



# New River Valley Leading Lights

## 2015-16 Annual Report



In 2016, we received nominations for 63 volunteers. Pictured above are some of these exceptional community members.

### *Celebrating Neighbors Helping Neighbors: Our Impact*

New River Valley Leading Lights recognizes and honors volunteers across the New River Valley who are making community-changing impacts, culminating in an annual celebratory banquet.

**8** years of honoring volunteers

**386** people nominated for awards

**46** awards presented to outstanding volunteers

**\$40,000** distributed to NRV nonprofits

[leadinglightsnrv.org](http://leadinglightsnrv.org)



## Expanding Awards, Continuing to Honor Volunteers



2016's high school nominees

What would the New River Valley community do without volunteers? Since 2009, we have listened to stories at our annual banquet, where we are consistently reminded of the enormous impact people of all ages are making on their community through service.

By expanding our awards from six to 11 this year, we sought to increase nominations across the NRV by creating county-specific awards; resulting in 34% of nominations for individuals outside Montgomery County. We made this change after listening to feedback from our board, donors, stakeholders, and

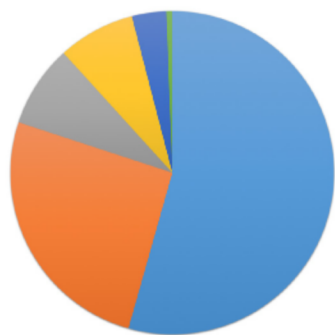
nominees: we all wanted to see more of the greater NRV community represented in nominations.

Also this year, we wanted to better recognize our community's high school and college students – a second award was added to each of those categories. We hope to keep expanding our reach with these additional awards. We hope you consider nominating someone for a 2017 award – nominations are now open at [leadinglightsnrv.org](http://leadinglightsnrv.org)!

In this report, you'll find information on our fundraising efforts and expenses, brief snapshots of our 2016 winners' service, information on how you can get involved with us, and more. Above all, we hope you take away this: we owe a debt of gratitude to all those who serve our community. Thank you to all the awardees and nominees, from this year and all years past! -- *Leading Lights' Board of Directors*

\* \* \*

## 2015-16 Financial Report



■ Banquet 54%

■ Monetary awards for winners 26%

■ Award materials 8%

■ Strategic planning 8%

■ Communications 3%

■ Fundraising 1%

Once again, our Board raised money from a variety of donors, with our major sponsor, the German Club Alumni Foundation, leading the way. In total, \$22,230 in monetary and in-kind gifts was donated; 43% of donations were given by individuals and couples, and 36% from local businesses. The remaining 21% came from civic clubs, foundations, universities, nonprofits, and churches.

This year, we spent \$19,474. Our April banquet that hosted 250 people represented 54% of expenses. Other notable expenses include a total of \$5,000 in monetary awards for this year's awardees. Each awardee choose an NRV nonprofit that is meaningful to them, and the donations are sent directly to those organizations.

Also of note, since it had been four years since our last strategic planning session, the Board spent time on this area with assistance from SynerVision Foundation. This investment helped us with re-focusing our mission, guided by planning and feedback sessions with Board members and community stakeholders.

Our Board members participate on a volunteer basis, which allows us to keep costs down through members volunteering their time to all aspects of our organization.

## 2016 Winner Snapshots

### High School

#### Aaron S. Miller, Radford

Aaron is a leader with the “I’m Determined Project”, which encourages youth self-advocacy. He played a key role in organizing “inclusion day” at his school to raise awareness about living with disabilities.

#### Connor Moran, Christiansburg

As Outreach Club president, Connor is very active with the club’s food pantry for fellow students. He packs food, maintains supplies, and raises money.

### Collegiate

#### Elizabeth Domann, Virginia Tech

Elizabeth is crucial in coordinating the Blacksburg United Methodist Church’s after school tutoring program, Fun143. In this role, she manages events and volunteers, and supervises tutoring sessions.

#### Kelly Berry, Virginia Tech

Kelly founded the Wesley Foundation’s 209 Manna Ministries, a food pantry that serves 30-60 Virginia Tech students weekly. She was the catalyst for raising awareness of the need for the pantry.

### Floyd County

#### Susan Icove, Floyd

As Chair of the New River Community Action Floyd Building Renovation Committee, Susan was the catalyst behind raising more than \$100K to renovate a multipurpose building that houses programs such as Head Start, food pantries, and job fairs.

Pulaski & Radford counties: Bill Hudson, Mickey Balconi, Nancy Hudson, Dorothy Sowers, Keith Nunn.



Giles awardees Doug & Donna Martin (far left), with nominees Vickie Spangler, Roxanna Link, Tacie Jones.



### Giles County

#### Doug & Donna Martin, Newport

Donna coordinates the Newport Cares Backpack and Summer Food Box Program, and is a long-time fundraiser for the Newport Village Green. Doug is a coach and mentor for Newport Sports. He serves as president of both the Newport Ruritan Club and the Giles Historical Society.

### Montgomery County

#### Ben Crawford, Blacksburg

Ben is the founder of the Community Foundation of New River Valley and co-founder of the Blacksburg Kiwanis Club. His numerous volunteer roles range from work at the American Red Cross to the YMCA.

#### Melvin Robertson, Christiansburg

At the Giving Tree Food Pantry, Melvin serves as food pantry leader and co-hosts the Day Center Program. With his service with To Our House, he connects people in crisis with resources.

### Pulaski County

#### Nancy & Bill Hudson, Fairlawn

Nancy and Bill have dedicated hours of service to Radford-Fairlawn Daily Bread, collecting donations and cooking. For years, they engaged in Red Cross disaster relief efforts and are avid supporters of Heifer International.

### Radford City

#### Keith Nunn, Radford

Keith raised funds to provide 60 children with meals on weekends during the school year. He has served as a Cub Scout Master and with Habitat for Humanity. Keith’s generosity also has extended to taking in a homeless college student.

## Lifetime Achievement Award: Don Mullins, Blacksburg



Don Mullins(left) with Dick Arnold, Board President  
of NRV Leading Lights

Don's generosity, and innate sense of direction when leading a project have benefited many organizations. He is the Advisory Committee Director for the YMCA at VT, and helped the Y's Thrift Shop grow to be the largest financial contributor to Y programs. Don has served with Habitat for Humanity for 15 years.

Some of his other roles have been with 4-H, the Wesley Foundation, the Montgomery County Christmas Store, and the Quality of Life team. Don was instrumental in the installation of a playground at Margaret Beeks. He also co-organized the Blacksburg Interfaith Habitat Group.

\* \* \*

## How to Get Involved

**Nominate a volunteer!** Do you know someone who devotes a significant, ongoing amount of time to service? Does their service address community needs and makes an impact? Do they demonstrate leadership and/or show initiative? Submit a nomination! Nominations are now open at [leadinglightsnrv.org](http://leadinglightsnrv.org).

**Become a Board member or community advisor.** We are always looking for talented people for our Board. Members serve three-year terms, commit to attending monthly meetings (September - May), and participate with one or more team. Advisors have a less formal commitment, and lend their expertise to specific projects or teams.

**Donate or become a sponsor.** Every donation or sponsor helps support our efforts, and, in turn, our community.

*Contact us at [leadinglightsnrv@gmail.com](mailto:leadinglightsnrv@gmail.com) if you are interested in joining the Board or sponsorship.*

**Stay in touch!** Find us on social media by searching for the below handles on Facebook, Twitter, & Instagram.

 New River Valley Leading Lights

 @LeadingLightsNRV

 @LeadingLightsNRV



2016 collegiate nominees

**Credits:** All photos provided by KymnImages Photography. Graphic design by Lindsey Gleason. *Front page map:* Heron's Landing Homeowner's Association, retrieved from: <http://www.heronslandinghoa.org/links-a-resources>.

