

YMCA Van Buren Shelter Services

Monthly news & updates



April 2022

Current Donation Needs

URGENT

- Baby diapers: size 6
- Deodorant: Men & Women

Always Needed

- Baby wipes
- Lotion
- Combs/brushes
- Women's underwear: size M-2X
- Men's underwear: size M-2X

Amazon Wish List

The Impact of Kindness and Service
Van Buren Volunteer Appreciation Brunch Save the Date
Tuesday, June 7th at 11:00 AM



Are you interested in learning more about our Van Buren Volunteer Program?
Are you a New Volunteer?

Click the button below to find out more and sign up for our **YMCA Shelter Services Onboarding** to get started learning about how to be a Van Buren Volunteer.

YMCA Van Buren Volunteers show their commitment to community every day and the generosity of our volunteers is evident in everything we do for our guests at the Van Buren Center.

Volunteers make it possible for us to do more. Your willingness to donate your time and talent not only helps our organization but directly impacts each person we serve. To all of our present, new, and future volunteers we want you to know how important the work you do is and how much it is valued and appreciated.

April was National Volunteer Month and we are so excited to announce that for the first time in two years our annual Volunteer Appreciation Event will be in person this year. We hope you will join us! A Save the Date RSVP invite will be sent out to all of our volunteers in early May. The event will be held on Tuesday, June 7th at 11:00 am.

Learn More!

For more information about volunteering or the event please email vbvolunteer@ymcacolumbus.org



Incredible Van Buren Kids: School-Aged Spring Break Program

From April 18 to 22 in our upstairs youth space, there were morning and afternoon sessions available to our children on spring break to attend. Activities and fun were programmed by Kristian Tucker, the **Volunteer Coordinator**. Each day children got to complete a different art project, have playtime with the toys and books, snack time, and learned how to make ice cream from a bag with ice and salt! On the last day, there was a pizza party for the kids and parents.



The children also worked together to paint a special surprise and Thank You gift for Director of Systems, **Colton Sray** who has been with the Van Buren Center since the day it opened in July of 2014. He is moving out of state and while we are so excited for him he will be missed. We are grateful to him for his commitment to service and the impact he has made on Van Buren.



An EGG-cellent Van Buren Family Event

Friday, April 15



Our first ever Easter Egg Hunt and Pictures with the Easter Bunny event at Van Buren Center was a great success. It was held on April 15 for our families, and we had over **40 children attend the event** and over 50 guests. Each child had the chance to meet the Easter Bunny and have their picture taken and printed out for them. Our Easter Bunny was played by our wonderful and amazing Facilities Director, **Gus Correa**. We are so grateful to him for volunteering for the role, the kids absolutely loved it and he did a great job!

In addition, there were cookies donated by **Grandview Yard Market District**, cotton candy, popcorn, juice boxes, free books, and candy stuffed inside eggs for the kids. For the egg hunt, **John Gerlach** of Performace Cars provided baskets and candy, while also running our cotton candy machine during the event. With the support and generosity from members of our **YMCA Downtown Board** and amazing board Volunteer Committee members **Mary Menkedick** and **Felicity Hillmer**, we were able to assemble **250 goodie bags** to give to all of the children currently in our shelter filled with small toys, bubbles, glowsticks, games, and so much more.

#LearnUnited

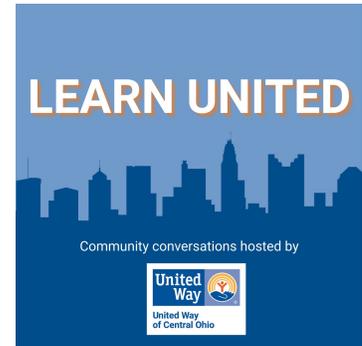
Current State of Volunteerism Panel



On Thursday, April 21 staff member, Carolyn Slebodnik was one of the panelists for **#LearnUnited**'s conversation focused on volunteerism in our community.

She was joined by an amazing group of panelists from nonprofit groups all around central Ohio. Together they discussed the importance of volunteerism and the impact it makes in our community. To watch the conversation click the link below:

<https://youtu.be/Y6H1A4M1Irc>



Community Spotlight: Mosaic Students Capstone Project with Van Buren Center



The Van Buren Center is excited to welcome back another group of Mosaic High School students for their end-of-the-year Capstone Project. Mosaic students come from different high schools located all around Franklin County. The students will be with us for 5 weeks, 4 days a week learning about our shelter and completing different volunteer projects. Part of their project will be a special blog series created by them about their experience volunteering at the Van Buren Center and learning about our shelter.

The students will learn about all the services available to our guests at Van Buren and the day-to-day operations. So far, the students have decorated for our Easter Egg event and assembled the 250 goodie bags that were given to each child, worked in the Van Buren Community Garden, assembled Welcome Kits for Kids that are given to all the children when they first enter shelter, worked in our warehouse, spent a day in our Youth Spring Break Program for the kids and completed a paint project with them, and so much more!



[Visit Our Website](#)

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