



What's Happening at Van Buren Monthly News & Updates OCTOBER 2023



Trunk-or-Treat Fun!



"This is better than real Halloween!"

Mallory W., a volunteer at Trunk-or-Treat heard one of the children exclaim this during Van Buren's annual event last Thursday. She was kind enough to share it with us. This year's event was a huge success because of the incredible response we received from our community.

Another volunteer **Amanda O.** put an ask out on her neighborhood social media group and received an overwhelming response from her neighbors and the community reaching out to help. She delivered over four carloads of costumes. Amanda shared with us how the post led to her meeting new neighbors in her area and building new relationships and networks. She is just one of the over **70 volunteers** who gave their time, talent, and heart this year to make our Trunk-or-Treat event an incredible time for our families.

The response we received from our community was a reminder of just how powerful small acts are and the impact they make when we all come together. The Van Buren Center received almost **300 costumes** this year in donations for our children in shelter and tons of candy. We are so thankful to our volunteers, board members, and staff for participating and donating to this year's event. Our families had a wonderful time and the 250 children currently in our shelter were all given the opportunity to experience a fun and safe event.

THANK YOU!





Community Garden of the Year

Harvest Award 2023 Winner- Van Buren Community Garden



Van Buren's Volunteer Coordinator, Katrina Martin-Healey, and Administrative Program Director, Carolyn Slebodnik attended the event.

At this year's **Growing to Green Harvest Awards**, Van Buren Center received the honor of being recognized as **Community Garden of the Year**. The ceremony was held at Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Garden. There were so many incredible community gardens and organizations from central Ohio nominated and recognized during the night. The Van Buren Community Garden is made possible because of the countless volunteers and staff who show their commitment to creating sustainable environments in our community and providing our guests with access to healthy and nutritious food.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

OSU Wexner Medical Center Marketing Team

October 9th-Fall Decorations



Thank you so much to the marketing team from **OSU Wexner Medical Center** for volunteering earlier this month to decorate our Single Adult Shelter with fall festive decor. They did a wonderful job being creative and decorating the building with the donated items.

OSU Wexner Medical Center Ambulatory Team

October 10th-Welcome Home Baskets and Meal Prep



We are always in need of volunteers to help out in our kitchen. The **OSU Wexner Medical Center** joined us again this month but this time with their Ambulatory Team. In record time they assembled 50 Welcome Home Baskets, prepped future meals for the shelter, and cooked and packaged dinner for the guests.



Victoria's Secret & Co. HR Talent Team

October 12th- Meal Prep



It is always such a pleasure to welcome the **Victoria's Secret & Co.** team to the shelter and have them as volunteers. This month we hosted the HR Talent team in our kitchen. The team helped the kitchen prep and cut a recent produce donation so that it could all be used to cook future meals. They did a great job and impressed our kitchen staff with their culinary skills.



Franklin County Board of Engineers

October 20th- Hiring Event



This month **Franklin County Board of Engineers** hosted an onsite hiring event for our guests at Van Buren. **12 guests** had the chance to apply and interview on the spot with the team. It was such a great experience working with the county team.



We look forward to the opportunity to partner with them again. The Van Buren Center is always looking for new businesses and companies to partner with to provide the guests in our shelter with employment opportunities and resources. For more information about how to partner with our Employment Program please email Melissa Marcum at melissa.marcum@ymcacolumbus.org



Looking for Holiday Volunteer Opportunities?



Care, Love, and Food for All This
Thanksgiving
Volunteer Opportunities at Van Buren Center

November 21-23
Meal Prep and Dinner Service

Let's give thanks together this Thanksgiving. Help us in our mission to build strong communities. Donate your time, talent, and heart and give to the Van Buren Center.

the 

Join Us and Volunteer at Van Buren Center This Holiday Season

The holiday season is here! We would love to have you join us this holiday season volunteering in our kitchen. Help us give care, love, and bountiful food for all this Thanksgiving.

Click on the **Volunteer Sign Up** button to learn more about our Thanksgiving volunteer opportunities this year.

[Volunteer Sign Up](#)

It's the most special time of year, again.



Santa's Workshop Toy Drive
YMCA VAN BUREN CENTER

the 



Let's bring happiness to every child's heart this holiday season.

Share the love with those who need it most. Each year, the Van Buren Center strives to spread joy and bring happiness to our families, women, and men in shelter. For our guests who are faced with spending the holidays in a shelter, there can be few reasons to smile or feel joy. This is where we need your help.

Our mission is to ensure that we continue to provide our families,

women, and men at Van Buren with a memorable and magical holiday. Where they know that they are loved and valued by their community because they are surrounded by people who care about them. The real joy of giving is giving to someone who can't repay you.

The volunteer sign-up for this year's Santa's Workshop will be available and sent out to our mailing list in early November.

[Click Here for Target Wish List](#)

[Click Here for Amazon Wish List](#)

Visit our Target and Amazon Wish Lists for suggestions and ideas for the toys we are requesting. 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. We request that all toys donated to our Santa's Workshop be new and unwrapped toys. Email vbvolunteer@ymcacolumbus.org for more information!

Volunteer Opportunities

New Volunteer Orientation

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](#)

Donation Needs

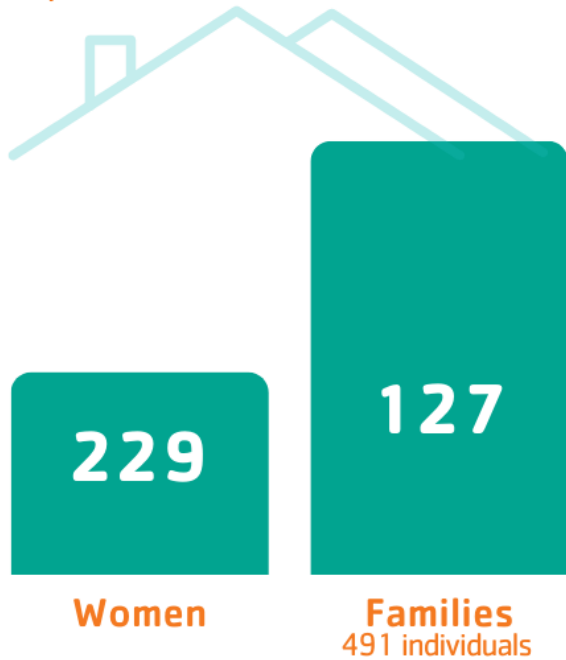
- Baby Bottles & Sippy Cups
- Hats, gloves, scarves
- Blankets (new/gently used)
- Adult Winter Coats size 3XL-6XL

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](#)

SEPTEMBER IMPACT

Van Buren Center provided safe shelter to 720 individuals in September.



PROGRAM OUTCOMES

41

Workshops available onsite to guests in September.



180+

Guests participated and attended a workshop and 93 hours of direct service offered.



15,711

Meals served in September at Van Buren Center.



70

Volunteers gave their time to make a difference and totaled 136 hours.



October 9th was the Y's first

Why We Wear Purple

YMCA Van Buren Give Hope



Event Date:

Thursday, November 2nd

Time:

5:00 pm-7:00 pm

Location:

Grange Audubon

**505 W Whittier St, Columbus, OH
43215**

We Wear Purple Day to spread awareness about Give Hope and the impact it makes. The Van Buren staff showed out in their purple shirts.

What is Give Hope?

Give Hope empowers and supports guests at Van Buren. 100% of the funds raised for Give Hope go towards eliminating barriers and helping the women and families currently at Van Buren get housed sooner. The Give Hope Fundraising Campaign started in 2018 and was created by YMCA Housing and Shelter's board member and previous board chair Joshua Zimmerman.

The Give Hope Annual Fundraising Event is this Thursday, November 2nd. It is not too late to buy your ticket and attend. We hope to see you there!

**Buy Tickets
Now!**



[Visit our Website](#)



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

[Unsubscribe carolyn.slebodnik@ymcacolumbus.org](mailto:carolyn.slebodnik@ymcacolumbus.org)

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