

## 2009 Governor's Brightest Stars

### Corporations

#### ★Premier Technology Inc., Blackfoot - **Governor's Brightest Star Corporation of the Year**

Premier Technology, an engineering, manufacturing and construction management company that emphasizes community service, small town values and a good work ethic, was a sponsor for a day-long career expo and engineering challenge on September 23 at the Lemhi County Fairgrounds in Salmon to help students from rural Idaho communities set education and career goals.

#### ★Smith Optics, Ketchum

The Smith Corporation has volunteered many hours of their service to organizations such as the Hunger Coalition, Special Olympics, Girl Scouts, and various local families in need. During the Castle Rock Fire, Smith Corporation donated hundreds of pairs of glasses to firefighters. A sense of volunteerism can easily be found among Smith's employees.

#### ★Wal-Mart Supercenter, Meridian - **First Lady's Choice Award**

Wal-Mart Supercenter, Meridian, considers itself a "store of the community," providing financial and volunteer support to dozens of charitable and community organizations and events. It has a particular focus on supporting veterans and military families, traditionally underserved groups, and people with disabilities. Wal-Mart employees volunteer with Hospice, Special Olympics, Optimist Baseball Teams, Salvation Army, Meridian's Promise, Project Patch, Meridian Fire Department, food banks and local schools.

#### ★Washington Trust Bank, Boise

Washington Trust Bank is a strong community partner with many non-profit organizations in Idaho, working with schools to educate students in the importance of finances and savings and providing Financial/Budgeting classes at the Light House Rescue Mission and Financial Education classes with Nampa Housing Authority. Washington Trust made a substantial monetary contribution to the 2009 World Winter Games and more than 125 bank employees served as Good Will Ambassadors.

### Small Businesses

#### ★Fred Kesler Agency—Farmers Insurance, Meridian - **Governor's Brightest Star Small Business of the Year**

The Fred Kesler Agency is a small business where every staff member is committed to giving back. Through active involvement in the Mayor's Anti-Drug coalition, Meridian's Promise, Kiwanis, Drug-Free Idaho, Leadership Meridian, and the Meridian Chamber of Commerce, this small business regularly lives up to its motto—"Protecting our community, One family at a Time." This small business sets the pace for volunteerism in Meridian and inspires others to give to their highest potential.

#### ★Ketchum Kitchens, Ketchum

For 15 years, Don Leonard and Kathy Mallane of Ketchum Kitchens have represented the finest of Idaho's very small business owners. In addition to personally supporting numerous causes around the state of Idaho, Ketchum Kitchens promotes volunteerism among staff by offering a flexible work schedule so they can participate in voluntary public service projects. Don and Kathy not only give to the community, but they celebrate the involvement of their staff members in service.

#### ★MBT Masai USA Corp (Masai Barefoot Technology), Hailey

MBT is a business that embraces those in need even during hard economic times. Their many contributions include donations to Wood River Valley Home Stay Athletes of the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games, Girl Scouts of Silver Sage Council, and the International Law Enforcement Officers who served as final leg torch bearers for the Special Olympics. Employees of MBT volunteer to make their community a better place to live.

### Organizations

#### Capital Improvement Committee, Eagle High School, Eagle

The Capital Improvement Committee (CIC) is a group of professional men and women who are hardworking and dedicated patrons of Eagle High School. The Committee has made substantial improvements both athletically and academically, and

continually assesses future needs to support future successes for Eagle High School students. The staff at Eagle High School sincerely believes that the CIC's volunteerism positively impacts the quality of life within the Eagle Community.

#### **Coeur d'Alene Parent Teacher Association, Coeur d'Alene**

The Coeur d'Alene Parent Teacher Association is committed to helping improve the school climate and student achievement for the betterment of the community and the state. The association supports and provides help for many school activities, including the Craft Faire, registration, graduation, Student Council activities, and various other school events and activities, as well as for Teacher Mini-Grants and Senior Scholarships.

#### **College of Southern Idaho Refugee Center, Twin Falls**

The College of Southern Idaho Refugee Center assists newly arrived refugees and their families to achieve self-sufficiency while also helping them to navigate, integrate and fully participate in their local community and American life. This worthy cause is possible only through the amazing dedication of staff, volunteers, teachers, and civically engaged community members who show love and encouragement to the refugees.

#### **★College of Southern Idaho RSVP Senior Assisted Services (SAS) Volunteer Transportation Program, Twin Falls**

The College of Southern Idaho RSVP Senior Assisted Services (SAS) Volunteer Transportation Program provides "no-cost" rides to low-income senior adults age sixty years and over throughout the Magic Valley Area. There is no other volunteer transportation service operating exclusively for low-income seniors in the entire state of Idaho. This service provides compassionate, courteous, client-centered care for senior adults in the Magic Valley Area.

#### **★David Ketchum American Legion Post #115, Ketchum - Governor's Brightest Star Organization of the Year**

The David Ketchum American Legion Post #115 not only contributes countless hours of service to the Wood River Valley community, they also inspire their fellow citizens to step up and help those in need. Organizations such as the local soup kitchens, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and the elderly benefit from their selflessness and hard work. Members of the Wood River Valley join Boy Scout Venturing Crew #192 in thanking these outstanding volunteers.

#### **Girl Scout Service Unit #21, Sun Valley**

Girl Scouts of Silver Sage Council Service Unit #21 is an organization of volunteer women who help girls in the Wood River Valley develop their full potential by encouraging them to relate to others with increased understanding, skill, and respect. They also help to develop values to guide actions and provide the foundation for sound decision-making. Girl Scouts of Silver Sage Council Service Unit #21 strives to improve society through their dedicated work with girls and their community.

#### **Idaho End-of-Life Coalition, Boise**

The Idaho End-of-Life Coalition is building on the extraordinary accomplishments of A Better Way Coalition and The Idaho State Hospice and Palliative Care Organization. These merged organizations are now empowered to more effectively improve the experience of dying people in Idaho and to address issues of quality end-of-life care access, understanding, and clinical excellence.

#### **Idaho State Broadcasters Association, Idaho**

The Idaho State Broadcasters Association and the employees of its member companies provide an immense amount of service to local communities in Idaho. As an organization, they promote volunteerism among youth in Idaho by sponsoring regional ceremonies honoring recipients of the U. S. Congressional Award. They provided funding to allow Idahoans to follow their legislative session while it met in temporary facilities and funded upgrades to the Idaho State University broadcasting facilities.

#### **★Kootenai Health's Volunteer Services, Coeur d'Alene Governor's Choice Award Winner**

One of the strongest volunteer programs in the Northwest, Kootenai Health's Volunteer Services organization is composed of hundreds of dedicated teenagers, volunteer nurses, retirees, former patients, child safety experts, and pet therapists. Together, they provide an array of much-needed services, thereby strengthening Kootenai Medical Center's mission to provide compassionate health care for all.

#### **Meridian (PAL) Police Athletic League Football, Meridian**

The Police Athletic League (PAL) is a non-profit organization that strives to provide a quality football program. Their mission is to create a healthy and safe environment for youth to develop their physical ability and to mentor children by providing leadership training through the LEADERSHIP 1<sup>st</sup> program. This program provides information to the players on how to make

safe and healthy choices in their lives.

### ★Special Olympics World Winter Games 2009, Idaho

The 2009 World Winter Games Special Olympics were far more than a one-time sporting event. They included free dental care with Miles of Smiles, free hearing tests with Healthy Hearing, the Global Law Enforcement Torch Run, and hundreds of Idaho volunteers who gave freely of their time for this worthy cause. Lives of athletes, their coaches and families, volunteers, host families, and local students were changed. Idaho is a better place for having hosted the Special Olympics 2009 World Winter Games.

### Sun Valley Ski Education Foundation, Ketchum

The Sun Valley Ski Education Foundation (SVSEF) is open to all youth in the Wood River Valley interested in ski racing. SVSEF encourages young people to adopt healthy, active lifestyles, to listen to and respect adult coaches, to learn and demonstrate outstanding sportsmanship, to strive to do their best, to set their sights high, to work to achieve their goals, and to develop a passion for sports and fitness that will last a lifetime.

## Schools

### ★Lakeland High School, Rathdrum

Staff and students at Lakeland High School excelled in volunteerism with at-risk youth, the disabled, terminally ill patients, elderly citizens, our local environment, homelessness, the hungry, abandoned animals, the working poor, and the abused. Over 500 staff and students served more than 5,200 hours last year and raised over \$30,000. Lakeland High School's goal was to promote success, well-being, and the alleviation of poverty and suffering, which are core values at the heart of service at Lakeland.

### Lewis-Clark State College, Lewiston

Lewis-Clark State College is a leader in community service and literacy activities throughout Idaho. Through AmeriCorps, the college recruits and trains tutors and mentors to work with academically at-risk students and provide new books to low-income children with their First Book Program. They sponsor VISTA members who serve at Idaho's other institutions of higher education, promote service-learning in K-16 schools, and recruit and manage student volunteers.

### Middleton High School Leadership Class, Middleton

Students in the Middleton High School Leadership Class organized a History Walk to promote health and fitness while providing members a better understanding of Middleton's history. Donations from participants benefitted the Middleton Food Bank. Leadership students and over 500 other students and faculty provided food, warm clothing, and other resources to 22 families. Students also collaborated with art and culinary teachers to provide reusable shopping bags and nutritional cookbooks.

### Project C.D.A. Alternative High School, Coeur d'Alene

Project C.D.A. Alternative High School, Coeur d'Alene, instills enthusiasm and compassion through projects that take at-risk-students who may be viewed negatively by society and provides them the opportunity to give back in a positive way. The students are proud to help. They develop an awareness of life beyond Coeur d'Alene and beyond their own personal worlds. By helping others, the students view themselves and their potential in healthy, positive ways. Both the students and their communities benefit.

### ★Riverstone International School, Boise - Governor's Brightest Star School of the Year

Through a strong foundation built on the five pillars of Academic Excellence, International Understanding, Community and Service, Leadership, and Outdoor Education, Riverstone International School ensures that all students reach their potential in a respectful environment. Riverstone's biggest program, the One Stone Club, has completed over 200 projects in the last seven years and all students must complete meaningful service learning projects to graduate.

### ★Vera C. O'Leary Middle School, Twin Falls

Vera C. O'Leary Middle School, Twin Falls, is an outstanding example of students, parents, school staff, and community members coming together to make a difference. Their involvement with the American Cancer Society, Relay for Life, Salvation Army and the Valley House Homeless Shelter is having a positive impact on their students who are able to see that they can make a difference when they take an active part in their communities. O'Leary is service learning in action!

## Students

### **Blake Alfson, Hayden Lake**

Blake Alfson has a passion for volunteering! From volunteering at the Bird Aviation Museum and Invention Center as one of their youngest docents, to creating the Lakeland Tri-District Chess Tournament, Blake gives generously of his time and sets an outstanding example of leadership for other young people. Blake has received the United States Congressional Award Bronze Medal for his goal-setting and service.

### **Dakota Barnes, Hailey**

Dakota Barnes is an active Girl Scout with a passion for volunteerism. She hosted the Special Olympics International Law Enforcement Torch Bearer Dinner and Breakfast in the Wood River Valley and prepared gift bags for all home stay Olympians in Blaine County. Dakota served as emcee for school assemblies, promoting acceptance and tolerance, and educated youth about the Special Olympics. A Congressional Award Medalist, Dakota has launched a lifetime commitment to service.

### **Hanna Coad, Sagle**

As a volunteer at Kootenai Medical Center Hospital, Hannah Coad accumulated over 150 volunteer hours in 2009, working in General Surgery, Runner's Office, Emergency Room Admitting, Central Services (Medical Equipment and Supplies), Heart Center, Kootenai Outpatient Imaging, Short Stay Unit, and Cancer Center. At her school she initiated the formation of student government, working with the school administration and the school board. Elections are being held this fall. Hanna is working on the Congressional Award.

### **★Amara (Amy) DiFrancesco, Sun Valley**

Although only 20, Amy DiFrancesco's volunteerism has elevated her to the highest levels of three premier U.S. youth programs: Girl Scouts, serving on the Board of Directors of Girl Scouts of Silver Sage; Boy Scouts, serving as National Venturing President; and Congressional Award, where, as a gold medalist, she served as a national ceremony hostess and spokes-person. Amy earned five President's Volunteer Service Award gold pins and was featured in several national magazines as a result of her service.

### **Austin Dobbs, Twin Falls**

Austin Dobbs is a volunteer team player. Often the youngest member working on a service project, he is willing to do whatever is needed "for the good of the cause". During the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games, Austin logged 360+ miles to support the Wood River Valley home stay program, the final leg of the international law enforcement torch bearers, and the New Zealand delegation. Austin has received the U.S. Congressional Award Bronze Medal.

### **Dylan Dobbs, Twin Falls**

Although Dylan Dobbs has provided hundreds of hours of service with organizations in South Central Idaho over the past six years, his nomination as one of the 2009 Governor's Brightest Stars was prompted by his exceptional service during the 2009 World Winter Games. Lacking a local opportunity to contribute, Dylan moved to the Wood River Valley for several days to assist with the Special Olympics. Dylan is the recipient of both the Bronze and Silver Congressional Medals.

### **Hanna Fischer, Boise**

Through Girl Scouts, students learn the importance of leadership, citizenship, setting goals, and dreaming. Often the easiest way to inspire girls to become leaders is to have them work with another girl who is busy being a leader. Hanna Fischer is just such a girl, someone in her community who delivers the Girl Scout message. Her positive presence at events, her willingness to lead, her excitement in being a Girl Scout, and her willingness to give back, make her a Brightest Star! Hanna has received the Congressional Award.

### **Atticus Hoffman, Boise**

Atticus Hoffman was 14 years old when he began developing the soccer program *One World Soccer Camp*. His mission was to bring together youth refugees and give them something that would make them feel more at home in Boise. Using the Ann Morrison soccer fields and generous donations from local vendors, the one-week soccer camp was created and a great number of refugees have enjoyed playing soccer in their community.

### **Courtney Hollar, Boise**

Courtney Hollar earned her Girl Scout Gold Award in August 2009. The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest award given by the Girl Scouts of the USA. Courtney's project combined two of her interests, working with children and improving the environment through education. In events totaling over 65 hours of voluntary service, Courtney planned and implemented composting and gardening workshops held at the Garden City Library, positively impacting the lives of the young people involved.

### **Danielle Hooper, Boise**

U. S. Congressional Award Medalist Danielle Hooper has three volunteering jobs that assist women, children, and struggling families. Each Tuesday she works at Dress For Success, helping underprivileged women find a free suit for a job interview and outfits for their children. Weekly she tutors struggling first grade students in reading and math at Collister Elementary and Morley Nelson Schools. She also stocks food pantry shelves at Love Inc., an organization that helps area families get out of debt.

### **Mackenzie Ingraham, Jerome**

An honor student, Mackenzie is active in school and community and has organized and spearheaded a movement to put turf on the Jerome High School football field. This project is the most recent and the most ambitious community service project Mackenzie has conducted. She assists every year with running a memorial softball tournament and keeps statistics and helps with scoring for basketball and track. She is an active member of the National Honor Society, participating in a number of service activities. She is working on the Congressional Award.

### **Hosanna Kabakoro, Twin Falls**

Hosanna Kabakoro arrived here in 2005, following a coup d'état in Fiji. She immediately began volunteering at the Twin Falls Library. A home educated student, in 2009 Hosanna received the highest award of the Girls Scouts, the Gold Award. Her project, Chatting Buddies, provided opportunities for ESL students to have informal conversations outside of classrooms. Hosanna is a U.S. Congressional Award Medalist.

### **Ashton Lupton, Hailey**

Girl Scout Ashton Lupton is one of the Wood River Valley's Brightest Stars, a star that is seen in the New Zealand sky. Without diminishing her extensive local service (Wagon Days, Lee Pesky Scavenger Hunt, Souper Supper) or her service to Girl Scouts, she was nominated as a 2009 Governor's Brightest Star for service to the Special Olympics World Winter Games, during which she served as hostess for the New Zealand Delegation during their home stay. Ashton has received a Congressional Award Bronze Medal.

### **Rhiannon Marquez, Boise**

Rhiannon Marquez, 8, has been helping to better the community for four years. Her biggest and most rewarding accomplishment has been the 'swear jar' fund. During the holiday season, she is able to donate items, which she shops for, to local charities. She is involved in school, the YMCA, and the Boys & Girls Club in Garden City. Rhiannon is very successful in everything she does due to her over the top fun attitude towards life. She knows thinking of others is an important lesson in life.

### **Sierra Norman, Twin Falls**

Sierra Norman is a 7th grader at Vera C. O'Leary Middle School, where she is a straight "A" student, involved in student council and cheerleading. She has dedicated her life to helping those in need through the La Lectura Project, PB&J drive, and Feeding Friends Food Bank. She shows great compassion for people and uses her many talents in a very positive way. She volunteers to sing and play piano at various nursing homes in the area, giving her the opportunity to share her excitement for life.

### **★Genevieve Nutting, Boise**

Genevieve volunteers for many different organizations. Among her proudest accomplishments are the self-esteem workshops she has presented to over 500 girls. She will be competing in the Miss Idaho Scholarship Pageant next June as Miss Meridian. Her platform is "Building the 3 C's through Girl Scouts: Courage, Confidence and Character." She encourages girls and adults to become involved with Girl Scouts because of the difference it can make in their lives and in the lives of others.

**★Kylie Poppen, Eagle - Governor's Brightest Star Student of the Year**

Kylie Poppen, a senior at Riverstone International School, has logged over 615 volunteer hours of service in the past year. She is a leader in service and philanthropy in her community. "I am fortunate to work with many bright stars, but Kylie is more like a star shooting across the sky; it is impossible not to notice and admire the brilliance." said Neva Geisler, Volunteer Engagement Director of United Way. Kylie has received U.S. Congressional Award Bronze and Silver Medals.

**Cooper Thomas, Orofino**

Cooper Thomas and her life-long friend share a commitment to keep a section of U.S. 12 clean. Cooper, 8, and John Allen, 64, are separated by five decades, but united by a bond of friendship and a common concern, keeping highways free of refuse. The two neighbors are volunteering for their third year in the Adopt-A-Highway Clean up Project for Idaho's Department of Transportation.

**Individuals**

**Janet Aikele, Moore**

Janet Aikele served as the Fundraising and Grant Chairwoman of the Congressional Award Council of Idaho, working as a volunteer to draft grants and appeals for funding to maintain a state presence for the youth of Idaho. Her support of this program helped encourage 2000+ participants to provide a minimum of 400 hours of voluntary public service per youth to Idaho communities while earning the Congressional Award Gold Medal. Her efforts on behalf of Idaho youth make her a very bright Idaho star.

**John Allen, Orofino**

Life-long friends share a commitment to keep a section of U.S. 12 clean. John, 64, and Cooper Thomas, 8, are separated by five decades, but united by a bond of friendship and a common concern, keeping highways free of refuse. The two neighbors are volunteering for their third year in the Adopt-A-Highway Clean up Project for Idaho's Department of Transportation.

**★Mark Bennett, Meridian**

Mark Bennett is the community of Meridian's "do it all" volunteer. He doesn't just get things done; he gets them done easily, effectively, and cost-efficiently. As an active member of groups as diverse as Meridian's Promise, the Meridian Kiwanis, Leadership Meridian, and the Meridian Chamber of Commerce, Mark is known as the person who leads volunteer efforts that accomplish exciting things.

**Kathy Caldwell, Boise**

Kathy Caldwell started being active in the community when she was 8 years old, giving away food to the poor in her neighborhood, much to the chagrin of her mother! Since then, she has collected clothing for the Veterans Home, donated VCRs and movies to the Veterans, collected toys, blankets, and food for the Humane Society, toys for the Stuff the Bus campaign, food for all the food drives in the community, and so much more that she cannot remember the names of the drives and campaigns.

**Miles Carroll, Idaho Falls**

Miles Carroll freely gives his time to others. As Chairman of the Board of White Pine Charter School, he oversaw financing and construction of a new \$2.5 million school and has been deeply involved with all aspects of White Pine ever since. He also volunteers his time as a member of the Bonneville County Farm Bureau Board of Directors. Miles is a carpenter, a farmer, and a handyman with lots of demands on his time; but he chooses to give much of it for the good of others.

**Kathee Clark, Kimberly**

Kathee Clark is a volunteer superstar with Boy Scouts of America's Snake River Council. Her extensive knowledge and unselfish giving of her time contribute to the development of youth in south central Idaho. She is the "go to" person for hard questions and the resident expert for Wood Badge, the premier training program for Scouting's volunteers. Every year Kathee spends her vacation training adult Scouting volunteers to better serve youth.

**David Cook, Boise**

David Cook, Creative Director for Boise's Stoltz Marketing Group (SMG), was approached by United Way of Treasure Valley to build a volunteer "dream team" to create an integrated marketing campaign for the annual Community Campaign. Dave put a team together, and all eight members, with a wide range of expertise, agreed to donate their time. With their help, in March 2009, United Way announced a fundraising total of \$5.9 million, the largest in the organization's 82-year history.

### **Mike Crawford, Sun Valley**

Mike Crawford is an important resource for voluntary public service in Blaine County and the state of Idaho. Many organizations benefit from his generosity of service at the local, county, and state levels. He served as the regional coordinator of the Final Leg of the International Law Enforcement Torch Bearers for the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games. Mike continually displays a spirit of selflessness and resilience as he sets forth to better the lives of others.

### **Walt Douglas, Kuna**

Realizing that Kuna's baseball fields were unsafe for children, Walt Douglas created a non-profit organization to help make them safe. He recruited volunteers, including heavy equipment operators, engineers, and ten-year-olds. Through sports and serving as a Scout leader for Boy Scouts of America's Ore-Ida Council, he has worked to teach children leadership and the responsibility of citizens.

### **Karry Fischer, Boise**

Karry Fischer, volunteer extraordinaire with the Congressional Award Council of Idaho, Girl Scouts, Boise schools, and the Boise Philharmonic Youth Auxiliary, has served her community for over 16 years. Her dedication and commitment to youth have been recognized with many awards including the Boise School District Counselor Advocate of the Year Award, the Congressional Award Council of Idaho's Appreciation Award, and Girl Scouts Rookie and Volunteer of the Year, Outstanding Leader and Honor Awards.

### **★Sharon Florence, Boise - Governor's Brightest Star Individual of the Year**

For 21 years, Sharon Florence has served with CASA, the Court Appointed Special Advocate Program. Sharon has been the voice in court for more than 100 foster care children who now have safe homes, free of abuse and neglect. Sharon also mentors many new volunteers to the CASA program. Her dedication and length of service to children placed in foster care inspire others.

### **Michelle Lucas, Twin Falls**

A recipient of the Congressional Award Council of Idaho's Appreciation Award, the volunteerism of Michelle Lucas has supported youth pursuing the Congressional Award, the highest award given by the Congress of the United States. Through Michelle's efforts, hundreds of youth have been encouraged to provide voluntary public service to their communities and subsequently honored for their hard work.

### **Gloria McCuistion, Jerome**

Gloria McCuistion is a 37-year volunteer from Eastern Idaho, now living in and volunteering for her community in South Central Idaho. As an employee of a non-profit organization, Boy Scouts of America's Snake River Council, she works long hours for little pay and yet volunteers in her limited free time. Gloria's selfless giving assists thousands of young men and women in achieving their goals and dreams.

### **Reneé Cornell McQuade, Calder**

Reneé Cornell McQuade is a bright star in the Calder community. She volunteers with the local emergency response unit, the Calder/Avery QRU (Quick Response Unit), and serves as their president. She also volunteers with the search and rescue unit and at the local school. Reneé started a 4-H group and engages in community projects while running a small farm that helps to feed her family.

### **Ruann Meade, Kimberly**

For fifteen years, Ruann Meade served on the Board of the Congressional Award Council of Idaho, encouraging students to volunteer in their communities. During that time, she decorated for numerous Congressional Award ceremonies in Twin Falls and Boise, honoring medalists for their volunteerism. As the principal of Valley Elementary School, Ruann tries to meet the needs of her 325 students, including hand sewing 100+ Christmas costumes and chairing the annual Valley School District Viking Foundation fundraisers.

### **Stan Meholchick, Caldwell**

Stan Meholchick and Jeanie Irvine invite disabled veterans from the Veterans Home and Hospital to spend a day fishing and relaxing in the outdoors. They all enjoy Stan's homemade chili and all the fixings. Stan and Jeanie spend countless hours preparing the food and the property for bus loads of veterans and volunteers. They never ask for anything in return except that we remember our veterans in our prayers. Their work for veterans is a huge task, one that they do happily twice a year.

### **Dwight Mogford, Meridian**

Dwight Mogford of Mr. Handyman is what is best about the Meridian Boys and Girls Club: caring adults using their funds, their time, and their creativity to build a positive place for kids. Through his innovation and donating his own skills and those of his employees, Dwight helps build a place filled with learning, caring, and respect. Dwight and the Mr. Handyman team aren't just fixing the present, they are building the future.

### **Linette Mooring, Boise**

For the last six years Linette Mooring has worked with the Agency for New Americans as a volunteer in different projects and roles, including English as Second Language tutor, Social Cultural Ambassador, job coach, fund-raiser planner, and developer of resources for donations. Linette is an inspiration and an advocate for refugees and special needs individuals. She gives refugees the feeling that they are not strangers to this community, but rather new Americans and new Idahoans.

### **John O'Connor, Sun Valley**

John O'Connor truly knows the meaning of serving his community and state, as well as his country. He is a dedicated veteran who leads by example and never stops giving. A past commander of the David Ketchum American Legion Post, John volunteers with Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Church and numerous community causes. As the Charter Representative for Boy Scouts of America's Venturing Crew #192, John has brightened the lives of many Boy Scouts with his generous attitude.

### **Mazal Simantov, Boise**

Mazal Simantov has been a volunteer for the Meridian Boys and Girls Club for a year. She brings fun and smiles to the kids learning to do art, music, learning games, and becoming aware of how to use the internet safely. She makes the technology lab a place of character and personality instead of a cold place where everyone just stares at their screens. She helps young people learn to be respectful, responsible, full of integrity, and aware that there are wonderful adults in their community who care about them.

### **★Don Simis, Gooding**

You can find Don Simis on almost any given school day in a first grade classroom at Gooding Elementary School as he reports for duty as a volunteer reading partner, just as he's done for over a decade. Don's dedicated service, specifically in the primary grades, highlights the importance of reading and the fact that it is the starting point for all the economic and social opportunities this world has to offer.

### **Louise Tanton, Boise**

Louise Tanton, a volunteer at the Salvation Army Childcare Center, formerly known as Booth Memorial, has put in countless hours, loving and rocking the babies and offering comfort while their moms are in classes. She gives encouragement to the young moms and role models good parenting skills. Louise is like having an extra staff member because she is always there for the babies. Because of her, the staff can take pride in saying we have a staff ratio higher than the standards mandate.

### **Joanne Teats, Kooskia**

Joanne Teats spends countless hours volunteering for all Clearwater Valley Schools. She spends one day a week helping in three elementary classrooms, chaperones all band and choir trips, is the seamstress as needed for costumes and sports uniforms, and keeps the books for High School Volleyball. She is instrumental in bringing together many children at her family's ranch for an Easter egg hunt for 70 dozen eggs.

### **★Ramona Walhof, Boise**

Ramona Walhof is Past President of the Idaho Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind. In 2001 she initiated a Bike-a-Thon fundraiser for the Idaho Chapter, an event that has doubled in size each year and provides needed funding. She has served on the United Way Board of Ada County and helped write "Standards for the Education of Blind Children." She has devoted her life to improve conditions for the blind, to support Lions International, and to be a source of strength for the disabled and the community.

★Highlighted 2009 Governor's Brightest Stars

Serve Idaho, Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism

For more information about the Governor's Brightest Star Awards visit [www.serveidaho.org](http://www.serveidaho.org)