

2015 Community Champion Award Recipients

The White River Families First Coalition announces the 2015 recipients of the White River Communities Champion Award. The award was established in 2011 as a way to recognize the service and dedication of those contributing to the betterment of communities within the White River School District. Recipients were nominated by members of the community because they have made a powerful difference without holding an office, title or public position.

The 2015 Community Champion Award recipients are Tyler Ussery, the Donald Loomis Clothing Bank (Julia Wentz, Donna Luchs & Sheila Smith) and the Members of the Community Presbyterian Church.

Tyler Ussery, a student at White River High School was nominated for this award because he is a positive and inspirational role model. Through his involvement in Key Club, he has had a significant impact on the community. From volunteering at the food bank to helping at events at the elementary school, Tyler has logged over 100 hours of service this year alone. He is also involved in leadership class and is a positive and caring person in his many school activities he participates in. Tyler has been active in Relay for Life and served as team captain last year and co-event lead and involved in planning. A true leader, he demonstrates compassion and commitment in all that he does. Tyler is described as a humble and selfless person working to help others in whatever manner he can.



Tyler Ussery

Julia Wentz, Donna Luchs & Sheila Smith, volunteers at the Donald Loomis Memorial Clothing Bank, received the award jointly. Donna Luchs has been volunteering at the clothing bank for nearly 15 years and prior to that was a dedicated food bank volunteer. Even though she has struggled with health issues, she has continued to be a hard working and loyal volunteer who has helped implement many great ideas that have made the clothing bank a welcoming place for families. Julia Wentz is described as a giving, loving and patient lady. A piano & voice teacher, Julia volunteers to accompany and work with students for solo/ensemble contests, drama productions and providing free lessons to students who are unable to pay. She has served on the school board and has been involved in PTA and many school projects and programs. She volunteered with the Jr. Miss competition in Buckley and has been a devoted volunteer at the clothing bank for 15 years. Julia brings a positive light and loving kindness to the clothing bank. Sheila Smith opened the Donald Loomis Memorial clothing bank in the name of her father. It now serves a multitude of families under Sheila's careful leadership. Sheila also oversees the JJ Smith Clothing Bank in Enumclaw. Supported by



Julia Wentz, Sheila Smith, Donna Luchs

community donations, the clothing bank is the quintessential boutique that also offers school supplies and personal hygiene items to both children and adults without restriction.

The members of the Community Presbyterian Church have made a profound impact on the children in the community. Members volunteer at Elk Ridge Elementary School each week, listening to children read, helping learn math facts, and taking time to listen. The church sponsors the weekend backpack meal program, serving multiple schools in the district. They do clothing and coat drives, school supply collections and hygiene drives and are a host church of the Winter Shelter program, providing a warm place and a meal to homeless in the area each week. The quilting group provides quilts for other organizations, active duty military, wounded warriors and vets. This community minded church is a small group of thoughtful people that are changing the community.



Community Presbyterian Church, Buckley

The White River Families First Coalition promotes activities and partnerships that support the health and human service needs of individuals, youth and families in order to strengthen White River area communities. The Coalition meets at 3:30 pm on the 4th Monday of the month at the Buckley Fire Station.