Blue Cross Volunteers Support 90 Service Projects Across Massachusetts on 12th Annual Service Day

Since Service Day's inception in 2011, Blue Cross has contributed nearly$11 million of value to local not-for-profits through this annual volunteer day

BOSTON, Sept. 29, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- Today, nearly 3,000 Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts ("Blue Cross") employees are volunteering to support 90 service projects across Massachusetts focused on creating more equitable, just, and healthy communities as part of the company's 12th annual Service Day.

Blue Cross partnered with 76 not-for-profit organizations to design both in-person and virtual volunteer opportunities that align with the company's health equity work. 2,200 Blue Cross employees are volunteering at community partner sites across the state and 800 are volunteering virtually from home.

"We're proud to support not-for-profits around the state that are working to address health inequities in our communities," said Andrew Dreyfus, president and CEO of Blue Cross. "The idea for Service Day came from our employees. Over the past 12 years it has grown to become our largest company event and one of our most beloved traditions. It is incredible to see the collective impact that can be accomplished in one day to support the critical work of our community partners."

Volunteers participating in-person are supporting 80 projects in 50 cities and towns across Massachusetts focused on addressing the social and environmental conditions affecting the health of children and families. Service projects include creating new outdoor play spaces for children to stay active, harvesting fresh produce to donate to local food pantries, and cleaning beaches and clearing trails to improve access to green space.

Simultaneously, 800 employees are participating from home in 10 virtual projects. Together on Zoom, volunteers are completing projects such as writing letters to seniors isolated at home, packing themed Happy Hope Bags filled with creative activities for hospitalized children and creating lifesaving paracord bracelets for military and first responders.

The company is also partnering with Common Impact to engage 30 employees in virtual skills-based projects, addressing business challenges facing five community partners – About Fresh, East Boston Neighborhood Health Center, Eastie Farm, Parents for Peace, and Shine Initiative.

Projects are chosen based on their alignment with the company's focus on health justice. In addition to sending a group of enthusiastic volunteers to complete the task, Blue Cross also provides a grant to cover the project costs. Since Service Day's inception in 2011, the total value of the company's financial and volunteer support to local not-for-profits is nearly $11 million.

For more information on Blue Cross' annual Service Day and the company's commitment to health justice, visit its Corporate Citizenship website or read its latest Corporate Citizenship Report.

Service Day community partners and projects:

Organization	City	Project Description
About Fresh	Virtual project	5 volunteers are advising About Fresh around data security best practices and staff training recommendations to ensure that their Fresh Connect program is HIPAA-compliant and safe from phishing threats.
Annie's Kindness Blankets	Hingham	100 volunteers are creating blankets to donate to community members experiencing substance abuse or mourning the loss of a loved one.

Applause Academy MA	Taunton	20 volunteers are helping make the performing arts accessible to Applause Academy's diverse community of children by organizing and repairing props, sets, and costumes and painting and decorating the dance studio.
Backyard Growers	Gloucester	25 volunteers are weeding, mulching, and clearing pathways in an urban garden to help provide healthy, fresh food to low- to moderate-income residents of Gloucester, including many immigrant and refugee families.
Birthday Wishes	Natick	20 volunteers are bringing the joy and magic of a birthday party to the homeless children and families that Birthday Wishes serves, by wrapping birthday gifts and filling Birthdays-in-a-Box.
Boston Harbor Now	Hingham	50 volunteers are ferrying to Peddocks Island to help ensure this beautiful environment remains a vibrant, public space - now and for future generations - by cleaning beaches, tracking collected trash, and clearing trails.
Boston Home	Dorchester	25 volunteers are hosting an Adaptive Sports and Recreation Day for Boston Home residents and outpatients that will provide them the special opportunity to bowl, play bocce, and participate in target games using assistive technology and adaptive devices.
Boston Nature Center	Mattapan	25 volunteers are building nature play areas that provide children with more ways to connect with nature by encouraging self-directed, informal play.
Boston SCORES	East Boston	12 volunteers are planting shrubbery & bushes around the outside perimeter of the Boys & Girls Club, creating a welcoming space for the 2,500+ youth served every year.
Boys and Girls Club of Lowell	Lowell	10 volunteers are creating activity kits that will ensure club members will have access to their favorite programming while the Club is undergoing construction.
Boys and Girls Clubs of Boston	Roxbury	25 volunteers are providing a safe and welcoming space for Club members by helping clean the kitchen, prep a healthy meal, landscape the front entry, and clean up the playground and baseball field.
Broadmeadow Brook	Worcester	10 volunteers are building a fence to define the property line.
Cardinal Cushing Academy	Hanover	20 volunteers are helping bring the gift of fresh air and outdoor activity to Cardinal Cushing residents by helping clear walking trails around their campus.
Carepacks	South Weymouth	20 volunteers are packing care packages for deployed military containing high-calorie food products, socks and t-shirts, personal care items, books, magazines, and more.
Catholic Charities	Hull	20 volunteers are painting, landscaping and winterizing Sunset Point Camp ensuring at-risk children can enjoy a fun summer of exploration and friendships for years to come.
Community Farms Outreach	Waltham	15 volunteers are weeding, transplanting, harvesting or other farm field tasks that will help the farm deliver fresh produce to neighbors in need.
Community Harvest Project	North Grafton	25 volunteers are participating in farm work that will allow CHP to donate food to over 20 hunger relief agencies in Central and Eastern MA.
Community Servings	Jamaica Plain	50 volunteers are preparing, and packaging scratch made, medically tailored meals for Community Servings' 2,200+ weekly clients who are experiencing critical illness.
Cradles to Crayons	Hingham and Newton	150 volunteers are helping sort, package and label gently used clothing and books to distribute to children in need across Massachusetts.
Crossroads	Duxbury	50 volunteers are helping close the campgrounds for the season and prepping the site for fall and winter events.
Dimock Health Center	Roxbury	20 volunteers are revamping the backyard of a residential house for women in recovery and their children to enjoy.
Dream Day on Cape Cod	Brewster	25 volunteers are helping close the facilities for the season to ensure that seriously ill children and their families will have a safe a welcoming environment next summer.
East Boston Neighborhood Health Center	Virtual project	5 volunteers are creating a roadmap for East Boston Neighborhood Health Center to improve staff and provider knowledge of and engagement with community-based healing practices.
Eastie Farm	Virtual project	5 volunteers are developing a budget framework and recommendations for implementation for Eastie Farm that helps them to track their revenue, expenses, grants, and salary costs more efficiently.
Esplanade Association	Boston	25 volunteers are beautifying the Esplanade by picking up trash and litter from the fields, gardens, and water edges of the park.
Father's Uplift	Dorchester	20 volunteers are packing "Bags for Dads" duffels filled with supplies and resources to help dads experiencing re-entry from incarceration ease their transition and remind them that they have a support system that cares.
Food for Free	Somerville	15 volunteers are packing "Just Eats" grocery boxes that provide over 3,000 Boston area families in need approximately twenty-five pounds of produce and pantry staples.
Friends of Holly Hill Farm	Cohasset	20 volunteers are harvesting produce to distribute to local food pantries, preparing garden beds for fall plantings and helping to compost at the farm.
Good Sports	Braintree	15 volunteers are sorting brand-new sporting equipment, apparel, and footwear at Good Sports warehouse to distribute to communities in need.

GreenRoots	Chelsea	20 volunteers are improving the community garden by taking down beds, piling and dispersing wood chips, and shoveling compost.
Happy Hope	Pocasset and virtual projects	250 volunteers are creating Happy Hope Kits with coloring sheets and fun activities that will bring a smile and a bit of fun to hospitalized children.
Holbrook Food Pantry	Holbrook	12 volunteers are painting the interior of the Holbrook Food Pantry, so clients are welcomed into an inviting and dignified space.
Home For Little Wanderers	Plymouth	20 volunteers are restoring a peace pond and garden that provide a quiet place to sit and relax in nature for adolescent youth involved with the Department of Children and Families.
Hope Floats Healing and Wellness Center	Kingston	30 volunteers are helping set up and prepare for Hope Floats' annual Memory Walk that will provide a space for grieving families to come together and honor the lives of those lost.
Hull Lifesaving Museum	Hull	50 volunteers are painting the fleet of boats and cleaning the museum space and repairing the museum's wheelchair accessible ramp.
Jewish Family Services MetroWest	Framingham	20 volunteers are support Framingham's immigrant community by helping JFS staff sort, package and load seasonal children's clothing that will be distributed to families in need.
JoinedForces	Chicopee	20 volunteers are repairing the home of a veteran by performing basic home repairs and enhancements.
Kind Hearts for Kids	Bourne	15 volunteers are assembling kindness kits and decorating the office space where foster children come for visits.
Letters Against Isolation	Virtual projects	300 volunteers are writing handwritten notes to isolated seniors that will provide joy and encouragement.
MA Coalition for the Homeless	Lynn	20 volunteers are building beds for homeless children that will provide a safe refuse and sense of security.
Magical Moon	Marshfield	50 volunteers are creating a magical space for children with cancer to escape and be a kid by helping revamp the Garden of Hope, Fairy Nook, and Hobbit House.
Mass Military & Cape Cod Military Support Foundation	Hyannis	75 volunteers are wrapping donated gifts for that families of veterans and active military during the holidays.
Merrimack Valley Food Bank	Lowell	20 volunteers are packing bags of nutritious food that will be distributed to students who rely on school meals for food through the weekend.
Mystic River Watershed	Everett	25 volunteers are removing litter from parks and paths that will reduce the amount of trash that ends up in the Mystic River and protect local wildlife.
Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH)	East Boston	25 volunteers are assembling emergency survival kits and replacing three garden beds.
Old Colony YMCA East Bridgewater	East Bridgewater	15 volunteers are creating a "sensory house" with a variety of sensory stations to promote social play, communication, and motor skill development.
Old Colony YMCA Middleboro	Middleboro	25 volunteers are installing a water wall, an outdoor abacus, and a site word wall to ensure campers do not fall victim to the "summer slide" by providing fun, active learning opportunities in the Y's new "Poolside Classroom."
Old Colony YMCA Plymouth	Plymouth	50 volunteers are installing a water bottle filling station and planting a rain garden to prevent erosion near their beach to make Camp Clark more sustainable.
Old Colony YMCA Stoughton	Stoughton	25 volunteers are creating a sensory playground for campers at Camp Christina to encourage open-ended play and stimulate creative thinking.
Operation Gratitude	Virtual projects	200 volunteers are making paracord survival bracelets and writing letters to provide military members and first responders with a tangible, lasting expression of gratitude.
Parents For Peace	Virtual project	5 volunteers are assessing Parents For Peace marketing and communications assets and developing messaging recommendations for educating and informing mental health providers on the services the organization offers to address radicalization and support families.
Peter Igo Park	Marshfield	20 volunteers are improving the facilities at Peter Igo Park spreading new sand on the volleyball court, spreading woodchips, installing a slide in the kiddie area, planting flowers, and power washing the tennis and basketball courts.
Playworks	New Bedford	25 volunteers are beautifying the playground at Gomes Elementary School to create a safe and inclusive recess space, transform recess culture, and promote active lifestyles for students.
Project Just Because	Hopkinton	50 volunteers are sorting and packing donating clothes and essential items to prepare Project Just Because's move to a new facility.

Regional Environmental Council	Worcester	10 volunteers are building a fence that will protect the garden from animals and help increase their harvest to continue to provide healthier, affordable, locally grown food for the Worcester community.
Room to Grow	Hyde Park	14 volunteers are sorting and packing bundles of baby and toddler items for the families in need with children ages 0-3.
Save the Harbor Save the Bay	Dorchester	40 volunteers are cleaning up Malibu Beach in Savin Hill following the busy season and getting it ready for the winter.
Sharing the Harvest / YMCA Southcoast (Dartmouth) AM	Dartmouth	25 volunteers are replacing the greenhouse coverings and planting strawberries and raspberries to provide these popular fruits to individuals and families experiencing food insecurity.
South Shore Stars	Westwood	20 volunteers are cleaning up the camp after a busy summer and readying it for winter.
South Shore YMCA	Hanover	20 volunteers are harvesting and gathering food at the YMCA's farm to donate to local food pantries.
St. Mary's Center for Women and Children	Dorchester	20 volunteers are beautifying the residential spaces to ensure St. Mary's Center residents feel supported, empowered, and inspired.
The Food Project	Lincoln	25 volunteers are making locally grown, healthy food more accessible to low-income families and people of color in Greater Boston by weeding, mulching, harvesting, and washing vegetables.
The Salem Pantry	Salem	12 volunteers are packing dry goods, frozen goods, and fresh produce to ensure the food pantry is equipped to provide meals for its 100-150 home delivery clients.
The Shine Initiative	Virtual project	5 volunteers are developing a newsletter template for the Shine Initiative that includes structure and content recommendations.
The Trustees	Hingham	25 volunteers are preparing for the Trustees' annual Fall Festival, a family event that invites hundreds of people to the farm to play games, visit with barn animals, and enjoy the farm. Volunteers will be helping with festival set up.
Together We Rise	Hingham and virtual projects	250 volunteers are providing comfort, support, and happiness for kids in foster care by creating birthday kits, assembling STEM boxes, and building skateboards.
Urban Powerhouse	Hyde Park	15 volunteers are painting the new facility to ensure athletes and members can feel great about their community and training space.
VA Boston Healthcare System (Brockton VA)	Brockton	30 volunteers are planting vegetables in the indoor greenhouse used at the hospital's farm to table meal program.
West End House	Allston	20 volunteers are creating booths for its annual Fitness Carnival focusing on teaching youth healthy eating habits.
Weymouth Food Pantry	Weymouth	20 volunteers are helping run a pop-up food pantry at Crossroads Worship Center that will distribute shelf stable foods and fresh fruits and vegetables to neighbors on the South Shore.
Wonderfund	Whitinsville	25 volunteers are renovating family visiting rooms at the Southcentral DCF office using a trauma informed approach so children and families can have calming and productive visits.
YMCA Cape Cod	Sandwich	20 volunteers are packaging shelf-stable meal bags, creating culturally relevant menu cards, and cleaning up the kitchen facility and community garden.
YMCA Greater Boston	Canton	40 volunteers are repairing benches and picnic tables, painting indoor spaces, and cleaning up and organizing summer games at Camp Ponkapoag.
YMCA Southcoast	Wareham	25 volunteers are cleaning up the campgrounds and trails, painting foursquare and hopscotch on the blacktop, painting, and assisting with light office projects.
Zoo NE	Boston	50 volunteers are revamping the Giraffe Entrance ensuring that it looks beautiful to benefit the surrounding community.

About Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts:
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (bluecrossma.org) is a community-focused, tax-paying, not-for-profit health plan headquartered in Boston. We are committed to the relentless pursuit of quality, affordable and equitable health care with an unparalleled consumer experience. Consistent with our promise to always put our members first, we are 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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