

Dozens Volunteer On Poughkeepsie Agency's 'Make A Difference Day'

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[Carol Reif](#) 11/01/2016



Folks from Central Hudson, Rhinebeck Bank and TD Bank volunteer at ELANT for the United Way of Dutchess-Orange Region's recent "Make A Difference Day." ELANT is a health and housing services provider. Photo Credit: *Contributed*

POUGHKEEPSIE, N.Y. -- More than 100 volunteers recently took part in the annual "Make A Difference Day" event organized by United Way of Dutchess-Orange Region, the Poughkeepsie-based organization said.

The intrepid volunteers worked on eight community projects, contributing a total of 730 hours and making an estimated economic impact of \$19,607, United Way said.

The benefits of helping out local nonprofit groups goes both ways.

Volunteers got to make a difference in others' lives while gaining skills that they could apply to their own, such as learning how to work as a team.

The projects also, United Way said, increase participants' "overall awareness of need" in their communities, the agency said.

“Through the help of these incredible volunteers, United Way was able to host another 'Make A Difference Day' and assist nonprofits in the rewarding work they do every day,” said Jeannie Montano, the organization’s president and chief executive officer.

Marist College student and United Way intern Anthony Longo volunteered with Habitat for Humanity of Dutchess County.

The project was, he said, “very eventful” because volunteers had to contend with the rain.

However, overcoming the weather and other obstacles helped them hone their time-management skills because they had to work closely together “as a team,” Longo said.

“Though the experience was a challenge, it was extremely rewarding to see the finished product and see how we made an impact in our community,” he added.

Melissa Clark, United Way’s community impact manager, said she was “humbled” by the sight of so many supporters and advocates coming together for a long weekend of volunteering.

The agency strives, she said, to continuously grow the list of nonprofits and other organizations participating in the event.

Nonprofits helped by the volunteers were Dress For Success Dutchess County, Elant, Food Bank of the Hudson Valley, Habitat for Humanity Dutchess County, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Newburgh, Hudson River Housing, **The Mid-Hudson Children’s Museum**, and the Poughkeepsie Farm Project.

Many local companies and organizations dedicated their time to various projects, including Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corp., Cornerstone Family Healthcare, Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce, FLUOR, Hannaford Supermarkets, Family Services Inc., IBM Corporation, Leadership Orange, Marist College, Mental Health America of Dutchess County, New Horizons Resources Inc., People’s United Bank, Rhinebeck Bank and TD Bank.

To take part in United Way’s next Day of Action, the Martin Luther King, Jr., Day of Service, sign up its volunteer portal at volunteer.uwdor.org or contact Melissa Clark at mclark@uwdor.org or (845)-471-1900, ext. 3128.