

2013 Governor's Volunteer Awards

On behalf of the Governor, OneStar Foundation is proud to announce the winners of the 30th Annual Governor's Volunteer Awards. The long standing tradition of the Governor's Volunteer Awards strives to recognize those who dedicate their talents and skills to help their fellow Texans. The winners were honored at the Governor's Volunteer Award Ceremony held during the [Texas Nonprofit Summit](#) on September 11, 2013.



Pictured from left to right: Nicole Gabler, Annalisa Ring Siegle, Lew Burnett, Daniel McClellan, Sarah Young, Theresa Cissell

Governor's Lonestar Achievement Award

Daniel McClellan (Austin)



For almost eighteen years Dan has achieved a feat deemed impossible for volunteers and even paid public servants; he has facilitated the continued operation and future sustainability of the Child Fatality Review Team (CFRT), collaboration between bureaucracies.

Since 1995, Dan McClellan has been a member of the Child Fatality Review Team, a collaboration brought about through the Center for Child Protection. The CFRT is a multidisciplinary group consisting of law enforcement officials, medical professionals, social workers, prosecutors, and child advocacy professionals working together toward a single goal: to prevent the senseless and needless deaths of children in Travis County.

In the early years Dan volunteered to collect records and data from the Medical Examiner's Office and the Department of Human Services as well as compiling and comparing the collected data which led to the creation of the CFRT Report in 1997. The report notes not only how many children died, but why they died, and what the community might do to prevent those deaths.

Each April, using the data from the CFRT Report, the Center holds a conference to honor the children who have lost their lives, and to alert the community about how to keep children safe.

Dan is known as humble, quiet and selfless, knowing that his work will never receive a thank you from a child saved. Our community's children are safer because of his commitment and lifetime of achievement.

First Lady's Rising Star Award Sarah Young (Age 15, Pflugerville)



Sarah Young is an exceptional young woman with a philanthropic resume that far exceeds many adults. At age 10, she decided to add a commitment to the environment to her already full plate of Girl Scout, church and military youth activities.

Sarah became a founding member of Discover Green – Environmental Leaders, Inc., a youth operated 501c3 using youth and family activities to educate, involve, and inspire environmental stewardship. In 2011, not long after her 13th birthday, Sarah took on the role of Youth Director for the organization.

When Sarah realized that founding members were going to age-out and the next generation of environmental stewards needed to be trained, she launched a structured training program for “eco-inspiration” coaches for the youth leaders she was recruiting. She developed a pre/post training assessment and tracking tool to measure success and needed refinements in an effort to ensure ongoing improvement.

In 2012, Sarah trained fifty new eco-inspiration coaches, will train another twenty in 2013 with a goal of at least twenty new coaches each year in the future. Under her guidance, coaches have started their own projects and even their own chapters throughout Texas and 3 other states.

Sarah is a Parks and Recreation Commissioner for the City of Pflugerville, a 4-H club officer, and a Lower Colorado River Authority Water Quality Monitor.

Sarah's volunteer efforts have created a solid foundation for developing lifelong leadership skills.

Community Leadership Award “Food on the Move” (Dallas)



CitySquare’s Food on the Move program began four years ago in collaboration with local apartment communities, AmeriCorps, Texas Department of Agriculture and PepsiCo. Throughout the summer months, Food on the Move operates thirty mobile teams across Dallas, Houston and Austin, with each team rotating among seven sites daily.

Food on the Move combats childhood hunger by providing a half million meals through a mobile feeding program targeting children and youth at low-income apartment sites, churches, and nonprofits. Through this program they deliver daily food to over 15,000 children who are not enrolled or involved in any organized summer program.

Meeting the truck at each site is a mobile team of CitySquare AmeriCorps members. Teams arrive on site fifteen minutes before the mobile food truck to prepare the site and to round up the children. Once the truck arrives, AmeriCorps members assist with food distribution, and as children finish eating, engage them in a minimum of sixty minutes of recreational activity based on the Playworks model.

According to Matthew Smith, Manager, Food for Good at PepsiCo, “CitySquare’s Food on the Move program has proven to be a national best practice for delivering meals to previously un-reached children...The result has been a critical balance of addressing immediate nutritional needs while equipping the children to lead healthy lives. And, maybe most importantly, CitySquare is providing hundreds of jobs through AmeriCorps for young leaders (often from the neighborhoods they serve) to be role models for the children, showing first-hand that it is possible to break the cycle of poverty.”

Senior Corps Community Impact Award Lew Burnett (San Angelo)



Lew Burnett, a retired Army Chaplain, has been active with Concho Valley Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) since 2004.

For over eight years, Lew has chaired the Faith In Action (FIA) Advisory Board, whose mission is to offer support services to frail elderly and physically disabled adults so they may live independently and with dignity. Lew has contributed over 1,750 + hours of service through FIA, raising funds, recruiting new volunteers and coalition partners and teaching a component of the FIA volunteer training.

Lew was named “Volunteer of the Year” by Faith in Action and received an Air Force Volunteer Excellence Award from the military. He was inducted into the Concho Valley Senior Hall Of Fame during Older American’s Month in 2010. He also was recognized by Concho Valley RSVP as the Humana MarketPoint Honoree in 2011 for Outstanding Volunteer Service Supporting Independent Living for the Elderly.

RSVP and Faith in Action have conducted surveys with FIA care recipients, and almost 100% of the respondents reported they were satisfied with the services received from FIA volunteers and that this service was instrumental in keeping them living independently in their own homes.

Lew has spearheaded fundraising for FIA which helps support over seventy trained volunteers who provide more than 2,600 units of transportation service to help FIA clients lead more productive lives each year. This is in addition to other services provided by FIA.

Lew sums it up by saying, “Faith in Action has become a full-time calling. I enjoy working with other volunteers who provide special kinds of ministry to the frail and elderly.”

VISTA Capacity Building Award

Annalisa Ring Siegle (Eules)



Since April 2012, Annalisa Siegle has been a Volunteer in Service to America (VISTA) at Volunteers of America Texas (VOATX), and has recently re-enrolled for a second year.

As a VISTA member, Annalisa is helping VOATX develop and implement a volunteer management program in the Fort Worth region. The goal of the program is to provide senior and developmentally disabled clients with volunteer companions; to provide mentors to clients recovering from substance abuse; and to provide role models to ex-offenders re-entering the community.

Annalisa has helped assess program and community needs, developed volunteer program policies and practices, recruited and placed volunteers, tracked volunteer hours, solicited donations for the program through service projects, and evaluated the effectiveness of the program.

During her time as a VISTA she has helped establish partnerships with organizations such as: Take Up Thy Cross Ministries, Carroll Independent School District, Keep Fort Worth Beautiful, Literacy Instruction for Texas, Collin County Community College, Lowes Heroes, and CWS Apartments Property Management Company.

Over 100 volunteers have been coordinated by Annalisa to work on group projects including the Lowes Heroes Project and the 9/11 service project, both of which received thousands of dollars in materials and financial support.

Annalisa and other VISTAs at VOATX ensure that programs are tracking and reporting their volunteer activities on a monthly basis. Over time, VOATX was able to report an 11 percent increase in volunteer hours and an increase in the number of older adults and individuals with disabilities having increased social ties or perceived social support.

AmeriCorps State-National "Getting Things Done" Award Nicole Gabler (Schulenburg)



Nicole Gabler serves as a SWIFT (Schulenburg Weimar In Focus Together) AmeriCorps member in Schulenburg and Weimar. SWIFT serves two Title I rural school districts as well as two rural parochial schools.

As Health Coordinator for nine on-campus Healthy High/Healthy Choices events, Nicole helps raise awareness of healthy eating habits; the consequences of an unhealthy lifestyle; and the importance of daily exercise. She serves as liaison between the presenters (local resident physicians, police officers, nurses and nursing students, and nutrition experts from AgriLife) and the Healthy High program.

Nicole is actively involved in facilitating and creating a permanent site for The Benefit Bank of Texas (TTB-TX) in Schulenburg and Weimar. The TTB-TX site is a secure web-based portal and counselor-assisted program helping low to moderate income individuals and families connect with programs for which they qualify.

A group of SWIFT AmeriCorps members, with Nicole in the lead, travelled to the Fisher House at the Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio for an AmeriCorps Week service project serving wounded military members and their families. They assembled over sixty care packages filled with useful items. Nicole, then used her journalism degree to cover that story in the local newspaper.

According to Heather Eilers, SWIFT Program Coordinator, "Nicole is a leader in this year's Corps and tackles all projects with a can-do attitude and a smile. She volunteers for all extra service projects and displays genuine concern for the members of the communities SWIFT serves."