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Shining A Light On Volunteerism

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Governor Christie's Keynote Address At The 2013 Points Of Light National Conference On Volunteering And Service Is Another Example Of Administration Efforts To Celebrate Volunteerism Across The Garden State

Today in Washington D.C., Governor Christie is delivering the keynote address at the 2013 Points of Light National Conference on Volunteering and Service. Founded in response to President George H.W. Bush's 1989 call for a "thousand points of light" with citizens volunteering to help their fellow citizens, the Points of Light Foundation is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that encourages the spirit of service. In the past, volunteers from Points of Light have assisted with relief efforts in the aftermath of September 11th, Hurricane Katrina, the deadly earthquake in Haiti and other tragic events.

NEW JERSEYANS COMING TOGETHER IN THE FACE OF NATURAL DISASTERS

In the aftermath of the worst storm in our state's history, volunteers throughout New Jersey and across the nation responded immediately to the devastation and they began working together as part of a long-term effort to help our state recover and rebuild. Many New Jersey volunteers lost their own homes and possessions, yet they demonstrated the strength and character of our great state by working to aid others who were also affected by the storm and helped get our communities back on their feet:

More than one million pounds of food and nearly 5 million meals and snacks were served through the Community Food Bank of New Jersey, the Southern Baptists, the Salvation Army, and the American Red Cross;

473 volunteer organizations have participated in Sandy recovery efforts:

Eighty eight of those organizations have reported more than 165,000 volunteers alone;




Jersey Cares and AmeriCorps' 16,500 volunteers gave more than 86,000 hours of assistance.

Volunteer labor and other donated resources eligible for in-kind match under FEMA's Public Assistance Program has totaled 932,275 hours, valued at more than \$26.3 million to date.

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Watch: Governor Christie: The Spirit Of This State Is In Our Families

Governor Christie: The Spirit Of This State Is In Our Families



Each year in New Jersey, the Governor's Jefferson Awards recognize volunteers that have enhanced the quality of life of our communities through service. This year, the awards focused on volunteers who devoted their time, talent and energy to the Super Storm Sandy recovery efforts. This year's winners include:

Scott & Dana Zabelski: Scott and Dana Zabelski's business in Toms River, Blue Wave Printing, produces screen-printed clothing for local businesses. The day after Hurricane Sandy, Scott printed a few "Restore The Shore" tees for his family to wear to show their support of their community. Blue Wave Printing designated a fixed amount from the sale of all "Restore the Shore" items to donate back to those who needed it most, and to date nearly \$500,000 has been donated to the community. Funds have been distributed in a variety of forms, such as gift cards, food, cell phones, construction materials, and significant cash donations to worthy relief efforts.

Jodi Bourque: When Super Storm Sandy struck, Jodi, a New Jersey native who now lives in Virginia, made an impassioned plea to friends, neighbors and local businesses to donate supplies to our state. She managed 300 volunteer workers, sorted contributions, laundered all clothing donations, and organized publicity, including a local TV interview. As contributions poured in, Jodi contacted God's Pit Crew, an international non-profit disaster relief organization, to haul all donations to the Jersey shore. After filling 14 enormous trucks, the Crew roared off to New Jersey.

Hurricane Irene:

From organized volunteer and service organizations, to the simple act of one neighbor helping another, thousands and thousands of volunteers from every part of the state stepped up in incredible ways before, during and after Irene. State and national service organizations activated volunteers from inside the state and across the nation to help our citizens in their time of need:

More than one million people were evacuated in an orderly process from our shore's barrier islands;

An estimated 25,000 evacuees were fed and sheltered;

Twenty-six Red Cross and Salvation Army mobile feeding units were dispatched throughout the state, distributing nearly 420,000 meals and snacks and 3,000 gallons of water;

More than 10,000 physical and mental health service consultations were provided by disaster recovery crisis counselors;

Approximately 21,000 clean up kits and 4,500 comfort kits were handed out to those in need;

More than 45,450 relief items such as hygiene kits, mops, brooms, tarps, work gloves, shovels, rakes and trash bags were distributed.

NJ HEROES HIGHLIGHTS ORDINARY CITIZENS DOING EXTRAORDINARY THINGS

Launched in December 2010 by First Lady Mary Pat Christie, NJ Heroes recognizes and celebrates the tireless efforts of unsung heroes that make the lives of New Jersey citizens better. To date, the organization has honored 20 Heroes and has donated more than \$100,000 to help them continue doing their work around the state. In addition, Mrs. Christie has awarded 30 scholarships, totaling \$200,000 to graduating high school seniors, veterans and active military service members who show a commitment to their community and volunteerism to use toward college.

THE CHRISTIE ADMINISTRATION IS GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

Season of Service

The Administration-wide "Season of Service" initiative builds on the same commitment to community the Governor emphasized in his 2010 inaugural address. During the holiday season, cabinet members, Administration officials and staff give back to their communities by volunteering at various organizations across the state. The "Season of Service" was inspired by 8-year old Aidan McManus, an NJ Hero who has devoted his time and hard-earned money to feed the homeless and those in need in Burlington County. This year, Governor Christie and First Lady Mary Pat Christie kicked off the 2nd Annual Season of Service by distributing packaged Thanksgiving dinners prepared by Boston Market for families affected by Super Storm Sandy.

Watch: Governor Christie: 'Season of Service' Is Particularly Important This Year

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Governor's Volunteerism Conference

Started by former Governor Tom Kean, the Governor's Volunteerism Conference is guided by the Governor's Advisory Council on Volunteerism and brings together multiple sectors of the volunteer community in New Jersey. The bi-annual conference drew 650 participants last October where Lt. Governor Guadagno saluted the service of the 1.5 million volunteers across the Garden State. The conference, which featured 29 workshops and brought together volunteers and volunteer managers from all sectors of New Jersey, also served to kick-off efforts to recruit 12,000 volunteers needed for the 2014 Super Bowl at New Jersey's MetLife Stadium.

Governor's Office of Volunteerism

To help volunteers serve their community, the Governor's Office of Volunteerism provides valuable technical assistance, information on the latest trends and best practices in volunteerism, and recognizes individuals and groups that enhance New Jersey's communities through voluntary service. The Governor's Advisory Council on Volunteerism and Community Service reaches out to and builds partnerships with businesses, county volunteer centers, voluntary organizations active in disasters, schools and colleges, and public and non-profit organizations. It also analyzes community needs and identifies resources. The Office of Volunteerism is also responsible for recognizing outstanding volunteers by administering the prestigious Governor's Jefferson Awards that recognize the volunteerism of New Jersey residents of all ages and backgrounds that have enhanced the quality of life of their communities through service.

The Office of Volunteerism has played a key role in response and recovery efforts for Super Storm Sandy, including: working with the volunteer community to prepare in the days before landfall; tracking and responding to the 15,000 calls, emails and texts that we received in the first weeks after the storm; and working with voluntary agencies to respond, recover and rebuild.

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