

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Recognizes Outstanding 2019 Volunteers

Each year, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, a statewide nonprofit whose vision is a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania, provides an opportunity for their affiliates to recognize the outstanding efforts of local volunteers for their dedication, commitment and exceptional contributions to keeping Pennsylvania beautiful. The 2019 Volunteers of the Year are:



Kenneth Rice, Sr. working with Tri-County CleanWays (serving Butler, Lawrence and Mercer counties): Kenneth Rice, Sr. first volunteered with Tri-County CleanWays for a cleanup of the Lower East Side Community in April 2019. Since then, he and Tri-County CleanWays have worked together, with neighbors, to transform previously abandoned lots into a community garden that include an edible rain garden and compost area. The Rice family purchased the lots a few years ago with the idea of feeding families in need for free. In 2019, the crops have helped feed over 50 families. Ken spends a significant amount of time researching ideas on maintaining and improving the gardens and has plans to offer

composting seminars and sessions on how to prepare some of the vegetables grown. The family has already purchased an additional abandoned lot in a different section of New Castle with the goal of creating another active community garden project to empower those residents.



Michael Ely working with Keep Harrisburg-Dauphin County Beautiful: Michael Ely has worked as a tireless and dedicated volunteer with Keep Harrisburg-Dauphin County Beautiful since April 2018. He has since assumed a leadership role. Michael organizes community garden and neighborhood beautification efforts and volunteer recruitment and management. Michael says of his experience, "I enjoy doing the work because it gives me the opportunity to give back to my community. I hope my example can get people to make positive life decisions." Mike continues serving the community of Uptown Harrisburg, specifically in the Camp Curtin Neighborhood.



Greg Williams working with Keep Huntingdon County Beautiful: Greg Williams joined the Keep Huntingdon County Beautiful (KHCB) community in 2016 and has since made a lasting impression. Greg is an outdoor enthusiast, with a gift for beautifying and restoring native landscapes and has been heavily involved with KHCB's annual efforts to improve Detwiler Memorial Park & Nature Trail along Standing Stone Creek in Huntingdon, PA. Greg has contributed to these efforts by planting trees, removing invasives, collecting live stakes, and providing general maintenance to the nature trail. In addition, Greg is active in restoring the Lower Trail, a 17-mile Rails to Trail path that parallels the Frankstown

Branch of the Juniata River from Alexandria, PA in Huntingdon County, to Canoe Creek State Park in Blair County as well as with beautifying Walnut Springs Park, a community park located in State College.



Rachael Filip working with Keep Perry County Beautiful: Rachael Filip began volunteering with Keep Perry County Beautiful in June of 2018 when she helped residents unload their old electronics from their vehicles at a special collection held by the affiliate. Since then she has assisted at all affiliate events including the Juniata River Cleanups and the 2019 Tire War. Rachael is also the vice president of the Newport High School Environmental Club. “Rachael has a noticeable commitment and compassion for the environment and succeeds in showing her enthusiasm for volunteer work with our Perry County community at large,” said Kristie Smith, Perry County Watershed Specialist and Keep Perry County Beautiful Coordinator.

“Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is indebted to our local affiliates and volunteers across the state. It’s sometimes overwhelming and humbling to learn what people are doing locally to improve their neighborhoods and change behavior. Without them, our programs would not be possible. I would like to acknowledge the outstanding efforts of our volunteers of the year and thank them for keeping our communities clean and beautiful,” stated Shannon Reiter, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful President.

Award winners and their programs can be found at keeppabeautiful.org under Grants & Awards.

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About Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful’s mission is empowering Pennsylvanians to keep our communities clean and beautiful. Since 1990, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful and its volunteers have removed over 141 million pounds of litter from Pennsylvania’s roadways, greenways, parks, forests, and waterways. To learn more about Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, visit www.keeppabeautiful.org.