



What's Happening at Van Buren Monthly News & Updates

MAY 2023



YMCA Healthy Kids Day Recap Van Buren Family Shelter

In partnership with **Action for Children**, Van Buren Center hosted its first **YMCA Healthy Kids Day** for the families at the shelter.

We had an incredible turnout from families who were excited to take advantage of all the valuable community resources during the event on Saturday, April 28th. Every year across the country YMCA branches have a Healthy Kids Day event at their location. The purpose of Healthy Kids Day is for children and families to have the opportunity to learn about the importance of healthy eating, nutrition, physical activity, mental and emotional well-being, and developing healthy habits.



Action for Children



Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities



YMCA ENRC+



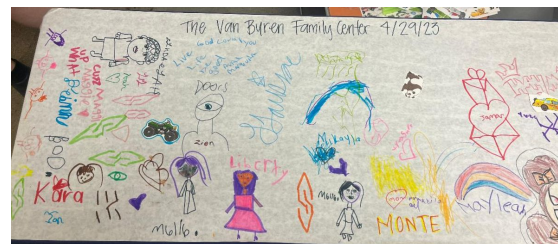
Southeast Healthcare

Thank you to the following community agencies and organizations for supporting Van Buren's first annual Healthy Kids Day!

- Action for Children
- AmeriHealth Caritas
- Anthem
- CFD RREACT
- Franklin County Board of Child Support Enforcement
- Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities
- Iota Nu Sigma Alumnae Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.
- North Community Counseling Center
- Primary One Health
- Southeast Inc.
- YMCA ECRN+



Franklin County Board of Child Support Enforcement





CFP RREACT





Iota Nu Sigma Alumnae Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.

Thank
You!

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Mosaic High School Interns



Mosaic High School Students spent 5 weeks volunteering at Van Buren while completing their Capstone Project. Their last day with us was May 12th. They truly made a great impact during their time with us.

The student's project centered around learning about food insecurity and homelessness. They worked in our kitchen and community garden 4 days a week. During their project, they help cook and prep meals for guests, prepped and weeded our community garden, and learned how to build garden beds.



Brandi N Milbry Foundation

Monthly Birthday Gifts for Children in Shelter

Thanks to the **Brandi N Milbry Foundation** children in our shelter with a birthday this month were surprised with special gifts and treats. This month there were 28 children's birthdays for us to celebrate. It was an extra special month and visit with the Brandi N Milbry team because it was on Brandi's birthday, May 24th. The foundation was started to honor the spirit and love that Brandi gave to her family, friends, and community and this month her love was felt by so many.



Seeds of Caring

Mother's Day Project

The mothers at Van Buren Center were blessed this Mother's Day with extra meaningful gifts made possible by **Seeds of Caring Columbus**. The group collected and assembled over 200 incredible gift bags for the mothers at Van Buren. Seeds of Caring empowers children to get involved in their community. The organization has partnered with Van Buren on several of projects over the past few years. By using their hearts and minds to learn about social issues the children have made a positive difference in our community.



Aetna Hygiene Kit Drive

On Wednesday, April 26th Aetna organized a group of volunteers to assemble over **150 hygiene bags** for our guests at Van Buren as well as a donation drive for essential supplies. The team at Aetna has played a crucial role in helping our guests at Van Buren access critical resources and supplies. We are so grateful to have them as a valued community partner.



Jimmy John's Community Garden Plant Day



YMCA Housing and Shelter Board

President, Joshua Zimmerman

organized a team from his Jimmy John's locations to help out in our garden this month as well as donating plants for our garden this year. His dedication to service and philanthropy has made an incredible impact. Joshua started our **Give Hope** fundraising campaign in 2017 and has dedicated his time and talent to making it a success year after year. He was also just honored as one of Columbus Business First 40 Under 40! We are so thankful to Joshua for all his support and efforts to make our community a better place.



Columbus School for Girls

Garden Clean-Up Day

We were so excited to host a group of high school students from the **Columbus School for Girls** on Friday, May 26th. The **Human Service Chamber of Franklin County** helped coordinate the opportunity for the high school students to volunteer with Van Buren Center and two other organizations. The students helped clean up the trash on our grounds and pulled weeds in our Community Garden as well as our Mediation Garden. They did a wonderful job beautifying our grounds and helped create outdoor spaces for our guests to enjoy and feel welcomed. We look forward to the opportunity to partner with them again soon!

How to Talk to Kids about Homelessness



[Click to View Video](#)

This video is from the non-profit **Invisible People** and was shared by Beth Morrow Lonn, Executive Director of Community Housing for the YMCA. It is a handy guide for parents and teachers, jam-packed with good advice on how to chat with kids about a pretty tough topic - homelessness. The video is all about encouraging our youngsters to understand, empathize, and be aware of the world around them.

Volunteer Opportunities



NEW OPPORTUNITIES

WANT TO HELP US PREP AND COOK DINNER?

Meal prep opportunities are now posted on our website and available Monday-Friday from 2 pm-4 pm. Help prep and cook dinner for our guests!

Face masks are now optional for all volunteers and are no longer required to enter the building.

VOLUNTEER

New Volunteer Orientation

Virtual

Meal Prep

Available Monday-Friday

2:00 pm-4:00 pm

Minimum age requirement 14 years old (w/ guardian)

Dinner Service

Available 7 days a week

4:50 pm-7:00 pm

Minimum age requirement 14 years old (w/ guardian)

[Click Here for Volunteer Opportunities](#)

Donation Needs

- Baby Diapers- Size 4, 5, and 6
- Baby Wipes
- Non-Perishable Snacks

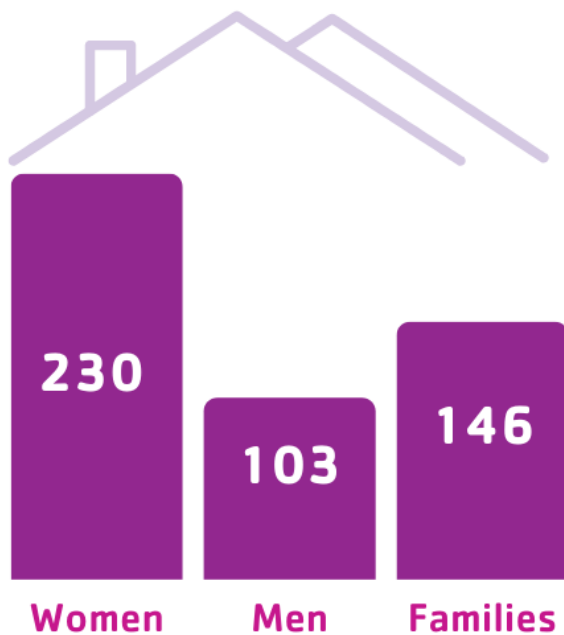
Please coordinate your donation drop off by emailing vbvolunteer@ymcacolumbus.org and include a description of your donation items and the date/time for drop-off.



[Click Here for Amazon Wish List](#)

APRIL 2023 IMPACT

Van Buren Center provided safe shelter to 878 individuals in April.



PROGRAM OUTCOMES

46

Workshops available onsite to guests in April.

300+

Guests participated and attended a workshop.

18,338

Meals served in April at Van Buren Center.

158

Volunteers dedicated their time to making a difference at Van Buren and totaled 923 hours!

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