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**CONTACT:**

[DHS.ServeIllinois@illinois.gov](mailto:DHS.ServeIllinois@illinois.gov)

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## **2023 Governor's Hometown Award**

### *Winner Announcement*

**Springfield-** The Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service in partnership with the Governor's Office extends a special thanks to all who applied for the 2023 Governor's Hometown Award. This award gives formal recognition to those who contributed to projects that improved their community's quality of life. These projects are sponsored by local units of government that had strong volunteer support, met a need, and made a definitive impact, thereby generating a positive outcome in the community and by extension, the state.





## 2023 Governor's Hometown Award Winner – Village of Pleasant Hill (Summer Food Program)



The winner of The Governor's Hometown Award was chosen by a panel of six (6) judges who were given 45-minute presentations by each of the finalists. After much consideration by the judges, the winner of the 2023 Governor's Hometown Award was The Village of Pleasant Hill's Summer Food Program. For the next year, The Governor's cup will be displayed at the Village of Pleasant Hill and will have their name engraved on it as the 2023 winner.

The Summer Food Program was nominated for The Governor's Hometown Award by Kathy Hart in the project category of "Healthy Futures." Below is a short description of The Summer Food Program:

The Summer Food Program is an all-volunteer and donation-funded program that has been operating since June of 2018. It provides meals throughout the summer break to any child ages 0-18. No financial guidelines or paperwork are required to be completed to get a hot meal and bonus sack lunch on Tuesday and Thursday each week (4 meals total - 2 hot and 2 cold). Over 2,000 meals are served throughout the summer in a village of 963 people. Any child in the surrounding area is welcome to come and participate. Meals are served in to-go containers for easy pickup for families.

To learn more, please visit: <http://fbcphill.org/summer-food-program.html>



## 2023 Governor's Hometown Award Finalist – Community Risk Reduction (CRR) (Joliet Fire Department)



Community Risk Reduction (CRR) was nominated for The Governor's Hometown Award by Kristi McNichol in the project category of "Violence Prevention, Intervention, or Interruption." They were chosen as one (1) of four (4) finalists to compete for the Governor's Cup and received honorable mention for their project described below:

Joliet Fire Department implemented the Community Risk Reduction (CRR) program in 2022. CRR connects Joliet residents with mental health providers free of charge. The program also housed a Will-Grundy Medical Clinic MSW intern who identified unsheltered homeless residents and connected them with shelter resources as well as medical resources. The result of the program led to the largest Point in Time count (HUD mandate) which led to their area CoC (IL 506) being invited to apply for a Special NOFO. IL 506 CoC was one of 32 in the WHOLE COUNTRY to be awarded the Special Unsheltered NOFO.

To learn more, please visit: [www.joliet.gov](http://www.joliet.gov)





## 2023 Governor's Hometown Award Finalist – Plant the Gem (Village of Flossmoor)



Plant the Gem was nominated for The Governor's Hometown Award by Stephanie Wright in the project category of “Environmental Stewardship.” They were chosen as one (1) of four (4) finalists to compete for the Governor's Cup and received honorable mention for their project described below:

The Village of Flossmoor led the Plant the Gem Project in partnership with the Hidden Gem Half Marathon, the Chicago Region Tree Initiative and Open Lands. The Village coordinated the planting of 300 native and diverse trees by various volunteer groups in a single day along the Hidden Gem's 13.1 mile half marathon route.

Not only do trees improve air and water quality, reduce flooding, reduce the urban heat island effect, and reduce energy costs by shading buildings, they also provide habitat for local wildlife and improve our quality of life by reducing crime rates, increasing property value, and boosting social cohesion in neighborhoods. According to the CRTI, one of the Village's partners for Plant the Gem, urban trees are critical infrastructure, just like roads, storm sewers or water mains. Studies show that the size and health of a tree canopy directly relate to the benefits and services the trees provide and the canopy's ability to offset impacts from urban living.

To learn more, please visit: <https://www.flossmoor.org/>



## 2023 Governor's Hometown Award Finalist – Plainfield Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) (Village of Plainfield)



Plainfield Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) was nominated for The Governor's Hometown Award by Commander Zach Zigterman in the project category of "Disaster Services/Public Safety." They were chosen as one (1) of four (4) finalists to compete for Governor's Cup and received honorable mention for their project described below:

Plainfield Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) is made up of 25 volunteers who train for and support the Plainfield Community in matters of disasters and public safety. In 2022 alone, PEMA members responded to 31 emergency callouts and volunteered 3,479 hours to the Plainfield community.

PEMA improves the quality of life and emergency services of the Village in countless ways. PEMA weather spotters position themselves throughout the village prior to severe weather and coordinate any post event cleanup. Plainfield is a storm ready community through the National Weather Service thanks to PEMA. PEMA is called out by the police or fire department and provides scene lighting or traffic control for extended scenes, freeing up first responders to respond to other calls for service. During special events, PEMA volunteers staff traffic control points, allowing police officers to be among the crowd for enhanced public safety.

To learn more, please visit: <https://www.plainfieldil.gov/>

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