



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Scott McFarland

(217) 685-5930

www.Serve.Illinois.gov

Volunteers Across Illinois To Answer Martin Luther King Jr.'s Question "What Are You Doing for Others?"

MLK Day of Service Highlights Volunteer Activities in Illinois

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Bruce Rauner has proclaimed January 15, 2018 as Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service in the State of Illinois. The Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service (Serve Illinois) encourages people across Illinois to take part in the day of service by volunteering in their community.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day was designated a National Day of Service by Congress in 1994. Illinoisans have a rich history of service, including being the number one volunteering state out of the largest states in the country. Dr. King said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is: 'What are you doing for others?'"

"Illinoisans answer this question each day by helping their neighbors and their community. Volunteerism is the answer," said Serve Illinois Executive Director Scott McFarland. "Illinois is proud that we were the first state to honor Dr. King with a holiday, and we are prouder still that Illinoisans make it a day on, not a day off."

Some of the many volunteer opportunities specifically created for this Day of Service include:

Youth & Opportunity United is hosting its 12th annual Diverse Communities United event. The youth-led event will feature performances and artwork by youth from 11 schools across Evanston and Skokie who seek to realize Dr. King's vision. The event is FREE, family-friendly, and open to all ages. A community reception will be held in the lobby outside of the auditorium immediately following the program.

Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois will be assisting City of Elgin's 2018 MLK Day of Service and Youth Leadership Conference.

Northwestern Settlement will host its 11th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Literacy Fair. Every participant will have the opportunity to partake in a variety of literacy-based activities, including games, arts and crafts, and creative writing. Participants will also be able to take home a book of their choosing and learn about the empowering nature of literacy. Families with readers of every age are encouraged to attend.

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Improving Illinois communities by enhancing volunteerism and instilling an ethic of service throughout the State.





City Year Chicago will be painting murals, walls, and classroom whiteboard, as well as doing light construction (benches and cubbies) for Gale Community Academy. They will also be doing mural painting for Jordan Elementary and all the 26 schools City Year Chicago serves. To end the day, they will be hosting a Beloved Community Open House to display Rogers Park organizations and the work they are doing to serve the community.

On January 17, 2018, AmeriCorps Project MORE will be collaborating with Housing Forward for the 2018 MLK Day of Service. Members, community volunteers, and program staff will be serving at Chicago homeless shelters to distribute donated toiletries, literacy supplies, and books to the shelter families. Families will be engaged in literacy development activities that promote reading and discuss Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s contributions to society.

All of the organizations listed above are part of the AmeriCorps program, which provides opportunities for adults of all ages and backgrounds to serve through a network of partnerships with local and national nonprofit groups.

Anyone interested in volunteering on Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service can visit Serve.Illinois.gov to find more than 2,000 volunteer opportunities throughout Illinois and in bordering states. Volunteers can search based on location or area of interest, as well as by web-based, ongoing, or one-time volunteer opportunities.

The Serve Illinois Commission is a 40-member (25 voting and 15 non-voting), bipartisan board appointed by the Governor and administered by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). Its mission is to improve Illinois communities by enhancing volunteerism and instilling an ethic of service throughout the State.

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