

# COMMUNITY CARES

TCAC AmeriCorps Newsletter — March 2022

## Blooms & Bounty!

All across the state of Tennessee we have had the wonderful opportunity to tell each and every one of your stories as much as we possibly can. We tell them to anyone who will listen. With these stories being told individuals not only get a full representation of what AmeriCorps is, but what it can do for their communities. Allowing our program to grow and flourish as any blooming flower does in the spring, it allows us to continue services more widespread than ever before, within the state of Tennessee, of course!

"There are no limits to what you can accomplish, except the limits you place on your own thinking."  
-Brian Tracy

We're thankful that we've had the opportunity to visit every site, whether it was via zoom or in person. Regardless, we are thankful. We have been able to see first hand what Community Cares AmeriCorps members are doing on a day-to-day basis. Keep growing into beautiful blooms across our great state!

### In this issue:

- Blooms and Bounty
- Facts about Spring
- The Month of March
- You are the Change: GVSA Winners & Stories from YOU
- Just for Fun: Celebrities from Tennessee



**Spring will be Sprung!** — Sunday, March 20th is the first official day of Spring 2022!

- The first day of spring is called the vernal equinox. The term vernal is Latin for "spring" and equinox is Latin for "equal night."
- According to a Facebook study, couples are most likely to break up in the spring and two weeks before Christmas Day from August through October
- The fall and spring equinoxes are the only two times during the year when the sun rises due east and sets due west
- On the first day of spring, a person at the North Pole would see the sun skimming across the horizon, beginning six months of uninterrupted daylight. A person at the South Pole would see the sun skimming across the horizon, signaling the start of six months of darkness.
- The first day of spring in the Southern Hemisphere is the first day of fall in the Northern Hemisphere.
- Spring almost always arrives on March 20 or 21, but sometimes on the 19th. The reason the equinoxes and solstices don't always come on the same day is that Earth doesn't circle the sun in exactly 365 days.
- The first spring flowers are typically lilacs, irises, lilies, tulips, daffodils, and dandelions.
- Holidays that occur in spring include Easter, Passover, April Fool's Day, Earth Day, Arbor Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Cinco De Mayo, and Holi (festival of colors in India).
- Easter always falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox.

Happy Spring!

# LET'S CATCH UP

TCAC AmeriCorps crew wrapped up final site visits with local AmeriCorps host sites. We've luckily been able to change our in kind totals currently from the very low number way up to a better HIGHER number. We appreciate all of the hard work and tasks you have put in to achieve this!

## IN THE MONTH OF MARCH

**Monday, March 7th —**

Member monthly check in at 6 PM Eastern (5 PM CST).

**Sunday March 13th—Saturday, March 19th—**

AmeriCorps Week! This is our week to celebrate YOU! We have plans to either do day-visits or virtual *parties* — we hope to see you there!

## YOU ARE THE CHANGE!

These fabulous four AmeriCorps members received some great accolades from the Governor's Volunteer Star Awards each individual was recognized by their communities as outstanding volunteers and service members. Local newspapers had each member listed accordingly as well, and gave a nice write up about each one.

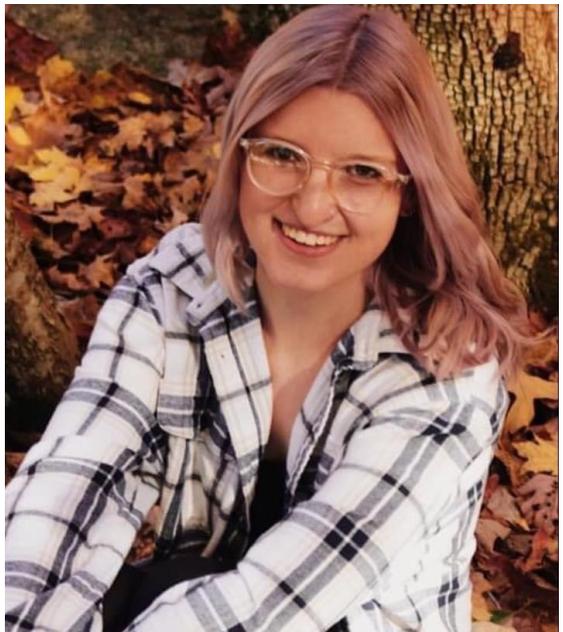


**Ashley Long, Hamblen Co**

Ashley has served with many organizations, the primary one for the Hamblen County area is MATS. She helped individuals with their daily tasks as well as helping them get back on their feet financially to afford rent or a home of their own.. and how to sustain it. She currently is a mentor with another alum for a group of 7 new CAC AmeriCorps members. She helps to organize and plan meetings once a month with the group, but checks in with them regularly. Last month they met for dinner. This month they're trying to get a trivia night together, and in December they are hoping to get together a potluck with another mentor group!

**Mikalyn Hunt, Hamblen Co**

Mikalyn serves at MATS the Ministerial Association Temporary Shelter which is a homeless self sufficiency program in Morristown, TN. She has been serving at MATS for 1.5 years through AmeriCorps. She interacts with our clients and provides basic needs with them. She is always eager to volunteer for any fundraiser event we have, and ones in the community as well. She does everything with a smile on her face. The residents and staff at MATS love her outgoing personality. Mikalyn always gives 110% trying to find a solution to the problem, Homelessness is hard, but people like Mikalyn, who always brings a smile and kind voice make it just a little bit easier. Mikalyn actively volunteers with Central Services through their Holiday Hope Fund, the Head Start program, and Morristown Parks and Recreation.



## TCAC Info

### Come Shop with Us!

TCAC Depot is your community discount store, located in Morristown, TN. They offer a wide variety of merchandise such as: apparel, housewares, electronics and more (even kitchen sinks!) stop by today!





## Denise Holt, Cocke Co

She is the Webster's Dictionary definition of serving others and getting things done for America! She always tells her peers that she helps, that she is blessed to be able to be a part of National Service, but in all reality, we are hands down the lucky ones. Denise is now enrolled in her second year through our Community Cares AmeriCorps program; which allows her to provide direct independent living services to the frail, disabled and elderly resident at Newport Housing Authority. Denise is always willing to give and go the extra mile for anyone, she will stop in her tracks and give a hand up before even thinking. She will take her residents to the grocery store and help them shop or goes as far as calling them when she's at a store to see if they need anything. Denise is extremely patient and has the most

empathy of any human. She will listen to the same story a resident tells her for three hours a day, if that is what she needs to do. She is dedicated to making her residents still feel like they matter even if they are aging in place or telling the same story over and over again. Without hesitation, Denise Holt was nominated to be the recipient of the Adult Governor Star Award.

## Kaylin Cole, Cocke Co

Kaylin is a very exceptional young lady that is a volunteer with the Tennessee Community Assistance team. She is one of our brightest volunteer stars that serves in one of our most needed communities, in the Cocke County area assisting the Newport Housing Authority. The Newport Housing Authority houses over 12% of the city's population ranging from all ages. Kaylan is an AmeriCorps Alumni and has been volunteering with us for over 2 years. Kaylan made an immediate impact from day one. She has slowly started becoming a leader by action and a voice within our operation on



facilitating and coordinating programs for the elderly and the youth. This Summer, she started an artistic painting class for the elderly and was a lead on a back-to-school program called "Swag Day" where kids got free school supplies, back packs, shoes, clothing, and a free Haircut which the kids loved. To go on top of everything she's done so far, she has helped make a new project become a reality that will be delivered on Christmas Eve this year called "Color Your Dreams." A coloring page of a plain bedroom was mailed to all the tenants at the NHA for the children to color and submit of what they would like to have their bedroom makeover look like. A winner will be selected and their dreams will come true. It was so tough to decide this year, they picked 2 winners. This idea was created because when she was little girl, she always loved it when she got a bedroom makeover. A bedroom for a child is their safe haven and a place they should love to be in. Her plan is to continue doing it quarterly through private donations. Kaylan is the perfect vision of what a volunteer is as she was also a former Lady Vol, playing softball for the University of Tennessee. She is now at Tennessee Tech playing softball and continuing her education as a teacher in Special Education with her major focusing on the Speech Pathology Program. One thing is guaranteed where ever she goes, she will be making someone's life better.

Feel free to watch the award ceremony by clicking the following link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EP\\_hqaXjBEA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EP_hqaXjBEA)

**Do you have empty ink cartridges at home?**

**Did you know... that over 350 million printer ink cartridges end up in our landfills every year?**



**STOP! - Do something about it!**

**Allow us to put your old inkjet cartridges to good use!**



**TCAC is collecting old cartridges for a fundraising event.**

**They can be dropped off at the Depot Store on  
740 East Main Street Morristown, TN 37814**

YOUR Great stories change who we are and how we all interact with one another. This is how you are the change, how you are making waves, and changing your communities for the better. We appreciate each and every one of you and all that you do for AmeriCorps and America! The two following stories are from two of Community Cares AmeriCorps members leaving us in July in their fourth service term. As they continue to serve along side the rest of you new or not so new anymore, please read their stories.

## Takeallah – Memphis, TN

My name is Takeallah Rivera and I've served as an AmeriCorps Vista member and now as an AmeriCorps member with Memphis Housing Authority. I try to personally live by reaching back to help others, specifically youth. Serving with Memphis housing Authority as their Youth Council Coordinator has helped me to put those values into action by motivating youth to become more involved in social science and political issues, to understand and advocate social justice.



Joining AmeriCorps has given me inspiration to educate myself and others on social justice issues. It is my sole reasoning in joining, and has taught me to branch out to share the information I've learned and give the wealth of knowledge to those younger than me to promote the change we need.

Who chose who? I decided after speaking with the site supervisor at Memphis Housing Authority that serving for TCAC AmeriCorps, Community Cares, was the right fit. I know my calling is to help brighten futures of disadvantaged youth, so I was placed in the right area. I have sharpened my leadership skills in preparation for a full time leadership role in the nonprofit sector. My dream is to continue helping this population.

AmeriCorps is something not for the faint of heart, but for those with a keen sense of helping others, and ability to put themselves aside for the sake of someone else. I would tell anyone considering joining AmeriCorps that the service requires an extensive time commitment and a passion for selflessly helping others.

The pandemic has altered everything, some in ways we will never go back to, and bettered things as well. Witnessing the AmeriCorps program shift and everyone's commitments to their communities to serve them despite the many restrictions has been one of my most encouraging and favorite moments while serving in AmeriCorps.

The most defining word for AmeriCorps is, "challenging." I would use this word throughout my term of service because, constantly I've been challenged from time management, to learning new skills, and learning from the young minds I'm around. One thing that many don't know about AmeriCorps is how the program is supportive and resourceful to its service members, even after their service is complete!

As this is my last term as an AmeriCorps service member, I am incredibly sad, but proud of all the things I have and have yet to accomplish! I'm thankful to have served, and be able to alter young lives for the better. I am a single mother myself, and helping young mothers as well as young men see the world a little differently and help give them a hand up in life for more is enough to make me keep going and strive towards greater things for myself.

## Sheila — Crossville, TN

My name is Sheila and I would like to share my story of being an AmeriCorps member for the past 4 years.

I learned the value and true meaning of kindness and respect through my parents and family at an early age. It is this learned behavior and seeing them carried out by those around me that I truly believed led me to find something I would be passionate about and form new friendships during my years as a member of the AmeriCorps.

I would not be honest if I did not say that my first initial reason for choosing to join was because I needed a job that would help me keep afloat and help me get back on my feet. Now, many years later if asked this question, I would say that I had not expected to find myself involved in something that was going to bring me more joy, meaning, and a sense of belonging than being part of this Community.

I chose this site mainly because it was close to where I lived and being a resident of Crossville Housing Authority, I had developed a rapport with the people who worked on the staff.

I would tell them they have nothing to lose but a lot to gain with the experience they would get by becoming an AmeriCorps member.

Only one favorite moment? This is going to be tough to narrow it down to just one. I would have to say to sum it all up the best thing I have gotten from being a part of this is the friendships I have made with the kids I have cared for, the elderly I have given meals to, and to those I have spent hours talking with and listening to them.

Compassion, to truly be a part of this one has to have this in them to help and serve those around them. More people should know that a program like this is out there for them, not only those who need something in their life to help get them meaningful and stable but to those in need of the care and time an AmeriCorps member would give.

I believe I have finally found who I am as a person through those I have had the pleasure of getting to know and hope to carry on with what I have learned during my years at Crossville Housing Authority while serving with Community Cares AmeriCorps.



**Pictured** — (L to R) Sheila, Cindy, and Becca. This photo was taken last year during National Service Recognition Day where Sheila and Cindy's service site location, Crossville Housing Authority for the great service they were helping to pump into their community.

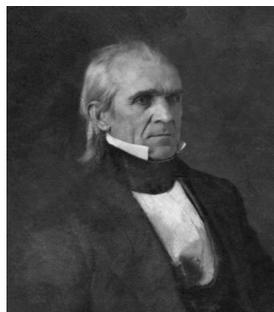
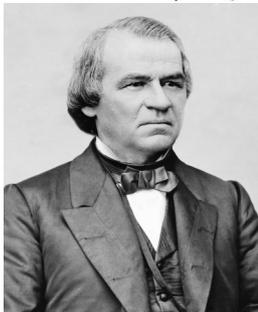
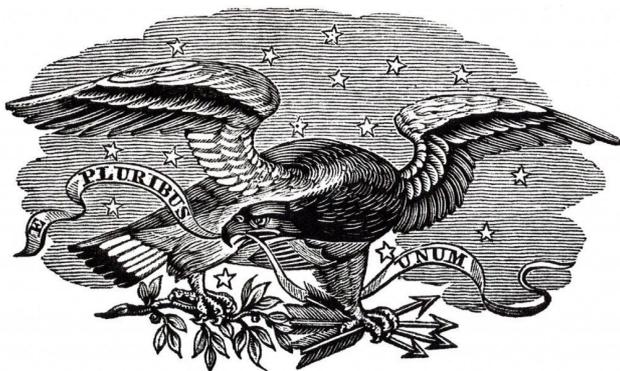
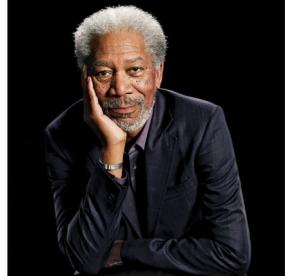


# JUST FOR FUN!

## Famous celebrities from our great state of Tennessee!

Celebrities you may or may not know from the state of Tennessee. — and how local they may be to you. This by no means is a full list, that would take a book. These are some of the most well known Famous Tennesseans.

- Davy Crockett** American folk-hero, Limestone
- Morgan Freeman** Academy Award Winning Actor, Memphis
- Aretha Franklin** singer, Memphis
- Elvis Presley** singer & actor, Memphis
- Dolly Parton** singer, Sevierville
- Miley Cyrus** singer & access, Franklin (Fun Fact: Dolly is Miley's godmother)
- Justin Timberlake** 10 Grammy winning artist, singer, dancer, Memphis
- Tina Turner** singer, Nutbush
- Quentin Tarantino** producer, Knoxville
- Kathy Bates** actress, Memphis
- Ric Flair** actor, Memphis
- Megan Fox** actress, Oak Ridge
- Isaac Hayes** singer, Memphis
- Michael Oher** football player, Memphis—the Blind Side real story, real person
- Lucy Hale** actress, Memphis
- Christina Hendricks** actress, Knoxville
- Ginnifer Goodwin** actress, Memphis
- Johnny Knoxville** His full real name is Phillip John Clapp, Knoxville
- Gregg Allman** singer, Nashville
- Leslie Jones** comedian, Memphis
- Dinah Shore** singer, Winchester
- Morgan Wallen** singer, Sneedville
- Samuel L. Jackson** born in Washington, D.C. but grew up in Chattanooga
- Usher "Usher" Raymond**, born in Dallas, TX, but raised in Chattanooga



## Presidents and Vice Presidents

- Albert "Al" Gore Jr.**, born in Washington, D.C. moved to Tennessee and served as a State Representative, then a TN senator, then later served as Vice President to Bill Clinton.
- Andrew Johnson**, born in Raleigh, NC. He settled early in Greeneville, TN where he served as alderman and mayor before being elected to the Tennessee House of Representatives. He held many other TN offices such as Military Governor or TN and United States Senator from TN.
- Andrew Jackson**, born in Waxhaw (a British settlement between the Carolinas) later moved to Tennessee where he served as a TN state Representative and Supreme Court Justice, and settled at the Hermitage (Jackson's Estate).
- James K. Polk**, born in Pineville, NC. He became a Tennessee State Representative while simultaneously serving as the 13th Speaker of the House prior to becoming 9th Governor of Tennessee, then later became President of the United States