



CORNING FOUNDATION

Excellence in Volunteerism

Excellence in Volunteerism 2022 Employee Award Winners

and chosen non-profit organizations for \$1,000 grants

The Excellence in Volunteerism Awards, started in 2019, and is a U.S. Corning employee program administered by Corning Incorporated Foundation. The program recognizes Corning employees who help make Corning communities vibrant by volunteering their free time at non-profit organizations. The Excellence in Volunteerism Award allows employees to nominate other employees showing exceptional volunteer commitment in the community. The selected employees are able to designate a \$1,000 grant to an eligible non-profit organization of their choice.

Carlos Alonzo, S&T, Corning, NY

Nominated by Eric Biribuze, S&T, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Science Technology Entrepreneurship Leadership Academy, Corning, NY

Carlos Alonzo is a champion of STEM Education and volunteers with numerous non-profit organizations. Carlos assisted in launching a robotics program for Rwanda students, grades 4-6, in partnership with Science Technology Entrepreneurship Leadership Academy (STELA). Providing weekly virtual instruction and mentorship, Carlos utilizes intuitive coding curriculum to help students have hands-on experience with design, building, and coding robots. "Carlos's impact in STEM education through robotics is impactful and far reaching," writes Eric Biribuze.

Katherine Ballman, Corning Gorilla Glass, Corning, NY

Nominated by Jessica Ober, Corning Gorilla Glass, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Arbor Housing and Development, Corning, NY

Providing relief for victims of domestic violence is a passion for Katherine Ballman who volunteers with the domestic violence shelter at Arbor Housing and Development. Katherine hosted a donation drive for needed shelter items and organized a variety of volunteer projects. Through her efforts, the shelter had new flooring installed and brightened several rooms with fresh paint. "Katherine spends countless hours in the local community and makes a tremendous impact at the shelter," writes Jessica Ober.

Laura Barnes, Staff Sector, Charlotte, NC

Nominated by Dede Starnes, Charlotte, NC

Grant recipient: Womens Resource Center, Charlotte, NC

A cancer diagnosis can be a scary and uncertain time. Laura Barnes launched G.L.O.W. (**G**lorify God, **S**pread Love, **O**verwhelm with joy, **W**itness to others) which provides care packages of blankets, socks, scarfs, puzzle books, playing cards, lotions, snacks, and other items to help support those battling cancer. "Laura is an inspiration to others by bringing thoughtful and individually curated bags of goodies that bring comfort and joy to individuals going through their cancer care journey," writes Dede Starnes.

Eric Biribuze, S&T, Corning, NY

Nominated by Jeanne Propst, Optical Communications, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Science Technology Entrepreneurship Leadership Academy, Corning, NY

As a passionate supporter of STEM education, Eric Biribuze, founded the Science, Technology, Entrepreneurship, Leadership Academy (STELA) in 2020. His commitment to making STEM and robotics accessible to all led to a program based on FIRST Lego League Challenge in Corning, NY through a week-long robotics camp with over 200 participants. STELA's work includes providing robotics kits, computers and mentorship and coaching to students. "Eric has been instrumental in building partnerships with local organizations and abroad to develop a strong pipeline of well-trained coaches and teachers, for additional resources to drive sustainability and scalability of STEM education," writes Jeanne Propst.

Arnette Brooks, S&T, Corning, NY

Nominated by Claire Warren Ginnan, Corning Gorilla Glass, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Economic Opportunity Program, Elmira, NY

Arnette Brooks is devoted to giving back to the community where she grew up. As president of the Cosmopolitan Women's group, she helps local students in their pursuit of academic excellence with recognition and scholarships. Arnette is also on the leadership team for the African American Read-In Program which reaches 6,000 students a year in elementary schools throughout the Southern Tier. In addition, she is a long-time participant on the CHOICES planning team which introduces 8th grade girls to career opportunities. "Arnette Brooks exemplifies the best that Corning has to offer in employees that embrace a culture of giving through volunteerism," writes Claire Warren Ginnan.

Tammie Burluson, Optical Communications, Concord, NC

Nominated by Preston Heartley, Optical Communications, Concord, NC

Grant recipient: Stanly Dixie Youth Softball, Concord, NC

Making a difference is what drives Tammie Burluson to devote her artistic talents and time to Make-A-Wish and Relay for Life. To create special experiences for Make-A-Wish children, Tammie has done everything from transforming a shopping cart into a superhero buggy to building a castle out of cardboard boxes. You'll also find her helping Relay for Life by assisting with fundraising events including bake sales, yard sales, and a silent auction. "Tammie epitomizes optimism and always finds a way to put a positive spin on any obstacle she comes across," writes Preston Heartley. "Her contagious enthusiasm motivates teams to do their best."

Mike Burns, Staff Sector, Corning, NY

Nominated by Martin Curran, Research and Development, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: United Way of the Southern Tier, Corning, NY

When United Way of the Southern Tier needed financial leadership, Mike Burns stepped up. Mike joined United Way's board as treasurer and helped to recruit a full-time controller. He also focuses the staff on key measures, and provides critical analysis and guidance for the Board. "Mike doesn't look for credit, he doesn't complain, he gets things done where they need doing," writes Marty Curran.

Anastasia Castilone, Staff Sector, Corning, NY

Nominated by Cynthia Cook, Staff Sector, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Friends of Camp Gorton, Corning, NY

You'll find Anastasia Castilone all over the community with her passion for volunteering. In addition to being a Cub Scout den leader, Anastasia brings needed food to homebound seniors as a Meals on Wheels delivery driver. On Watkins Glen race weekend, she can be found behind the wheel of a courtesy cart for disabled visitors. "Always willing, with a smile and kindness, Anastasia is the "Heart and Soul" of the community," writes Cynthia Cook. "Anastasia volunteers to help both young and old to make our community more vibrant and welcoming."

Katie Cervoni, Staff Sector, Corning, NY

Nominated by Kristine Dale, Staff Sector, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: United Way of the Southern Tier, Corning, NY

If there's a United Way event happening in the Corning valley, undoubtedly Katie Cervoni will be at the center of it. Katie partners with Kristine Dale, Corning's United Way Campaign program director, driving fundraising activities and volunteerism. Katie recently joined the Board of Directors for United Way of the Southern Tier to bring a fresh perspective and offer new ideas for ways to involve community members. "Katie is a valued advocate for United Way of the Southern Tier and exemplifies what it means to give back to the community," writes Kristine Dale.

Steve Colby, Optical Communications, Charlotte, NC

Nominated by Vincent Ferretti, S&T, Charlotte, NC

Grant recipient: Newton Depot Authority, Charlotte, NC

A visit to the historic Newton Depot Authority now includes a large model railroad thanks to Steve Colby. Steve invested many hours piecing together the model, electrical work, and base to give visitors a real-life look into local history. The model is a catalyst for a STEAM program at the museum focusing on the railroad's scale and environment. "Steve's efforts turned items that were considered junk in a storage room into a valuable display and programming," writes Vince Ferretti.

Carlton Cole, S&T, Corning, NY

Nominated by Gregory Stone, S&T, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Friends of the Ithaca Sea Scouts, Ithaca, NY

Community work in Ithaca fills Carlton Cole's free time. As a volunteer with the Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 2-2, he assists with vessel safety inspections safety patrols on Cayuga and developed a training plan for youth in Sea Scout Ship 25 in leadership and ship operations. When he's not on the water, Carlton helps the Tompkins County Friends of the Library by sorting books for their book sale and lends a hand in Boy Scouts. "Carlton's knowledge and involvement is appreciated by the Friends of the Library, Coast Guard Auxiliaries, and other groups to which Carl has taken time and energy to volunteer with," writes Gregory Stone.

Frederick Collins, S&T, Corning, NY

Nominated by Geoffrey Steenberge, Finance Staff Sector

Grant recipient: Notre Dame High School, Elmira, NY

Fredrick Collins knows how important schools are in communities. For the past ten years, Fred has been part of the Parent School Association for All Saints Academy. He helped with major fundraising efforts including the Fall Festival and Spring Gala, as well as leading the Secret Santa initiative. "Not only have Fred's efforts had an amazingly positive impact on All Saints Academy, but his passion and leadership have also encouraged me and countless others to become more involved," writes Geoffrey Steenberge. "I have never met anyone who better demonstrates everything that the Excellence in Volunteerism award represents than Fred Collins."

Ying Gao, S&T, Corning, NY

Nominated by Xiang-Dong Mi, S&T, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Chinese School of Rochester, Rochester, NY

For more than 25 years, Ying Gao has volunteered with the Chinese School of Rochester in a variety of roles, perhaps most importantly as one of the school's founders. Her many hats have included President, Principal, Head Teacher, and board member. "Through Ying's efforts many children and adults have a place to study the Chinese language and culture," writes Xiang-Dong Mi. "Attendees can take calligraphy classes, watch Chinese dance troupes, and learn Chinese. Through these shared experiences, many invaluable friendships have blossomed in our vibrant community."

Grant Gildehaus, Optical Communications, Charlotte, NC

Nominated by Adam Weeks, Optical Communications, Charlotte, NC

Grant recipient: Mecklenburg County Council Boy Scouts of America, Charlotte, NC

Grant Gildehaus is a committed Scouts BSA (formerly Boy Scouts of America) volunteer and spends his personal time as Eagle Scout Coordinator for Troop 233. Committed to youth education and service, Grant has been recognized by his peers in scouting with the District Award of Merit 2020, District Committee Member for the Year 2021, Commissioner's Key, and Cubmaster Key. He was also instrumental in the formation of the first female Scouts BSA troop in his Council. "Grant generously provides his time and talents to strengthen the community and improves the lives of others," writes Adam Weeks.

Jonathan Greveling, Optical Communications, Concord, NC

Nominated by Kevin Cabrera, Optical Communications, Concord, NC

Grant recipient: Habitat for Humanity Cabarrus County, Concord, NC

Jonathan Greveling spends his time with two organizations that focus on hope. He fundraises for Make-A-Wish to make critically ill children's wishes come true. Jon also volunteers during weekends with Habitat for Humanity to provide affordable homes for families in need. "Since I started with Corning, Jon and community outreach have become synonymous," writes Kevin Cabrera. "Jon works to foster an inclusive environment and demonstrates that giving back to others is a top priority."

Preston "Scott" Heartley, Optical Communications, Concord, NC

Nominated by Nicholas Coleman, Optical Communications, Wilmington, NC

Grant recipient: Humane Society of Union County, Concord, NC

Preston "Scott" Heartley can be found doing everything from wielding a hammer and paintbrush for Habitat for Humanity to making wishes come true for children with cancer through Make-A-Wish. Recently, Scott became involved with Meals on Wheels to provide assistance to home bound seniors. "Scott is committed to his involvement and support of the community," writes Nicholas Coleman. "It's a pleasure having Scott on my team to spread the giving energy to our group."

David Heglar, Optical Communications, Wilmington, NC

Nominated by Chris Lanier, Optical Communications, NC

Grant recipient: Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina

David Heglar serves as a dedicated volunteer fire fighter with the Kure Beach Fire Department. He answers calls for fighting fires, assists with medical emergencies, and handles water accidents and rescues and devotes hundreds of hours a year to help keep his neighbors safe. "David is unselfish with his personal time and he looks for opportunities to make his community a safer place to live," writes Chris Lanier.

Tammy Hoffman, Optical Communications, Wilmington, NC

Nominated by Kenneth Kelmer, Optical Communications, Wilmington, NC

Grant recipient: Port City Robotics, Wilmington, NC

Tammy Hoffman uses her technical training to introduce students to robotics. Through Port City Robotics, a FIRST Robotics organization, you'll find Tammy onsite for their three-day tournaments, helping with team meetings, and providing meals for their all-day events. Tammy is a sought-after technical mentor who helps students develop their ideas and translate them into assembly and fabrication of their robot. "Tammy is generous with her time and financial support by providing meals and supplies to the team," writes Ken Kelmer.

Peter (Jud) Johnston, Optical Communications, Wilmington, NC

Nominated by Greg Davis, Optical Communications, Wilmington, NC

Grant recipient: Port City Robotics, Wilmington, NC

Making learning fun is what Peter (Jud) Johnston does with Port City Robotics where he's been a volunteer since 2019. The Wired Wizards, the high school Robotics Team, count on Jud's coaching from early in the design process through the many problem-solving phases of designing and building robots. "Jud is patient with students, and he strives to make sure they understand engineering fundamentals," writes Greg Davis.

Angela King, Advanced Optics, Keene, NH

Nominated by Zakary Walker, Advanced Optics, Keene, NH

Grant recipient: Cedarcrest Center for Children with Disabilities, Keene, NH

Angela King has found two organizations in her community in which to invest her personal time. When she's not serving hot meals at the Keene Community Kitchen, she can be found helping to plan events at Cedarcrest Center for Children with Disabilities. Cedarcrest recently celebrated its 75th anniversary with a barbecue where Angela volunteered on the planning committee and was engaged in every aspect of the successful event. "Angela is an outstanding person and goes above and beyond for our community at every opportunity," writes Zakary Walker.

Christina Laskowski, S&T, Corning, NY

Nominated by Eric Biribuze, S&T, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Science Technology Entrepreneurship Leadership Academy, Corning, NY

Christina Laskowski is passionate about robotics and spends her free time bringing robotics to others. For over a decade Christina has helped to run robotics programs in the Corning and Elmira communities for youth aged 7-18. Recently, Christina spent time volunteering with Science Technology Entrepreneurship Leadership Academy (STELA) and took vacation time to fully immerse in the week long summer robotics camp. "Christina fully exemplifies the core tenet of Corning Value of Innovation for changing peoples' lives and embodies the spirit of the Excellence in Volunteerism Award," writes Eric Biribuze.

Emilee Lindner, Staff Sector, Corning, NY

Nominated by Maria Strinni, Staff Sector, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Happy Compromise Farm and Sanctuary, Lowman, NY

Every Sunday, you'll find Emilee Lindner working at Happy Compromise Farm and Sanctuary. In addition to helping with the animals, Emilee gets involved with barn repairs, gardening, and construction projects. "Emilee is a dedicated volunteer at Happy Compromise Farm and Sanctuary," writes Maria Strinni. "She spends hours of her time unselfishly to help in the community."

Kevin Logan, Advanced Optics, Canton, NY

Nominated by Mandie Mousaw, Advanced Optics, Canton, NY

Grant recipient: Canton Minor Hockey, Canton, NY

Kevin Logan shows his commitment to the sport of hockey by volunteering as head coach of the St. Lawrence Steel Peewee (12U) Major AA team which brought home a championship title for the 2021-2022 season. In addition to his coaching duties, Kevin serves as Secretary on the Canton Minor Hockey Board of Directors and is the Master Ice Scheduler for the Hockey Operations Committee. "Kevin is committed to providing players the opportunity to have fun on the ice while teaching them valuable life lessons," writes Mandie Mousaw. "He continually affirms the importance of commitment, self-discipline, and sportsmanship among the team participants."

Ashley Lomboy, Optical Communications, Wilmington, NC

Nominated by Madison Howard, Optical Communications, Wilmington, NC

Grant recipient: Waccamaw Siouan Tribe, Wilmington, NC

Ashley Lomboy is a dedicated volunteer with the Waccamaw Siouan Tribe. As a program director for the STEM Studio she helped lead the charge for the Wigwam STEM Challenge, Marine Quest Day, and Community Yacunne Fish camps. These programs have over 500 participants and 10 community partners and sponsors. Ashley is also a founding member of the New Hanover County Multicultural Commission, a group that identifies ways the county can be inclusive of people from diverse backgrounds. "Ashley has made considerable contributions to her community, and she inspires our next generation," writes Madison Howard.

Chris Long, Gorilla Glass, Harrodsburg, KY

Chris Coffman, Gorilla Glass, Harrodsburg, KY

Grant recipient: American Cancer Society, Harrodsburg, KY

For Chris Long, golf is an avenue to support the American Cancer Society (ACS). Each year Chris organizes a golf scramble that attracts teams from Harrodsburg employees, Corning vendors, and the local community with sponsors and prizes – all to benefit ACS. "Chris does a phenomenal job coordinating the golf tournament, the single largest fundraising activity in our area for the American Cancer Society," writes Chris Coffman.

Meghan Lyons, S&T Corning, NY

Joshua McCaslin, Gorilla Glass, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Humane Society of Schuyler County, Watkins Glen, NY

If dogs are humans' best friends, then Meghan Lyons is a dog's best friend. At the Human Society of Schuyler County, Meghan organizes the dog walking program. She also spends countless hours training the "harder to adopt dogs" to overcome challenges and find their forever home. "Meghan sets the example to other volunteers at the animal shelter for what they should aim for," writes Joshua McCaslin.

Nicholas McAdam, S&T, Corning, NY

Nominated by Kathryn Greene, S&T, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Corning Meals on Wheels, Corning, NY

Nicholas McAdam can be found volunteering his time with several different causes, including helping homebound seniors and preserving the environment. A few organizations Nick spends his time with are Corning Meals on Wheels, United Way of the Southern Tier, the Corning Area Young Professionals, and as a trail steward for various hiking trails in Elmira, NY. With Corning Meals on Wheels, Nick not only delivers meals, but organizes team members for Corporate Communication's adopted route on Fridays. "Nick is a critical contributor to the community through his volunteerism and support of volunteer opportunities," writes Kathryn Greene.

Brian McIntosh, Optical Communications, Hickory, NC

Nominated by Will Brown, Optical Communications, Hickory, NC

Grant recipient: Hearts and Hope Foundation, Hickory, NC

Brian McIntosh has been volunteering as an assistant coach for the Bandys High School softball team since 2015. As a coach, he spends countless hours supporting and mentoring the team in skills on and off the field. This year, the team was first in their conference and reached the 3rd round of the NCSHAA 2A State Playoffs, which is the best the team has performed since spring 2014. "Brian's dedication to coaching over the years is an excellent example of leadership," writes William Brown.

Sharon Milligan, Staff Sector, Charlotte, NC

Nominated by Martin Light, Staff Sector, Charlotte, NC

Grant recipient: Hickory Choral Society, Hickory, NC

Sharon promotes music excellence and education as a volunteer member of the Hickory Choral Society (HCS). For more than 35 years, Sharon contributes her time and talent as a singer in addition to her experience and knowledge of finance, strategic planning, fundraising, and grant writing. Sharon served on numerous committees and held a variety of positions on the board of directors. As chair of the newly formed development committee, she focused on the long-term financial sustainability of HCS. She also led the organization to hire the first paid artistic director as chair of the search committee. "Sharon is an inspiration for promoting musical excellence and music education in the Hickory area," writes Martin Light.

Morad Ali Moradi, Advanced Optics, Fairport, NY

Nominated by Andrew Korol, Advanced Optics, Fairport, NY

Grant recipient: Keeping Our Promise, Fairport, NY

The unfolding crisis in Afghanistan gave Morad Ali Moradi an opportunity to make a difference for refugees in his community. Ali generously volunteers his time to assist Afghan SIV (Special Immigration Visa) holders transitioning to life in the United States. He works with Keeping Our Promise as a translator and provides transportation services to Afghan families. A Facebook page he created with nearly 200 members provides national news and community information important to these new arrivals to the United States. "Ali's kindness, patience, care, and spirit of self-sacrifice reflects great credit upon himself, his fellow countrymen, and Corning," writes Andrew Korol.

Felicia Jones Murrill, Optical Communications, Charlotte, NC

Nominated by Eric Biribuze, S&T, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Habitat for Humanity of Orange County, Charlotte, NC

Felicia Jones Murrill is an active volunteer in her community. Felicia supports a variety of local non-profit organizations including Habitat for Humanity, Digi-Bridge, and professional organizations. At Digi-Bridge Felicia supports and sponsors the STEAMLab, an out-of-school-time program that develops hands-on exploratory and career focused STEM experiences for K-8 students in Title 1 schools. She also served on the boards of the National Association of Black Accountants and Clark Atlanta University Charlotte Alumni chapter. "Felicia helps many people in the community, all while promoting Corning," writes Eric Biribuze.

Raymond Nanni, Optical Communications, Charlotte, NC

Nominated by Brett Burch, Optical Communications, Charlotte, NC

Grant recipient: The Well Outreach, Charlotte, NC

Raymond Nanni donates his time and talents to The Well Outreach, a regional food ministry that serves over 650 families. For over a decade Ray has spent his weekends volunteering at the food pantry to distribute food to those in need. The Well Outreach recently implemented a mobile food pantry which serves over 500 families. "Ray's selfless pursuit to help others is unmatched by anyone that I know," writes Brett Burch. "He is the type of person that makes Corning shine every day."

Jessica Ober, Corning Gorilla Glass, Corning, NY

Nominated by Katherine Ballman, Corning Gorilla Glass, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Arbor Housing Development, Corning, NY

Jessica Ober is passionate about her community and actively seeks opportunities to volunteer. For Earth Day, Jessica organized a group to volunteer with City of Corning at the Civic Center to pick up trash and debris as well as mulch the plant beds. Jessica also hosted a donation drive for Arbor Housing and Development's domestic violence shelter. "Jessica provides creative solutions to help support the community and drive participation in volunteer events," writes Katherine Ballman. "Her vision is inspiring, and she motivates others to be excited about volunteerism."

Jamie Post, Corning Gorilla Glass, Corning, NY

Nominated by Katherine Ballman, Corning Gorilla Glass, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Arbor Housing and Development, Corning, NY

Supporting women is a passion of Jamie Post and she actively volunteers with Arbor Housing and Development at the domestic violence shelter. At the shelter Jamie works to provide a welcoming experience for the residents. "During one project, multiple volunteers did not show up and Jamie stayed late to paint the rooms by herself to ensure they were finished and ready for the shelter to use," writes Katherine Ballman. "Jamie is unselfish with her time and has an infectious positive attitude."

Delaine Preston, Gorilla Glass, Harrodsburg, KY

Nominated by Courtney Duchesne, Gorilla Glass, Harrodsburg, KY

Grant recipient: CASA of the Bluegrass, Harrodsburg, KY

Delaine Preston cares about children, especially those in foster care. Delaine recently organized a drive for Mercer County Department of Community Based Services to collect backpacks, toiletries, toys, and clothes. These items will help children transition to a new home and feel comfortable during office visits. She also participates in Casa of the Bluegrass, which is an advocacy center for foster children. "Delaine is passionate about helping children in our area and, due to her efforts, the vibrancy of our community will grow with the next generation," writes Courtney Duchesne.

Jeffrey Pruett, Optical Communications, Hickory, NC

Nominated by Anita Doran, Optical Communications, Hickory, NC

Grant recipient: Special Olympics of North Carolina, Hickory, NC

Jeff Pruett is a tireless advocate for the Special Olympics of North Carolina. He was one of the founders of the Hickory Law Enforcement Torch Run / Bike Ride. Every year for the past seven years, Jeff has helped to organize the event, recruit participants, and ride more than 300 miles to raise money for the Special Olympics of North Carolina. "Jeff exemplifies excellence in volunteerism and represents Corning in the best possible way to our community," writes Anita Doran.

Daniel Ragland, Pharmaceutical Technologies, Corning, NY

Nominated by Casey Gonta, S&T, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Crystal City Parks Foundation, Corning, NY

Daniel Ragland, an avid disc golfer, turned one of his favorite hobbies into an opportunity to volunteer. Daniel spends his time improving the disc golf course at Denison Park by filling in holes under trees, fixing signs, and trimming trees. Recently, Daniel led the redesign of the entire disc golf course when the Cherry Blossom Trail was installed in the park. "Daniel elevates our local park to a higher standard for everyone," writes Casey Gonta.

Jim Ritchey, Life Sciences, Greater Boston, MA

Nominated by Chad LaCroix, Life Sciences, Greater Boston, MA

Grant recipient: ASM Materials Education Foundation, Boston, MA

Jim Ritchey is instrumental in developing materials science educational resources. For over 30 years Jim has volunteered with the American Society of Materials (ASM) and serves as Treasurer on the board of directors for the ASM Education Foundation. He also worked with the local ASM Boston to create a camp for local science teachers. "Jim is excited to bring awareness of the American Society of Materials and its efforts to the biological materials of interest to others," writes Chad LaCroix.

Robert Roth, Gorilla Glass, Harrodsburg, KY

Nominated by Shawn Markham, Gorilla Glass, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: National Speleological Society, Harrodsburg, KY

Spending time in caves became a passion for Robert Roth that developed into an opportunity to volunteer with the National Speleological Society. Bob holds multiple positions with the society and is co-chair of the management committee at the Wells Cave Nature Preserve. As part of the preserve management committee, Bob dedicates time monitoring for degradation and water quality. He also helps with special projects like monitoring White Noise Syndrome in bats. "Bob's support of the National Speleological Society is very important as the environment conditions are constantly changing," writes Shawn Markham. "His work provides additional data on areas not normally monitored and tracked in our global climate change observations."

Brett Shelton, Environmental Technologies, Corning, NY

Nominated by Steven Wagner, S&T, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Road Runners Club of America Southern Tier SOAR, Corning, NY

Brett Shelton is a founding members of the SOAR Youth Running Club in Corning, NY and is a lead coach. Brett plans practice activities and organizes the coaches. He volunteers at least three evenings a week for practices and travels to the meets. "Brett has a passion for all aspects of running sports and imparts that to the kids," writes Steven Wagner. "While most participants will probably not go on to compete at the collegiate level or beyond, they learn life skills of perseverance and practice from Coach Brett."

Deanna Sherman, Optical Communications, Corning, NY

Nominated by Robin Gee, Optical Communications, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Northern Tioga School District

Deanna Sherman is no stranger to public service and volunteers her time with a variety of organizations in Elkland, Pennsylvania. Deanna has served as a Councilwoman on Elkland's Council for four years and served on several committees. She worked with the Elkland Recreation Authority training and supervising pool staff. In addition, she worked with the Elkland Police Department for special events, including cooking and serving a free Veterans Day dinner and running a local toy drive for children. "Deanna is one of those special people who truly tries to make her community a better place," writes Robin Gee.

Dede Starnes, Optical Communications, Charlotte, NC

Nominated by David Kozischek, S&T, Charlotte, NC

Grant recipient: Girl Scouts Carolinas Peaks to Piedmont, Charlotte, NC

Out of a desire to share her love of crocheting and knitting with others, Dede Starnes created the TwinKnits program. Through TwinKnits people of all ages and ability levels are introduced to the art of crochet, knitting, and other fiber crafts. Dede leads a bi-monthly “Stitching Under the Sails” event in Downtown Hickory, NC where crafters come together for learning, sharing, and fellowship. “Dede’s creation of TwinKnits is a benefit to the community,” writes David Kozischek.

Christina Steffanus, Staff Sector, Corning, NY

Nominated by Lindsey Helkenn, Staff Sector, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Corning Comfort Care, Corning, NY

Christina Steffanus donates her free time to 171 Cedar Arts Center and Corning’s chapter of Sister Cities International. At 171, Christina organized an event for Martin Luther King Jr. Day with a drum and dance workshop, storytelling, poetry, and craft projects. As a board of directors member for the Corning chapter of Sister Cities International, she organized a speaking event to raise awareness and funds for Lviv, Ukraine. “Christina’s dedication and commitment to the community is inspirational,” writes Lindsey Helkenn.

Maria Strinni, Staff Sector, Corning, NY

Nominated by Emilee Lindner, Staff Sector, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Corning Meals on Wheels

Maria Strinni shows her commitment to the community by volunteering with Meals on Wheels and United Way of the Southern Tier. Maria serves on the Board of Directors for Corning Meals on Wheels and dedicates her Fridays to delivering food to those in need. For United Way, Maria held a fundraiser by offering her talent as a photographer to take headshots of employees who give a donation. “Maria is vital to the Corning-Elmira community,” writes Emilee Lindner. “She is passionate about lifting up others.”

Gregory Tenbus, Pharmaceutical Technologies, Corning, NY

Nominated by Matthew Ricci, Environmental Technologies, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Soaring Capital Soccer Club, Elmira, NY

Dedicated to bringing lacrosse and soccer to local youth, Gregory Tenbus volunteers his time coaching and mentoring athletes with Soaring Capital Soccer Club. In addition to coaching, he helps with field maintenance, fundraisers, and charity events. “Greg approaches challenges with a positive attitude and it has been an honor and a privilege to work beside him,” writes Matthew Ricci.

Patty Wahba, Staff Sector, Corning, NY

Nominated by Jesse Cates, Finance Staff Sector, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Corning Comfort Care, Corning, NY

Patty Wahba donates her time and skills volunteering with Corning Comfort Care, also known as Bampa's House. As the Financial Advisor on the board of directors, Patty works closely with the board president and treasurer to develop the annual budget, monitor the monthly profit and loss statements, and develop long term financial plans. She also assists with fundraising events and activities. "Patty generously provides her time and financial knowledge to help strengthen the community and improve the lives of others," writes Jesse Cates.

Michael Warren, Environmental Technologies, Corning, NY

Nominated by Chad Krelie, Staff Sector, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: New York State West Youth Soccer Association, Corning, NY

Bringing soccer to youth is a passion for Michael Warren. Mike has served as a board member of the Bath Kiwanis Youth Soccer organization and organized the Bath Kiwanis Fall Youth soccer program. When Mike isn't coordinating the game schedule, recruiting coaches, and ordering equipment, he can be found out lining and mowing the playing fields. "Mike's leadership of the Bath Youth Soccer organization has made a positive impact on the group and the Bath community," writes Chad Krelie.

Claire Warren Ginnan, Corning Gorilla Glass, Corning, NY

Nominated by Arnette Brooks, S&T, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Tanglewood Nature Center, Elmira, NY

Claire Warren Ginnan's dedication to the community includes supporting the Economic Opportunity Program, Tanglewood Nature Center, Foodbank of the Southern Tier, and the African American Read-In program. Claire recently joined the Tanglewood Nature Center's board and is a leader for the African American Read-In program. "Claire's leadership and commitment to the community is admirable," writes Arnette Brooks. "It's encouraging and motivational to volunteer with Claire and see her desire to better the community."

Sonya Whitfield, Optical Communications, Hickory, NC

Nominated by Anita Doran, Optical Communications, Charlotte, NC

Grant recipient: NAACP Foundation, Hickory, NC

Sonya Whitfield's experience and guidance on the NAACP board of directors has helped it to be successful. She has coached and mentored NAACP committee chairs by helping them write objectives, strategic plans, and fundraising. In addition, she helped structure and promote new education programs at the Hickory Branch of the NAACP. "Sonya has provided valuable leadership and encouragement to get NAACP programs off the ground and on the road to success," writes Anita Doran. "She is an exemplary representative for Corning in our community."

Thomas C. Zajicek (TC), S&T, Corning, NY

Nominated by Thomas M. Zajicek, S&T, Corning, NY

Grant recipient: Seven Generations of Stewards, Corning, NY

Making the Falling Leaves and Native Nations Festivals successful is what drives Thomas (TC) Zajicek. TC takes his knowledge and uses it to benefit other Native American educational events, including the mini festival at the Chemung Valley Montessori School, Garden of Fire, and Nunda Americana Day. TC is a past board member of Seven Generations of Stewards. “TC is a dedicated volunteer who is generous with his time and commitment to the Native Nations Festival,” writes Thomas M. Zajicek.