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Greater Cleveland Volunteers has teamed up with Dean's Greenhouse again this year for a special springtime sale. Brighten up your yard with beautiful flowers, hanging baskets, herbs, vegetables, and a whole lot more.

*At check-out, tell the cashier you're shopping to benefit Greater Cleveland Volunteers. No flyer is necessary. We receive a 20% donation of your purchase from May 1 - June 30, 2025.*

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FOR HOURS

## Kevin Gross named as new executive director for GCV

Greater Cleveland Volunteers is pleased to announce its new executive director, Kevin Gross. Kevin has an extensive background in nonprofit administration and building partnerships throughout the community. We sat down with Kevin recently to get to know him a little and what he envisions for Greater Cleveland Volunteers:

### Can you tell us a little about your background?

Absolutely! I am an Ohio transplant, born and raised in southern New Jersey, just over the bridge from Philadelphia. So, as expected, I'm a die-hard Philadelphia sports fan as it was ingrained in me from a young age! My wife and I love to travel and explore new places whenever we get the chance. One of our lifelong goals is to visit as many U.S. National Parks as possible. Hopefully we will get to all of them someday! So far, my favorite place in the world has been the rainforests of Costa Rica, which I've been lucky enough to visit twice, including on our honeymoon. One thing I didn't expect when I moved to Cleveland in 2016 was how quickly it felt like home. There was something about Northeast Ohio that just felt familiar right away. I originally came to Ohio for a job with the Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park, where I also met my now-wife, Lili. After spending several years with the Conservancy in a variety of roles, including overseeing the national park's volunteer program, I moved on to lead a small nonprofit outside of Akron called Crown Point Ecology Center. Now, I couldn't be more excited to step into the role of executive director at GCV.



### What drew you to GCV?

All throughout my career thus far I have been in positions with organizations which have helped people in our community. Most of my past experience has been in conservation organizations, outdoor education, and helping feed those battling food insecurity in the region. When I saw the posting and learned a bit more about GCV, I was instantly drawn to the organization and the position due to the expansive reach that GCV has. Rather than focusing on just one area of need, GCV empowers volunteers to uplift organizations and programs across the region which I find incredibly exciting to be a part of.

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**What are some of your main priorities as you settle into your new job?**

First and foremost, my initial priority is to learn as much as possible from our amazing staff. We have a lot of irons in the fire and so much going on with even more potential to grow, therefore I want to dive deep into everything GCV with our staff to learn as much as I can. Once I get settled, my priorities will shift to cultivating and strengthening our existing partnerships, as well as seeking out and building new ones. I am a firm believer that power and growth through partnership is the best way to sustainably grow the reach of a regional nonprofit like GCV.



*Kevin and his wife, Lili, on their honeymoon in Costa Rica.*

**What excites you the most about the potential for growth and change with GCV?**

I think the staff at GCV is what excites me the most. I can already tell that GCV has an incredibly dedicated and superbly talented group of staff and I am so excited to be in a position to lift up and support the ongoing work they are doing every day. The needs in Greater Cleveland are vast, spanning so many different program areas. It truly energizes me to know that GCV is a major catalyst for positive change, whether it's improving education outcomes for children, supporting those facing food insecurity, or helping older adults find meaningful volunteer opportunities.

**What does success look like for a nonprofit?**

Success for a nonprofit isn't just about the quantitative numbers all the time. Success is about the real, lasting impact on the community we serve. A successful nonprofit creates meaningful change by effectively addressing needs, empowering individuals, and strengthening the fabric of the community. It's measured by both qualitative

and quantitative outcomes like how many people we reach, how engaged our volunteers are, and how deeply our programs improve lives. Ultimately, success is when our mission is not just fulfilled in the present but is also sustainable for the future, ensuring that we continue making a difference for years to come. For GCV, the volunteers we recruit and help to place in the community tell the story of our success each and every day!

**Last question, do you like pickles?**

I love pickles! I can confidently say that ever since I was a child, pickles have been one of my favorite foods for sure, especially the ones that are extra vinegary and sour! With my love of pickles only adding to my excitement, I can't wait to help make Cleveland Pickle Fest 2025 another huge success for GCV!

# VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP OLDER ADULTS

There are plenty of volunteer opportunities working with older adults in the Cleveland area. They range from arts and crafts, Meals On Wheels, and companionship to health education and computer training. Volunteering is a powerful way to make a positive impact on their lives.

For many older adults, engaging in arts and crafts can offer a sense of purpose, boost creativity, and enhance cognitive function. Volunteers who assist in these activities provide opportunities for self-expression, which can help alleviate feelings of isolation and loneliness.



Addressing hunger is another critical aspect of supporting older adults, as many face food insecurity. Volunteers can help by delivering meals or with food prep, ensuring that seniors have access to nutritious meals. Perhaps most importantly, offering companionship through the Chat Pals program can reduce loneliness, providing emotional support and fostering meaningful connections. By volunteering in these areas, we not only improve the quality of life for older adults but also build stronger, more compassionate communities.



**Volunteer Opportunities with Older Adults**

**Hands On**—Bingo, Music, Recreation, Arts & Crafts Assistant, Food (prep, serving, delivering with Meals on Wheels), Guardianships, Friendly Visitor, Chat Pals.

**Education**—Nutrition Mentor, Health Promotion Leader, Computer Instructor, Benefits Screener.

Visit [greaterclevols.vsyslive.com](https://greaterclevols.vsyslive.com) for volunteer opportunities, or scan the QR code.

Contact Nancy Dzurnak at [contact@greaterclevelandvolunteers.org](mailto:contact@greaterclevelandvolunteers.org) or 216-391-9500 x2123 for more information.

**UPCOMING EVENT OPPORTUNITIES**

**Sound the Alarm**—Just one day of your life can change someone else's forever. Help Sound the Alarm and save a life by installing free smoke alarms and sharing fire safety information in Garfield Heights on Saturday, April 26th from 9:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m., in the West Blvd Neighborhood on Saturday, May 3rd from 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m., and in the Collinwood Neighborhood on Saturday, May 10th from 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. Free parking, beverages, and snacks. Wear comfortable clothes and shoes.

**Spring Clean Up**—Get ready for the Summer of 2025 with a Spring Clean Up on Saturday, April 26th from 12:00–2:00 p.m. at Lincoln Park in Tremont. Volunteers will help with flowerbed weeding, raking, sweeping, and light trash pickup. Free parking and beverages. Dress for the weather and comfortable shoes recommended.

Visit [tinyurl.com/GCVEventVols](https://tinyurl.com/GCVEventVols) to see these and other opportunities to help make our community stronger and more just. Contact Nancy Dzurnak at [ndzurnak@greaterclevelandvolunteers.org](mailto:ndzurnak@greaterclevelandvolunteers.org) or 216-391-9500 x2123 for more information.