

Celebrating the 2024 State of New Hampshire



Older Adult Volunteer Award Winners

This year marks the 5th Annual Older Adult Volunteer Awards from the New Hampshire State Commission on Aging. This award is built upon 59 years of Governors of the State of New Hampshire celebrating the contributions of older adults through an award for their volunteerism in the Granite State during the nationally recognized Older Americans Month.

Older Adults are a resource for our communities. The people being honored for their service through this award have demonstrated that any one of us can make a difference at any point in our lives. They have shown outstanding leadership or demonstrated meritorious achievement as volunteers in New Hampshire. Through their engagement, they have woven connections that contribute to and strengthen our communities.

2024 Honorees

Joan Winterle

Belknap

Joan Winterle from the Alton Senior Center has demonstrated her dedication, passion, skills, and compassion for helping others through her volunteering at the center. When a new participant comes to the Alton Center, Joan always makes them feel welcome with her smile and conversation about what their interests are for meals and activities. With limited budgets that support the center, Joan's skills in organizing and keeping the kitchen operations running are a great support to Community Action Program Belknap and Merrimack Counties, Inc. older adult nutrition program.

Marion Owen and therapy dog Lilla Du

Carroll

Marion Owen and her therapy dog Lilla Du have logged over 230 hours of service at the Memorial Hospital Pet Therapy Program. Their service extends to other sectors including visiting the NH Veterans home in Tilton and the Manchester Veterans Home. Marion and Lilla Du have offered their support to both in Lewiston Maine and at the NH State Hospital after the recent tragic events that occurred in those communities. The Staff and patients of both sites were happy to see them and were extremely grateful for the visits.

Bill and Barb Chase

Cheshire

Bill and Barb Chase are both active volunteers in the Westmoreland community and beyond. Several years ago, Bill started the Emergency Management Program in Westmoreland and was the Director of the program for many years. Bill now is the assistant director of the program. Both Bill and Barb have participated in the Keene Pops Choir for years. They are also quite involved in Project Home, a grassroots organization that helps asylum seekers move from detention centers into our communities and homes as they await their asylum hearings. Besides volunteering locally, they are also global volunteers participating in volunteer opportunities in Guatemala, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Haiti, Nepal, Honduras, Tanzania, Rural West Virginia, and an American Indian reservation in Montana.

John Tolman

Coos

John 'Jay' Tolman has been a dedicated and passionate member of the volunteer team, at North Country Home Health and Hospice since 2012, contributing over 100 hours of service in 2023 alone. He is on track to hit another 100 hours this year. Jay's commitment to making a difference is evident in every interaction. Patients, as well as the families and caregivers he supports, consistently report that he is a bright light in their days. His kindness and attentive listening ensure that each patient receives individualized support during their end-of-life journey. Jay is not only a volunteer; he is a compassionate and dedicated advocate for those in need. His efforts go beyond fulfilling a role – they contribute significantly to the personal growth of those he serves and the growth of the community.

Kathy Sherrieb

Grafton

Kathy Sherrieb has been an active member of the CommunityCare of Lyme Board, helping guide the organization toward fulfilling its mission. She has also acted as one of the leads for the Pearl Dimick Fund, which helps families in the community heat their homes and offers grants to send their children to camps over the summer. Furthermore, this volunteer was the driving force behind starting a Food Pantry in our community at the start of the pandemic. Through her volunteerism, families and individuals in Lyme and surrounding communities have regular, predictable access to food items regardless of their ability to pay. All are welcome at the food pantry each Tuesday afternoon, and there are no questions asked. Kathy has created this safe space for people to come together to support one another while sharing the bounty of the region.

Judy Cook

Hillsborough

Judy Cook has been an outstanding volunteer in the community of Brookline, NH for many decades. She has selflessly given her time, energy, and expertise to a wide variety of causes and her service has not gone unnoticed. Judy has held many positions in her community including EMT with Brookline Volunteer Ambulance; Brookline NH Selectboard member; Brookline NH Planning Board; Cemetery Trustee; Supervisor of the Checklist and many more. Judy has also been a Catholic Charities, "Caregivers" driver for 7 years. Judy continues to enrich her community by her selfless service and commitment to volunteerism.

Mary McGahan

Merrimack

Mary McGahan has been volunteering with Crisis Center of Central NH longer than there is a record of, becoming a fixture in our organization, both for volunteering and fundraising. Mary is the creator of Mr. Concord, a fundraiser that brings in new volunteers and new donors and has been an amazing opportunity to educate the community on the issues of domestic and sexual violence. Mary also attends all our annual awareness building events like Walk-a-Mile in Their Shoes and the Resilience Breakfast and actively represents CCCNH in the community during events like Market Days, National Night Out, and Midnight Merriment to spread CCCNH's mission. Not only is she a volunteer for CCCNH and a member of General Federation of Women's Clubs, but she has also been a Hospice volunteer for 17 years, a Shot at Life volunteer for 6 years, and was previously a Board Member & Executive Director of Dress for Success NH.

Denise O'Connor

Rockingham

Denise 'Denny' O'Connor joined Community Caregivers of Greater Derry in 2015 after retiring from a management position at Friendly's. She started with weekly volunteer medical drives which she still does to this day. Denise works one-on-one with clients of the center, her spirit and willingness to work with all who need help is commendable. Denise is integral for the success of the Loaner Closet, a durable medical equipment community lending program. When the program was told they had 120 days to move, Denise started helping weekly in the office with packing, purging, and organizing. After she helped with the move in, she started helping at the Loaners Closet each Friday. Denise is a perfect office volunteer who comes in, knows what to do, how to help and just does it.

Jerry Vermette

Strafford

Jerry Vermette has run Rochester's Veterans' group for several years. Many Veterans are unaware of what benefits they should be receiving. Jerry makes sure they are aware of those benefits and how to receive them. Jerry's Veterans' Group is important for encouragement, fellowship and reminiscing about things only veterans can understand and appreciate. Jerry is always welcoming and willing to assist as needed with the variety of needs he is presented with. He constantly tries to reach out to all the veterans in the Rochester Area through advertising and promotion. Jerry's efforts have helped his fellow veterans to follow his lead and reach out to others in the community. This is evident in the growth of the group. Jerry is committed to his fellow veterans and is constantly trying to make sure their needs are met.

Bruce Jasper (posthumously) accepted by his wife Anne Jasper

Sullivan

In anticipation of this prestigious award each year, the Newport Senior Center begins thinking about all their valuable volunteers and who we they would like to recognize the following year. In 2023, the Center knew exactly who we wanted to recognize in 2024. Unfortunately, due to unexpected medical difficulties, it is with heavy hearts that they nominated Bruce Jasper, posthumously.

Bruce Jasper was not only a partner in a local law firm, but also a partner in the community. Bruce had a profound impact as a member of the board of directors, for the Newport Senior Center, for the past four years. Bruce donated the gift of his time each month sharing his expertise and supporting fundraisers that would help the center continue to provide services to older adults in Sullivan County. For Bruce, giving back was his way of life. Bruce's efforts in giving back have touched the lives of people of all ages. Whether Bruce was volunteering his time at the Newport Senior Center, in the town governments of Croydon and Newport, Wags & Wiggles Rescue, or Economic Corporation of Newport, Bruce's acts of kindness always empowered others to live a healthy life filled with joy, happiness, and independence.

