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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Volunteers recognized for helping Galion Mobile Food Pantry events**

**GALION, OH** (March 1, 2022) - The Galion City Schools, in partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio and the City of Galion, recognized a group of Galion community members who have played an important role in the monthly Mobile Food Pantry program on Wednesday, February 23.

Community volunteers who contributed 18-plus hours of their time and effort to our community each received a certificate of appreciation from the school district and a specially designed T-shirt designating them as Community Champions!

Galion resident Jerry Myers, who contributed 27 hours to the mobile food pantry program in 2021, believes it is very important for people in the community to dedicate their time to those less fortunate.

"I decided to volunteer for the food pantry because there are people in our community that need help," Myers said. "I feel that volunteering my time shows those less fortunate than me that I care, respect, and recognize that people need help."

Among the many volunteers who helped in 2021, a total of 8 Galion community members gave 18-plus hours each to helping with the program. These individuals included: **Gina Redman** (27 hours), **Jerry Myers** (27 hours), **Beth Ann Jones** (24 hours), **Adair Pittman** (21 hours), **Lupe Campo** (21 hours), **Sherri McMullen** (18 hours), **Tim Mantey** (18 hours), and **Cindy Wallis** (18 hours).

"Volunteers are the crux of a school pantry program," Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio Volunteer Engagement Specialist Shozo Kawaguchi said. "When we switched our food distribution format from the farmers market style to the drive thru model at the onset of pandemic two years ago, the need for more volunteers grew because our new model requires many different roles."

At Galion, between 20 and 25 volunteers are needed for optimum operation. Volunteers take different roles, including guiding traffic, registering community members, and loading food.

"We would not be able to organize a school pantry like Galion without volunteers," Kawaguchi said. "Galion's school pantry is a community effort and I encourage those community members who are interested, available, and able, to consider volunteering at the Galion school pantry."

Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio and the Galion City Schools, with financial support from the City of Galion, were able to distribute more than 341,000 pounds of food, totaling more than 122,000 meals for nearly 4,700 families in Galion and Crawford County.



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"Volunteering once a month makes me feel good in my heart that the thankful people coming through the line will have food in their cupboards," Galion resident and Food Pantry volunteer Adair Pittman said. "If you have a couple hours a month to load boxes in cars, do it because the experience of helping others that need this program will make you feel grateful inside."

"I want to thank all of those staff members, students, and community members who have volunteered, and continue to volunteer, to help make the Mobile Food Pantry program successful in Galion," Galion Superintendent Jennifer Allarding said. "I also want to thank the City of Galion and Mayor Tom O'Leary for providing financial support for this program that benefits all Galion citizens."

Individuals Interested in volunteering for future Mobile Food Pantry events are asked to fill out the Volunteer Pre-Registration Form - <https://forms.gle/FngUZGijE14B7PQ49> - to pre-register for this volunteer opportunity. Students 14-18 years of age are welcome with community service hours offered for graduation requirements.

Please contact Violeta Chinni at 419-709-4488, or email [chinni.violeta@moesc.net](mailto:chinni.violeta@moesc.net) for more information about volunteering opportunities.

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