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**First Lady Beshear Honors Exemplary Volunteers**  
*2011 Service Recognized*

**Note to editors:** Award category descriptions and summaries of winning nominations are available by calling Anya Weber at (502) 564-6786.

**FRANKFORT, Ky.** (June 11, 2012) – Seventeen groups and individuals from across the state were honored for their volunteer contributions today at a ceremony in Frankfort.

First Lady Jane Beshear and Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) Deputy Secretary Eric Friedlander presented the 2011 Governor's Awards for Volunteerism and Service at the Governor's Mansion.

The Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service (KCCVS) coordinates the annual awards program.

Mrs. Beshear called the commitment of the award recipients outstanding.

"These annual awards put a much-deserved spotlight on the people who quietly but resolutely serve others with no expectations for recognition or acclaim," Mrs. Beshear said. "These honorees represent the thousands of Kentuckians who volunteer. They serve as an inspiration for us all to find a passion in service and give sincerely."

Friedlander said the honorees show how one dedicated person or group can change the lives of others.

"Your service does lasting good for so many Kentuckians in ways that you may never know," he said. "You are certainly filling the needs of our vulnerable citizens and have become true partners to this cabinet in preventing crises and promoting well-being. I congratulate and thank you all."

The Governor's Office launched the volunteer awards program in 1975. Since 1995, the KCCVS has administered the program.

A panel of independent judges with experience in volunteerism and/or service chose award recipients in 13 categories.

Two additional achievement awards were also presented to honor groups for their participation during the state's Make A Difference Day food drive last October.

For the second year, a special First Lady's Award was added to honor a Kentuckian who has gone the extra mile to assist youth at risk of dropping out of school, an effort that complements Mrs. Beshear's Graduate Kentucky initiative.

Jeanette Elder of Pikeville and George B. Merrifield Jr. of Louisville each received a Lifetime Achievement Award.

A list of award winners and their nominators follows.

### **2011 Governor's Awards for Volunteerism and Service Recipients**

- **Hazard High School**, Group Youth Volunteer Service Award, Hazard/Perry County, Nominated by Betsy Clemons
- **The Baptist Coalition**, Faith-Based Group Award, Louisville/Jefferson County, Nominated by Carin Veech
- **Mortenson Family Dental**, Corporate Award, Louisville/Jefferson County, Nominated by Diane M. Cowne, M.Ed.
- **Hypnotiq Motorcycle Club**, Group Volunteer Service Award, Lexington/Fayette County, Nominated by Kathy Hughes
- **Partners In Education**, Group Volunteer Service Award, Winchester/Clark County, Nominated by Cora Heffner
- **Commonwealth Canine Search and Recovery**, Nonprofit Organization Award, Lexington/Fayette County, Nominated by Heather M. Suedkamp
- **Amanda Otten**, Youth Volunteer Service Award, Louisville/Jefferson County, Nominated by Linda Roark
- **Thrissie Dohn**, Challenge Award, Mount Washington/Bullitt County, Nominated by Patty Gregory
- **Jennifer L. Webb**, Volunteer Service Award, Richmond/Madison County, Nominated by Brandy Oliver Brown
- **Fran Adams**, Senior Volunteer Service Award, Paducah/McCracken County, Nominated by Ann Smith
- **Wathen Livers**, National Service Award, Owensboro/Daviess County, Nominated by Cathy Campbell
- **Lisa Johnson**, First Lady's Award, Versailles/Woodford County, Nominated by Tina Murphy
- **Shawn P. Aberl II**, Kentucky Ambassador Award, Elizabethtown/Hardin County, Nominated by Jennifer Aberl
- **Jeanette Elder**, Lifetime Achievement Award, Pikeville/Pike County, Nominated by Dana King
- **George B. Merrifield Jr.**, Lifetime Achievement Award, Louisville/Jefferson County, Nominated by Meredith McCann

### **Make A Difference Day Traveling Awards**

- MSUCorps, AmeriCorps Program
- The Lakes Service Region, Department for Community Based Services region

MSUCorps AmeriCorps Program's 29 members collected more than 20 tons of nonperishable food items. This equates to 23,080 ounces of food per member. Their effort allowed area food banks to feed 83,665 Kentuckians.

Mary Claire Williams is the program director for Morehead State University's MSUCorps AmeriCorps program.

The Lakes Service Region's 402 employees collected 26,323 ounces of nonperishable food items. This equates to more than 65 ounces of food per employee, enabling food banks to feed 3,290 Kentuckians. The Lakes Service Region includes Ballard, Caldwell, Calloway, Carlisle, Christian, Crittenden, Fulton, Graves, Hickman, Hopkins, Livingston, Lyon, Marshall, McCracken, Muhlenberg, Trigg and Todd counties.

This is the third consecutive win for The Lakes Service Region. Therefore, the Make A Difference Day traveling award is theirs to keep. Renee Buckingham is the Service Region Administrator.

For more information about the awards program or the KCCVS, please visit [www.volunteerKY.ky.gov](http://www.volunteerKY.ky.gov).

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*The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and health care programs, including Medicaid, the Department for Community Based Services and the Department for Public Health. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full and part-time employees throughout the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.*