Blue Cross Service Day Powers Mass. Nonprofits to Build Healthier Communities

BOSTON, Sept. 20, 2017 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Today, 55 nonprofits in 33 towns across the Commonwealth will get a powerful helping hand from 3,200 Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts employees as part of the company's annual Service Day. Due to inclement weather, eight projects are being postponed, rescheduled or moved to a different location to ensure the safety of all participants.



From Springfield to Hull, Blue Cross volunteers will help improve access to healthy living programming and initiatives by participating in service projects like harvesting fresh produce to donate to local food pantries, creating a new outdoor play space and raised garden beds for Boys & Girls Club members, and chopping and preparing fresh meals for critically ill patients.

In addition to volunteer support, each Service Day nonprofit partner will also receive a $5,000 grant for materials to assist in their efforts. These grants, coupled with the 23,000 volunteer hours Blue Cross associates will contribute, brings the total 2017 community contribution on Service Day upwards of $1 million. Since Service Day's inception in 2011, Blue Cross has made more than $6 million in community contributions on the annual volunteer day.

"Service Day is our associates' favorite day of the year," said Andrew Dreyfus, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts President and CEO. "It is amazing to see the energy of our associates as they come together to help nonprofits across the state make a difference in the health of our community. Blue Cross is committed not only to our members but to improving the health of all Massachusetts residents."

"My job is to work with employers to design health and wellness programs for their employees" says Nicole Pizzi, Wellness Consultant at Blue Cross "It is rewarding to have the opportunity to work directly with organizations like the Boys & Girls Club of Lowell on Service Day to create an outdoor playground that I know will give children in our community access to more physical activity."

For more information on why Blue Cross is dedicated to its annual Service Day, visit the Service Day website, read the 2016 Corporate Citizenship Report or watch highlights from Service Day 2016.

2017 Service Day community partners and projects:

Organization	Location	Project Description
America SCORES	East Boston	Paint recess games on the blacktop, create a reading room, and help with cleaning and landscaping at the McKay K-8 school in E. Boston.
American Red Cross	Boston	Sort food for families in need at the American Red Cross food pantry.
Appalachian Mountain Club	North Easton	Improve signage and clear overgrown brush along the Bay Circuit Trail in Easton.
Ascentria Care Alliance	Blue Cross Quincy Office	Organize and package gift baskets of fresh produce to be distributed to Ascentria clients across the state.
Big Sister Association of Greater Boston	Brighton	Beautify the Faneuil Gardens Housing Development to create more functional and eye-catching recreational spaces for residents.
Boston Harbor Now	Boston	Clean beaches and clear walking trails to preserve the beauty of the Boston Harbor Islands.

Boy Scouts - Spirit of Adventure Council	Milton	Improve camp facilities by landscaping grounds, painting fence and cabins, and building fire pits.
Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston - Yawkey Club	Roxbury	Revitalize the Club through a variety of indoor and outdoor maintenance projects.
Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston - Charlestown	Charlestown	Transform a simple tunnel into an inspirational passageway for kids to travel between the two Club buildings.
Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell	Lowell	Improve the Club's outdoor space by painting games on the blacktop and transforming the playground to a quiet, sensory area.
Boys & Girls Club of Marshfield	Marshfield	Build an outdoor volleyball court and improve indoor facilities to benefit 5,000 Club members.
Camp Harbor View	Boston	Help end the camp season on a high by helping winterize the camp by assisting clean the facilities and equipment and landscape the grounds.
Cardinal Cushing Centers	Hanover	Clean up an overgrown fitness path and create a volleyball and shuffle ball court.
Community Harvest Project	Grafton	Participate in a normal day on the farm helping harvest, sort, wash, and package late season produce.
Community Servings	Jamaica Plain	Prepare and package healthy meals to distribute to critically ill patients.
Cradles to Crayons	Brighton	Sort and pack donated items such as clothing and baby supplies for children in communities across the state.
Cradles to Crayons	Blue Cross Quincy & Hingham Offices	Package winter accessory kits and arts and craft bags for 27,500 children in need.
Crossroads (Camp Wing)	Duxbury	Maintain Camp Wing's facilities by clearing trails, cleaning cabins, and repairing the camp's bikes.
Friends of Holly Hill Farm	Cohasset	Support the Holly Hill Farm by weeding, mulching, harvesting, and maintaining trails.
Friends of Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly	Brighton	Help senior residents establish a garden club by elevating planter boxes and assembling picnic tables.
Girl Scouts of Eastern MA	Waltham	Ensure that the network of trails at Camp Cedar Hill are accessible, safe, and welcoming for girls to explore and learn about themselves in nature.
Heading Home	Charlestown	Create a healthy environment for clients transitioning in and out of shelters by assembling "bed kits" with clean sheets, pillow, and blanket.
Hull Lifesaving Museum	Hull	Restore the Museum's fleet of boats, spruce up their gardens, and organize indoor exhibits.
Joined Forces	Springfield	Transform the home of a well deserving veteran through an exterior revamp with painting and landscaping.
Magical Moon	Marshfield	Create a bee skep, maintain walkways, and enhance the Fairy Forest.
Massachusetts Audubon Society - Boston Nature Center	Mattapan	Build and maintain accessible trails for residents to enjoy nature at the Boston Nature Center.
Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless	Lynn	Assist families transitioning out of homelessness by sanding, painting and beautifying furniture, and sorting and preparing donated clothing.
May Institute	Randolph	Enable students with disabilities to enjoy the outdoors by gardening, building and painting picnic tables and painting classrooms.
Message of Hope Foundation	Blue Cross Hingham Office	Assemble activity packs for over 1,000 Happy Hope Bags that will then be delivered to local hospitals and hospice facilities.
Old Colony YMCA - Middleboro (Camp Yomechas)	Middleborough	Construct reading teepees, transform old canoes into gardens, build a pirate ship sandbox, and assemble a mud kitchen.
Old Colony YMCA - Plymouth	Plymouth	Spice up Camp Clark by creating recycling centers, a driving range, and outdoor track.
Old Colony YMCA Stoughton	Stoughton	Build an obstacle course for children to test and explore their physical capabilities.
People Making a Difference Through Community Service	Cambridge	Carefully build educational protein science kits to help Boston middle and high school students learn about cell mechanisms.
Pine Street Inn	Boston	Participate in a Chop A Thon to prepare food for use by the Pine Street Inn healthy meal program.
Playworks	New Bedford	Transform a small parking lot into an engaging playground at the Congdon Elementary School in New Bedford.

Project Just Because	Hopkinton	Sort and pack donated items such as books, clothing and toys for children in communities throughout Central MA and Metro West regions
RFK Action Corps	South Yarmouth	Create a welcoming environment at the Cape Cod Adolescent Treatment Center. Paint and landscape the facility.
Room to Grow	Boston	Ensure the best possible start in life for babies in poverty by making blankets and sorting and organizing donated clothing.
Save the Harbor/ Save the Bay	South Boston	Clean up the beaches for visitors to enjoy throughout the fall and winter seasons.
St. Mary's Center for Women and Children	Dorchester	Clean and organize playrooms, community space, and kitchens, and maintain outdoor landscaping.
Stars	Randolph	Enhance the development of children by creating a fun and safe outdoor playground and school yard at the Randolph preschool.
The Food Project	Lynn	Help build a sustainable food system by harvesting and sorting thousands of pounds of produce to donate to local hunger relief organizations.
The Greater Boston Food Bank	Boston	Sort and package food donations for distribution statewide.
The Trustees	Hingham	Help maintain the last functional farm in Hingham at the Trustees' Weir River Farm.
The Urban Farming Institute of Boston	Dorchester	Promote community members to eat locally sourced food by helping harvest fresh produce in the Dorchester urban farm.
Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center	Boston	Provide adventurous and challenging hands-on learning programs for urban youth by organizing kayaks and backpacking expedition gear.
United South End Settlements	Boston	Create a zen yet playful environment for the early education center by painting and landscaping the facilities and participating in yoga with toddlers.
United Way	Blue Cross Boston Office	Create "Brain Building" kits for children and their families to promote early childhood development.
VA Boston Healthcare System (Brockton VA)	Brockton	Serve the veterans at the Brockton campus - clean and paint the facilities, landscape the grounds, and write thank you notes.
West End House Boys & Girls Club	Allston	Prepare nutritious snacks and setting up an obstacle course to get kids moving afterschool.
YMCA Greater Boston (Camp Ponkapoag)	Canton	Refresh the camp after a successful summer season by landscaping, cleaning the pool area, and organizing the indoor lodge.
YMCA of Cape Cod (Camp Lyndon)	Sandwich	Clear trail ways, clean cabins, and winterize the camp.
YMCA Southcoast	Wareham	Build an outdoor pavilion, stadium seating, and obstacle course.
YouthBuild	Roxbury	Engage with youth while landscaping, painting and participating in light carpentry to improve a Roxbury community center.

About Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (bluecrossma.com) is a community-focused, tax-paying, not–for–profit health plan headquartered in Boston. We're the trusted health plan for more than 25,000 Massachusetts employers and are committed to working with others in a spirit of shared responsibility to make quality health care affordable. Consistent with our corporate promise to always put our 2.8 million members first, we're rated among the nation's best health plans for member satisfaction and quality. Connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

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