County Habitat for Humanity since 2008. Gerry introduced sustainable building practices to the organization, coordinated volunteers, served as a construction manager, and held the position of Board Treasurer.

Darlene Sanders

Catawba County

Darlene Sanders is a full-time volunteer and resident at Exodus Home, where she serves as the Lead Site Manager. In this role, she works in finance and manages office issues across their seven locations. Additionally, Darlene volunteers as a mentor within the program.

Sera Cuni

Chatham County

Sera Cuni created Feed-Well Fridges, a program that enables local nonprofits to redistribute prepared food and meals. Chef Sera prepares and delivers 45,000 microwaveable meals annually to these fridges, ensuring the food can be easily warmed. Additionally, Chef Sera rescues 10,000 pounds of food per month, preventing it from going to waste.



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Gregory Carr

Duplin County

Greg Carr has volunteered with the Greenevers Volunteer Fire Department for nearly 32 years and currently serves as their Fire Chief. The department is deeply involved in the community, and Greg has mentored numerous young people through his work there. He is also the Chaplin for the Duplin County Fire Association.

Brad Freeman

Durham County

Brad Freeman previously served as the Executive Director of PetPals NC, an organization dedicated to integrating pet therapy to assist special education teachers, learning specialists, school counselors, social workers, and more. In 2024, PetPals NC had therapy dogs working in over 25 schools.

Thao Sommerville

Forsyth County

Thao Sommerville serves on numerous boards in Forsyth County and has held the position of president for several of them. She is deeply committed to improving her community, preserving Vietnamese culture, and empowering girls and women.



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Patricia Adams

Franklin County

Pat Adams volunteers with Sowing Seeds, where she helps distribute food to people in her community. She also participates in the Backpack Buddies program and provides weekly transportation for elderly individuals to and from their medical appointments.

Erna Bright

Gates County

Erna Bright served on the Gates County broadband task force, collaborating with county officials, internet providers, and the NC Department of Information Technology (DIT). His efforts were instrumental in Gates County achieving 97% fiber optic installations for residents in this rural area. He was a strong advocate for local leaders, ensuring the installation process minimized disruption for residents and farmers.

JaQuavion Stainback

Granville County

JaQuavion Stainback originally attended The Shepard Youth Ranch and now volunteers there, where he assists with horse care, and property maintenance. Now as their intern, JaQuavion is consistently eager to contribute.



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Gary Grant

Halifax County

Gary Grant is an activist, community leader, and former educator deeply committed to social justice, agricultural sustainability, rural community empowerment, and volunteerism. He actively combats food insecurity through partnerships with local farmers, offers companionship to hospitalized community members, and provides free support on estate planning, vocational training, and more.

Howard Bakken

Henderson County

Howard Bakken has dedicated over 2,500 hours over the past 21 years volunteering with the Chikaming Goat Herd at the Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site (NHS). He is consistently willing to assist and has been a valuable resource for both new volunteers and staff

Adrianna Noel Goodwin

Hyde County

Adrianna Goodwin is an active volunteer within the Ocracoke School community. She participates in the PTA and boosters, organizes and coaches basketball, coordinates community events, and assists with fundraising for field trips, among other activities.



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Mike Davidson

Iredell County

Mike Davidson is a dedicated volunteer who supports his community through numerous organizations, including the American Legion, American Legion Boy Scouts, Beulah Baptist Church, and Iredell Christian Ministry. He serves on multiple boards, and beyond his formal volunteer work, he also assists many community members on an individual basis.

NC Screening Team

Jones County

The North Carolina Screening Team plays a vital role in interviewing potential Red Cross volunteers. Following Helene's calm and efficient response, the number of interviewees increased dramatically, resulting in significantly more volunteers on the ground in North Carolina.

Janice Scions

Lee County

Janice Scions has been a volunteer at The Enrichment Center of Lee County for over 12 years delivering means to home bound older adults. She also serves as the treasurer and goes above and beyond assigned tasks to make an impact on the community.



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Joy Harklerode

McDowell County

Joy Harklerode is the Founder of Mercy Fund Animal Rescue, a 100% volunteer-run, foster-based animal rescue with a commitment to life. Joy focuses on rescuing and caring for pets in her county and also provided supplies for pets during the Helene recovery efforts.

Dr. Elesia Glover

Mecklenburg County

Elesia Glover founded the nonprofit Posh Pack Inc. to educate students, parents, social workers, school nurses, and educators about the importance of female hygiene. She supported Hurricane Helene relief efforts by sending hygiene kits and donated over 100,000 feminine hygiene products in 2024 alone.

Julie McClintock

Orange County

Julie McClintock has dedicated over 25 years to environmental volunteer work in her county. She co-founded the Friends of Bolin Creek, an organization committed to protecting and advocating for the Bolin Creek Watershed.



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DH Conley High School ROTC

Pitt County

This group of ROTC students volunteers at the senior games, assisting with setup, takedown, and the events themselves. They are also committed to undertaking numerous impactful volunteer projects to support their county.

Maxton McDowell

Randolph County

Maxton McDowell's volunteer service has greatly enhanced the lives of individuals in Randolph County. His advocacy for vulnerable children, leadership in community organizations, and efforts to improve social services have a lasting impact. His work in securing a new Social Services building and supporting the hiring of key leaders, will continue to benefit the community for years to come.

Becky and Chip Craig

Wayne County

Becky and Chip Craig volunteer for different fundraisers, in which one they were able to help raise over \$200,000 for the Kiwanis Miniature Train Project, that is a huge attraction to the community. They also volunteer at the local salvation army and literacy connections.