



United Way of Chatham County
PO Box 1066, Pittsboro, NC 27312
(919) 542-1110
www.unitedwayofchathamcounty.org

2020 Chatham County Outstanding Volunteers

Pam Barker

Pam Barker serves as a member of CORA Food Pantry's Board of Directors, and in that capacity, she has blossomed as the most active member of the Fundraising Committee. Pam has been invaluable in gathering almost \$20,000 in community sponsorships for fundraising events such as *Empty Bowls* and the annual Golf Tournament.

Pam is also the head of the Food Drive Committee. In 2019, food drives brought in 157,494 pounds of food. CORA has seen a 60% rise in need and demand over the past few months. Pam has provided a critical response to that increase in need and doubled her efforts to recruit new community partners to host food drives. She has also taken upon mentoring new volunteers to join the food drive committee. Thanks to her efforts, CORA is on track to meet their food drive goal by June 2020. Fifty percent of food that CORA serves comes from community food drives.

Pam also volunteers on a weekly basis in the pantry as a Family Services volunteer. In 2019, she donated 85 hours providing guidance to families. Pam's willingness to pitch in has made her one of the top go-to volunteers at CORA. She brings overflowing compassion for our community, professionalism to her volunteer role, and steadfast support to CORA staff.

Nominator: Isabella DeSantis

Chatham PTA Thrift Shop

The Chatham PTA Thrift Shop provides supplemental funding to Chatham County Schools. During the 2018/2019 school year, PTA volunteers helped raise over \$603,000. All the money was raised locally and was in addition to federal, state and local government funding. PTA volunteers donated an estimated 74,500 hours last year. They rolled up their sleeves and sorted clothes and other donated items. They also picked up donated items from drop boxes all over the County. With the money that is raised by PTA volunteers, the school system can subsidize funding for programs that are cut at a state level, such as art and music. Due to the efforts of the PTA volunteers, Chatham County Schools earned the distinction of the "Best Communities for Music Education" from The Namm Foundation, a nonprofit organization supported, in part, by the National Association of Music Merchants.

The money that PTA volunteers generate is supplemental funding that is not controlled by the Superintendent. Funding decisions for those dollars are made at the school level by

administrators and PTA volunteers. Over the years, funding has gone toward field trips to Washington DC, playground equipment, campus beautification, equipment upgrades, classroom supplies and admissions testing for college.

Nominator: Dr. Derrick Jordan

Jaime Detzi

Jaime Detzi is the Executive Director of the Chatham Education Foundation. She partners with Chatham County Schools to align funding raised by the agency with the school systems strategic plan, that ultimately is about developing and nurturing youth. Jaime led the charge and heavy lifting that resulted in a \$300,000 grant from the Oak Foundation. This enabled Chatham County Schools to establish a Kindergarten Readiness Camp. Without Jamie's efforts, the camp would not have launched.

In December of 2019, Jaime helped secure a \$110,000 grant from the North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation. This grant will allow Chatham County Schools to pilot a summer enrichment program to provide math interventions for rising ninth graders not meeting grade-level benchmarks. The aim is for those students to gain math proficiency and graduate from high school.

Jaime insists on investing her personal time and ideas into the school system. Her approach could lead someone to believe that she was an employee of the school system, because she's always willing to come to the table to help identify ways to provide expanded opportunities for students and staff.

The Chatham News and Record partnered with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Hussman School of Journalism & Media for a forum at one of the high schools. The forum focused on examining how poverty impacts the way students in Chatham County are learning. Jaime was among those behind the scenes organizing the forum. She was also on stage as a panelist, championing Chatham County Schools. Jaime offered thoughtful perspective about what needs to happen in order to curb the effects of poverty on the education of students. All this time is independent of her primary work at the Chatham Education Foundation.

Nominator: Dr. Derrick Jordan

Rene Higginbotham

Rene Higginbotham is the defacto leader of the 4-H Extension Master Gardener Volunteer program in Chatham County. She spent this past year leading the management team, fundraising team, public gardening workshop team and the soil testing team. Certified Extension Master Gardener Volunteers are only required to submit 30 hours each year to maintain certification, but Rene went above and beyond by volunteering over 176 hours in 2019. She has superb organizational and management skills that has greatly assisted in volunteer coordination, which has allowed staff to devote more time to the educational and technical components of programs.

Rene has been vital in implementing the first series of Extension Gardener classes, as well as the subsequent Master Gardener Volunteer Core Training. Rene spent hours preparing for the workshops, helping with set-up, guiding residents and volunteers through portions of the hands-on training and assisting with clean-up. She also kept track of many of the detailed and underappreciated organizational tasks. The workshops and volunteer training sessions reached nearly 1,100 Chatham County residents. Rene has been a valued advisor and has helped to shape the direction of the home gardening workshops.

Nominator: Matt Jones

Lindsay Shore-Wright and Jazmin Mendoza-Sosa

Lindsay Shore-Wright and Jazmin Mendoza-Sosa are co-leaders of the Clover Creators 4-H Community Club. Their dedication to improving their community through positively impacting the lives of youth is not only demonstrated through their volunteer work with Chatham County 4-H, but also through their chosen professions. Lindsay is the Media Coordinator at Virginia Cross Elementary and Jazmin is the Communities in Schools Student Support Specialist at Virginia Cross Elementary. The Clover Creators 4-H Community Club is a newly formed bilingual, bi-cultural club based in Siler City. In the past year, seventeen members of this club have participated in monthly meetings, programs and activities at the county, district and state levels.

At the county level, they participated in activities such as County Activity Day, a mock Board of Commissioners meeting and three community service projects. Their community service projects included trash pick-up in Siler City, painting benches at Bray Park and holding a food drive for the West Chatham Food Pantry.

At the district and state level, five of the members participated in District Activity Day. All five won medals and were invited to compete at the state level. All members placed at a state level as well. Two members also participated in 4-H Congress. For some of the youth, this was the first time they had ever traveled outside of the county or visited a university.

It is because of Lindsay and Jazmin's dedication, leadership, perseverance and passion that these youth were able to develop life skills, build confidence and be exposed to enlightening experiences. It is evident that Lindsay and Jazmin wholeheartedly believe in the vision and mission of Chatham County 4-H. Their belief and support are demonstrated through their daily actions and commitment to the youth and organization they serve.

Nominator: Victoria Brewer

Ed and Becky Spence

Ed and Becky Spence have spent their lives volunteering in their community. They were instrumental in starting the Boys and Girls Club in Chatham County, where they both still serve on the Board of Directors. The Boys and Girls Club now serves almost 300 children in Siler City and offers programs that focus on education & career, health & life skills, character & leadership, fitness & recreation, sports and art. The Boys and Girls Club has become a vital human service nonprofit and has been life changing for the children of Siler City.

Soon after the Spence's moved to Galloway Ridge, they, along with their neighbors, helped to start the Galloway Ridge Summer Camp for the Boys and Girls Club. The camp served 30 children in 2019. Their camp experience included games, decorating rockets, learning the history of Jordan Lake, basket weaving, swimming at the Duke Center for Living and visiting Fearington Village to see the goats, chickens and Belted Galloway cows.

At Galloway Ridge, Ed and Becky, serve on the residents' Chatham County Charitable Fund. This group is responsible for raising money to be distributed to local human service nonprofits in Chatham County. Becky is the chairperson of the Allocations Committee which determines agency funding. Ed and Becky are also very involved in their church. They attend First Baptist Church in Siler City where Ed is a Sunday school teacher and Becky works with the church youth group. Ed also serves on the Board of Deacons and is a trustee of the Church.

Ed and Becky also established the Jay Spence Memorial Scholarship after the death of their son. This scholarship is given annual to one or more graduating seniors at Jordan Matthews High School to help students further their education. Ed and Becky are true believers in helping others and are living examples of what volunteering is all about.

Nominator: Joan Zollinger

Cliff Stickney

Cliff Stickney has been the President of East Chatham Little League since 2018. In just over a year, he helped the league thrive in many ways. His first order of business was to have East Chatham Baseball officially join Little League. He also successfully lobbied for a change from Little League District 6 to District 2, which is where Chatham County falls on the North Carolina Little League map. Cliff was the mastermind behind starting a fall baseball league in conjunction with the more traditional spring baseball league. "Fall ball" was designed to be a developmental league that focuses on teaching children the fundamentals of baseball.

Cliff has also worked on several fundraisers, including a golf tournament at Chapel Ridge and a Casino Night. He also created an Amazon Smile account and a Fan Gear store through Dick's Sporting Goods. All purchases give money back to the league. Since becoming President, the fall registration has increased by 80 and the spring registration increased by 50, which are both the highest in the league's history.

Cliff wanted to give the kids one more chance to hang out before summer, so he came up with the

idea to hold a movie night event for free. The event featured a movie that was projected outside, along with two food trucks and several other concessions. Cliff grilled burgers and did most of the set-up and break-down. The event was a huge success with over 200 people in attendance.

Under Cliff's leadership, East Chatham Little League was able to provide \$11,000 and countless man hours into fully restoring the Farell Field located near North Chatham Elementary. The field had not been operational for the past decade. East Chatham Little League was also able to spend \$12,000 to replace light poles at the two baseball fields near Pittsboro Elementary.

During 2019, Cliff donated 500 volunteer hours to East Chatham Little League. In addition to his significant contribution to youth baseball, he serves on the Board of Directors for the Chatham Wrestling Alliance and is a charter member of the Chatham Elite Wrestling Club, where he is Head Coach for the Chatham Parks and Recreation's youth wrestling program. He is also a licensed foster parent. Cliff has dedicated his life to helping youth in his community.

Nominator: Jesse Yeager

Burney Waring

Burney Waring volunteers every week at the Chatham School of Science and Engineering and has taken great interest in the school and the students. He offers his expertise in engineering to inspire and educate the students. He also teaches week-long lessons to all freshmen and connects students with mentors in the community that can help them in various careers.

Through Burney's volunteering, the school was able reach a portion of Chatham County that had not been reached before. Burney has been a huge asset to the school, helping to promote the newly formed early college program. Burney has provided connections, resources and opportunities to the schools through his outreach. He has become a recognizable face in the school and the students go to Burney with questions about job skills and job prospects. Burney continues to communicate, visit and provide resources to help improve students' high school experience and job outlook.

Nominator: Bobby Dixon

Elizabeth Zeringue

Elizabeth Zeringue has been a volunteer of Chatham Habitat for Humanity since the 1990s. She first volunteered while on a group build with county employees and from there decided to continue volunteering so she could develop new skills and meet other people in the area. Today, Elizabeth is one of Chatham Habitat's most skilled volunteers, contributing more than 300 hours every year. During 2019, she served as a house site leader during the annual Collegiate event. Elizabeth is always ready to teach groups of new volunteers, which saves staff time. She is capable of performing and leading many tasks on her own and is also a member of the Chatham Habitat's Volunteer Electrical Crew. Her nursing background has also come in handy on the construction site

when accidents occur. Not only does Elizabeth work out in the field, she also serves as a mortgage management counselor and works with families to stay up to date on their home payments.

Elizabeth has been involved with many different nonprofit organizations through her work with the Siler City Rotary Club. Her fellow Rotarians said she displayed courageous leadership as past Club President. She implemented many changes suggested by the district, region and Rotary International, despite initial resistance to change by the club membership. She continues to champion Rotary ideals and projects in the community. She also served as a volunteer mentor with Communities In Schools of Chatham County. The teens even worked with her on the Chatham Habitat construction site. Elizabeth exemplifies many desired qualities in a volunteer. She is motivated, patient, team-oriented and eager to learn.

Nominator: Rachel Horowitz

Jack Zollinger

Jack Zollinger has been a volunteer at United Way of Chatham County for over 35 years. Even before moving to North Carolina, he volunteered at the United Way in Westchester County, New York for 12 years. After living in North Carolina for a year, Jack's neighbor invited him to join the Board of Directors of the United Way of Chatham County. He began his first Board term in 1994. Not long after Jack joined the Board, he helped to start the United Way Endowment Fund. Through the endowment, United Way is able to fund community projects with the interest that is earned. In 2001, Jack was presented the Ormsbee Robinson Award for his Outstanding Service and Dedication, which is the most distinguished award that United Way bestows.

Jack has served five Board terms since 1994 and is currently serving a sixth. He served as Chairman of the Board from 2016 through 2018. Even in the years that Jack was not serving on the Board, he continued volunteering. He has chaired fundraising campaigns at Fearington and Galloway Ridge over the years, raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for local human service nonprofits. He also continued to serve on the Endowment Committee. Not only does Jack volunteer at United Way, he also volunteers at Galloway Ridge and at his church.

Jack is very active at Galloway Ridge, serving as chair of the Residents Benevolent Care Fund Committee, member of the Community Engagement Committee and member of the Resident Finance Committee during 2019. In the past, he also served as a charter member of the Residents Council and Galloway Gala.

Jack and his wife attend Chapel In The Pines Presbyterian Church, where they are pre-charter members. Jack serves as Fellowship Team Chair, Treasurer, Audit Committee member, Solar Panel Committee member and Finance & Administration Chair. Jack truly epitomizes the spirit of volunteerism, serving the United Way, his church and community whenever he can.

Nominator: Robert Holton