

Honorees named for annual Celebrating Volunteers

USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin 6:58 p.m. CT March 22, 2017



APPLETON - The honorees of the annual Celebrating Volunteers Community Gala will take their moment in the spotlight on May 2.

The gala, presented by the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region and The Post-Crescent, aims to honor the selfless work of volunteers who toil behind the scenes for a bevy of great causes in the Fox Valley.

This year's recipients include:

- **Kaylie Bittner** of Menasha, who earned the Youth Scholarship Award for her efforts in launching a clothing and toiletry drive through St. Mary Catholic High School and other local schools to aid students dealing with homelessness. The award is presented by Community First Credit Union.
- **Mary Downs** of Appleton, who will receive the Janet Berry Volunteer of the Year Award for her extensive work with NAMI Fox Valley, including serving as the organization's board chairperson. The award is presented by The Post-Crescent.
- **Lee Hillstrom** of Neenah, the recipient of the Health Award, who has, among other things, been instrumental in the establishment of the Us TOO Fox Cities Prostate Cancer Support Group and the success of the Neenah Summer Fun Run. The award is presented by Ascension and ThedaCare.
- **Fox Cities Diaper Bank and Kimberly-Clark**, recipients of the Business Partnership Award. K-C has worked closely with the United Way Fox Cities since 2010 to coordinate and support the Diaper Bank program, which provides diapers to babies from low-income families. The award is presented by SECURA Insurance.
- **Jane Dwyre Garton** of Little Chute, who will receive the Walter L. Rugland Community Service Award for her many years of volunteer efforts for such endeavors as the Women's Fund for the Fox Valley Region, Leadership Fox Cities, the Community Learning Center, Global Fox Cities, the Kurgan Sister Cities Project, the Multicultural Center and the Friends of the Appleton Public Library. The award is presented by Thrivent Financial.
- **Sally Podoski** of Neenah, who will be honored with the Paul and Elaine Groth Mentoring Award for her mentoring work at multiple agencies in the Fox Cities over the past dozen years. She has worked closely with both youth organizations and those who cater to the needs of the elderly. The award is presented by Mielke Family Foundation.
- **Carolyn Ragusett** of Neenah, recipient of the Hanns Kretzschmar Award for Excellence in the Arts. She has been a key player in the success of Attic Theatre, including serving a dozen years on the board of directors and providing an array of support. The award is presented by Thrivent Financial.

- **Marie Waddell** of Appleton, who will receive the Dan P. Spalding Volunteer Educator Award for the myriad of volunteer roles she held at Ferber Elementary School, including serving as president of the school's parent-teacher organization. The award is presented by School Specialty.

Each of the nominees will be featured in The Post-Crescent in April.

The Celebrating Volunteers Community Gala is set for 6 p.m. May 2 at the Radisson Paper Valley Hotel in downtown Appleton. Registration and a pre-gala reception will begin at 5:15 p.m., followed by dinner, an awards program and post-event social.

Tickets are \$35 per person or \$350 per table of 10. Registration deadline is April 25. Register at cfoxvalley.org/celebrating-volunteers.