



What's Happening at Van Buren Monthly News & Updates

NOVEMBER 2023



Share the Magic of the Season with a Special Gift

**Santa's Workshop
opens Sunday,
December 17th, and
runs until Sunday,
December 24th.**

The Van Buren Center currently has 277 children in shelter. Our goal is to ensure that each child has the opportunity to experience a magical holiday season and receive 5 special gifts each. We need your help to make this possible!

Santa's Workshop

YMCA VAN BUREN CENTER



[Click Here for Target Wish List](#)

[Click Here for Amazon Wish List](#)

What Kind of Toys Are We Looking For?

We ask that all toys donated are new, unwrapped toys. The special thing about Santa's Workshop is we include the parents in the experience of giving. Parents get to pick out each gift which ensures that the child receives the most perfect gift that is selected specifically with them in mind. Please no toy guns/Nerf-Guns, knives/swords, or weapons.

We are in need of gifts for teens. There are currently over 50 youth in our shelter between the ages of 13-17 years old. By donating to Van Buren's Santa's Workshop your support will help make sure all of the youth at the shelter have the opportunity to experience a magical holiday.

Our biggest age groups of youth are ages 2-4 years old and 10-11 years old. We are in need of toys, board games, and dolls. Please consider visiting one of our wish lists and donating a toy this holiday.

Toys can be dropped off at Van Buren through Monday, December 18th. To coordinate your donation drop-off please email vbvolunteer@ymcacolumbus.org.

Visit our Target and Amazon Wish Lists for suggestions and ideas for the toys. If you would like to donate to our toy drive you are welcome to purchase them from any store and do not need to get them from Target or Amazon to give.

Volunteer in Santa's Workshop!

There are only a few slots left with openings! If you haven't signed up yet for this year's Santa's Workshop make sure to reserve your slot

before they are all filled up.

[Click Here for Santa's Workshop Volunteer Sign-Up](#)



Volunteer to Serve Christmas Eve or Day Dinner at Van Buren

Help make the holiday bright and meaningful for our guests by volunteering to help serve dinner. If you are interested in donating food, drinks, or desserts we are in need of donations for these items as well.

[Click Here for Christmas Dinner Volunteer Sign-Up](#)

Thanksgiving at Van Buren

Give Thanks. Give Food. Give Hope





The men, women, and families currently staying at Van Buren enjoyed not 1, but 2 wonderful holiday meals on Thanksgiving Day thanks to the hard work of over 60 volunteers who donated their time, talent, and heart. **X-Clusive Empowerment Network** provided and served Thanksgiving Lunch for the 8th year in a row! As always they provided an incredibly delicious meal and took such great care of our guests providing special moments filled with joy and gratitude. **Fry Out Cancer** blessed us for the 3rd year in a row by providing 40 turkeys for our Thanksgiving Dinner, and **Juawann** with **Reliable Transport Express** and his brother provided and cooked all of the side dishes for the meal. Volunteers from Ohio Health, Besa, and our community helped to prep the turkeys and desserts and also serve dinner.





COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Dress for Success

Monthly Visit to Van Buren



Dress for Success made their monthly visit to Van Buren earlier this month. Each month they provide our women in shelter with an incredible experience and resource. **Dress for Success** offers our guests styling sessions where they can get the clothing and personal care items they need to be interview and employment-ready. We are so grateful to Dress for Success for their continued partnership and the amazing impact they make in the lives of those we serve.

NetJets

November 10th-Meal Prep



We are always in need of volunteers to help out in our kitchen. We had 2 teams from **NetJets** join us this month. They got so much prep work done for breakfast and helped prepare dinner for our guests that evening. Both groups did an incredible job helping out and it was wonderful having them join us this month.



J.P. Morgan Chase Bank

November 15th- Meal Prep and Single Adult Men's Gift Wrapping



We hosted a team from **J.P. Morgan Chase Bank** earlier this month. The group completed multiple projects with us during their time including meal prep, dinner service, and assembling **180 holiday gift bags** for men at Van Buren to receive this Christmas. They assembled the gifts in record time and were a huge help in our kitchen. Thank you to the team for all your work!





Aetna and Micheal Anne

Valuable Resources and Food Donations



Michael-Ann from **Aetna** continues to amaze us with her passion and effort to help support the Van Buren Center. Each month Aetna provides valuable resources and information to our guests by coming out to meet and talk with them. In addition, Michael-Ann frequently volunteers in our kitchen and drops off donations to help feed our guests. We are so grateful to Michael-Ann and Aetna for all of their support!

ViaQuest

Weekly Tuesday Lunch Service



ViaQuest has been providing the Van Buren Center with volunteers from their agency every Tuesday to help us with lunch service. The agency provides services and support to individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities. The group of volunteers has been a huge help in providing great service and care to our guests in shelter. Thank you to ViaQuest for all your amazing work!



Columbus Airport Authority

November 1- Meal Prep and Dinner Service



It was a busy month in our kitchen this November! We welcomed a team from **Columbus Airport Authority** who did a great job prepping fruit and produce that we got donated. It takes so many hands to prep and provide 3 meals a day to our guests at Van Buren.

We are so grateful to all of the volunteers who have given their time, talent, and heart in 2023.

To learn more about how you can get involved email vbvolunteer@ymcacolumbus.org



Brandi N Milbry Foundation

November Birthday Gift Drop-Off



Watch Now

NBC4 came out this month to capture the amazing story and work that the **Brandi N Milbry Foundation** does in our community spreading love and kindness. Watch the story by clicking the link or video. We are so grateful to the foundation for the impact that they make in the lives of the children at Van Buren.

To learn more about the foundation and how you can help [Click Here.](#)

Volunteer Opportunities

[New Volunteer Orientation](#)

Donation Needs

- Hats, gloves, scarves
- Blankets (new/gently)

Virtual

Meal Prep

Available Monday-Friday

2:00 pm-4:00 pm

Minimum age requirement is 14 years old (w/ guardian)

Dinner Service

Available 7 days a week

4:50 pm-7:00 pm

Minimum age requirement is 14 years old (w/ guardian)

[Click Here for Volunteer Opportunities](#)

used)

- Adult Winter Coats
URGENT NEED sizes 3XL-6XL
- Travel size shampoo, bar soap, and deodorant

Coordinate your donation drop off or receive more information about our current donation needs by emailing

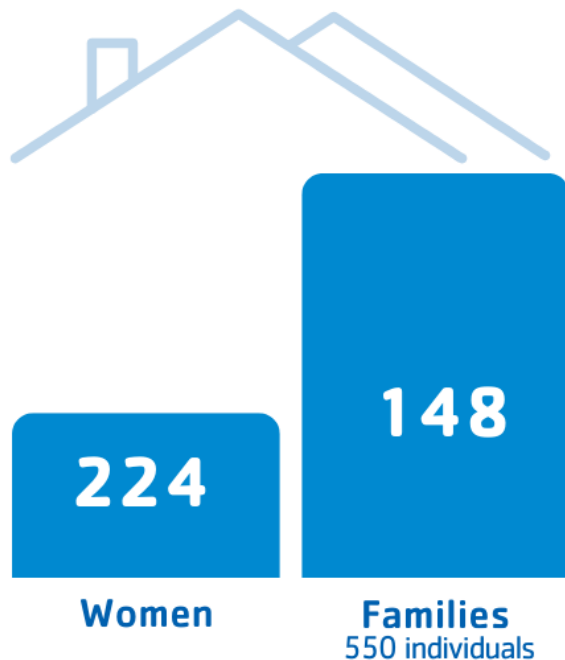
vbvolunteer@ymcacolumbus.org.

[Click Here for Amazon Wish List](#)

YMCA VAN BUREN CENTER

OCTOBER IMPACT

Van Buren Center provided safe shelter to 774 individuals in October.



PROGRAM OUTCOMES

45

Workshops available onsite to guests in October.



300+

Guests participated and attended a workshop and 105 hours of direct service offered.



14,740

Meals served in October at Van Buren Center.



228

Volunteers gave their time to make a difference and totaled 430 hours.





Give Hope 2023

THANK YOU!



This year's **Give Hope** event was an incredible night filled with hope and inspiring stories. Our MC for the night, **Monica Day** from NBC4 did an amazing job helping us tell our story and hosting. We are so thankful to everyone who attended and gave to this year's Give Hope campaign. During the event, we reached our fundraising goal for the night and raised over \$30,000! These funds will ensure that our families and women in shelter have the resources and support they need to successfully get out shelter and into a home of their own.



Visit our Website



YMCA of Central Ohio Shelter Services | 595 Van Buren Dr., Columbus, OH 43223

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