Press Release

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Fort Drum Public Affairs

Fort Drum celebrates volunteerism, recognizes exceptional community service

FORT DRUM, N.Y. -- Volunteers help sustain installations across the Army as they freely contribute their time and effort to enhance readiness and family support and make a positive impact in the local communities.

Fort Drum volunteers who performed exceptional community service activities in the past year were recognized April 20 during the annual Volunteer of the Year Recognition Ceremony.

“The biggest benefit people get from volunteering is the satisfaction of incorporating service into their lives and making a difference in their community and country,” said Dani Reed, Fort Drum Army Volunteer Corps program manager. “Volunteerism is the principle of donating time and energy for the benefit of other people in the community as a social responsibility rather than for any financial reward.”

The theme of this year’s ceremony was “Volunteers: The Heart of the Army Community,” and the following community members were nominated for 2022 Volunteer of the Year in their respective category:

Soldier and Family Readiness Group – Judy Nobles, Master Sgt. Brittany O’Heir, Kelly Ginder, Samantha Faust, Sgt. 1st Class Cody Sommers, Sgt. Brett Newton, Chastine Bobbitt, Sgt. Andrew Kuhn, Samantha Max, Capt. Chaney Brooks, Rachael Mohn, Amanda Staley, Sgt. Kourtney Willis, and Kelsey Tibbles.

Large Community Group – David Havern, Kelly Ginder, and Emma Kelley.

Child and Youth Group – Marie Campos and Spc. Clayton Libberton.

Youth Group – Emery Sayre.

Small Community Group – Jessica Reiter, Samantha Faust, Spc. Clayton Libberton, and Meredith Taylor.

Kelly Ginder was named Soldier and Family Readiness Group Volunteer of the Year and Large Community Group Volunteer of the Year. Ginder was recognized for her work as SFRG leader for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade Combat Team, and for her service as the volunteer coordinator for Chapel Next, Protestant Women of the Chapel board member and general chapel volunteer.

Marie Campos was named Child and Youth Group Volunteer of the Year for her contributions to the Girl Scouts as project coordinator with Indian Trails Service Unit 512.

Emery Sayre was awarded Youth Group Volunteer of the Year for his service with the Fort Drum Religious Support Office.

Spc. Clayton Libberton, a member of the Fort Drum Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program, was named Small Community Group Volunteer of the Year. Libberton was recognized for his contributions to the BOSS program, as well as his volunteer work at Parkside Bible Church with the worship band. He also serves as an assistant scout master and Child and Youth Services sports coach.

“I like helping people and being active in the community,” Libberton said. “I’ve never been someone who likes to sit in my room all day and play video games. I’m always looking for something to do, and helping people is a good use of my personal time.”

Libberton said he learned how he could volunteer with CYS and the Boy Scouts after attending the Fort Drum Army Volunteer Corps Super Sign-up fair.

He also participates in BOSS volunteer activities at the Feed our Vets Food Pantry and SPCA.

“Volunteering is a good way to give back to the community and to make good relationships,” Libberton said. “I’ve met so many people and families I would not normally see if I wasn’t volunteering.”

Ginder was named the overall 2022 Fort Drum Volunteer of the Year.

“This is a great honor for me because the people of Fort Drum and the community here is worth serving every day,” she said. “For me, being a volunteer is a calling and it has been a wonderful opportunity to give back.”

Ginder said she began volunteering 15 years ago when her family was stationed at Fort Bliss, Texas.

“It’s a great opportunity to make connections and network with people, so they don’t feel as lonely or isolated as military family members typically do.”

Community members can explore volunteer opportunities through the Volunteer Management Information System (VMIS) or by contacting the Fort Drum Army Volunteer Corps.

“If people are looking for ways to volunteer, I would find a group or organization that you are passionate about, and then be willing to give the time to serve and to share your gifts and abilities,” Ginder said.

Col. James Zacchino Jr., Fort Drum garrison commander, thanked the volunteers for their invaluable service to the community.

“It has been said and re-echoed that the greatest gift you can give someone is your time,” he said. “So, this is not only an opportunity to celebrate volunteer service, but a chance to say thank you on behalf of the community you helped. To our volunteers, thank you for selflessly dedicating your precious time and efforts for a cause greater than yourselves, and asking for nothing in return.”

Fort Drum volunteers recorded 45,942.75 hours of service into the VMIS last fiscal year. This equates to a monetary value of roughly $1,376,000, with the value of each volunteer hour estimated at $29.95.

“As today’s program highlights, our volunteers are the heart of the Army community,” Zacchino said. “You are truly special, and you symbolize what makes Fort Drum an incredibly awesome community.”

To learn more about the Fort Drum Army Volunteer Corps, visit [www.facebook.com/FortDrumArmyVolunteerCorps](http://www.facebook.com/FortDrumArmyVolunteerCorps). Volunteer opportunities are posted on VMIS at [www.armyfamilywebportal.com](http://www.armyfamilywebportal.com).

Community members can register for VMIS training and volunteer orientation by calling (315) 772-2899. The Army Volunteer Corps office is located inside the Family Resource Center, Bldg. 11042 on Mount Belvedere Boulevard.

For further information regarding this release, contact Public Affairs at [katherine.e.wright12.civ@army.mil](mailto:katherine.e.wright12.civ@army.mil) or 315-772-9043.

Photo Captions:

VOY1 - Col. James Zacchino Jr., Fort Drum garrison commander; Brig. Gen. Jason Curl, 10th Mountain Division (LI) deputy commander for operations; Luzane Anderson; and Command Sgt. Maj. Shelly Jenkins, garrison senior enlisted adviser, present the Volunteer of the Year award to Kelly Ginder during the Volunteer of the Year Recognition Ceremony on April 20 at the Peak. (Photo by Mike Strasser, Fort Drum Garrison Public Affairs)

VOY2- Fort Drum community members gather April 20 at the Peak for a celebration of volunteerism, and to award the Volunteer of the Year in five categories during the Volunteer of the Year Recognition Ceremony. Awardees joined senior leaders for a group photo following the ceremony. (Photo by Mike Strasser, Fort Drum Garrison Public Affairs)