

## FOCUS ON Volunteer Gwinnett Smashes Records and Enhances Lives

– April 1, 2014

Meeting a challenging goal is great. Smashing it two years ahead of time is even better. The residents and county employees participating in Volunteer Gwinnett understand just how powerful teamwork can be when tackling ambitious projects. More than 50,000 Gwinnett volunteers ended 2013 with a bang by logging more than one million volunteer hours. The original goal was to reach one million by 2015.

For more than 25 years, volunteerism has been a part of Gwinnett County Government's culture. That is why Volunteer Gwinnett was initiated in 2012. As a part of Gwinnett County's Human Resources Department, it consolidates all county volunteer opportunities on one website and organizes the selection process, background checks, and administration.

Not long after its inception, others took notice of the program's efforts. Volunteer Gwinnett received two national awards in 2013: the Achievement Award in the Volunteers category from the National Association of Counties and the Superior Award from the National Association of County Information Officers. Program Coordinator **Kay Sibetta** is proud of the progress that has been made so far and acknowledges that it takes people working together to make it happen. *"I believe that Volunteer Gwinnett has been successful because of the tremendous support given from the County's leadership, departments, employees, our amazing volunteers, and community partners,"* Sibetta said. *"Volunteer Gwinnett is truly a collaborative initiative."*



*Volunteer opportunities are varied throughout the County and allow participants to enhance the lives of others*

You have probably seen Volunteer Gwinnett in action throughout the County. If you have ever taken a class at one of Parks and Recreation's community centers, there's a good chance it was taught by a volunteer. If you called a county department with a question, you might have been assisted by a volunteer.



*Volunteers help Parks and Recreation in many ways, from cleaning up park facilities to teaching classes*

Those who are willing to share their time and partner with local government reap numerous benefits. Residents, community partners, and businesses become more engaged through volunteering. Volunteer Gwinnett participants get the benefit of learning firsthand how local government works and affects their lives. The impact on government operation is no less impressive. In addition to beating the 1 million hour goal in 2013, Gwinnett County volunteers made a financial impact of more than \$22.7 million.

If making a significant financial impact and learning about local government is not enough motivation, volunteers get the satisfaction of helping others live happier, healthier, and more independent lives. For example, Volunteer Gwinnett – Senior

Services affords the opportunity for volunteers to assist Gwinnett's large senior population. Opportunities include meal delivery, light housekeeping assistance, transportation assistance, and minor home repairs.

Jim Griffith, a longtime homedelivered meals volunteer, appreciates the opportunity to serve others and contribute to his community. "It's much more than delivering good food," Griffith said. "We become friends with the seniors we are serving. Any time you get a chance to be a friend to someone, and sometimes be the only person they get to see that day, it feels really good."

To learn more about how you can volunteer, visit [www.volunteergwinnett.net](http://www.volunteergwinnett.net).

April 6 through April 13 is National Volunteer Week. Please consider signing up to be part of the program.



*More than 50,000 volunteers gave of their time during 2013, providing the County with more than \$22.7 million worth of labor*