National Volunteer Week is an opportunity to celebrate the impact of volunteering on our youth, families, and communities, and to demonstrate that service unites. Through service, we come together to tackle tough challenges, create change, and build safer, more vibrant communities.

We celebrate the power of volunteers who make a difference and recognize the extraordinary individuals who are impacting youth in a positive way. In 2016, volunteers provided 16,140 hours of service within our facilities and to help youth on parole! To celebrate this week, each juvenile correctional facility is hosting a volunteer appreciation award celebration. I would like to be the first to thank each and every volunteer!

Grinnell College’s Young, Gifted and Black Choir participants spent their spring break sharing with our Juvenile Correctional Facilities in March. They are pictured here at Cuyahoga Hills JCF.
Volunteer Valerie Handy provided a holistic hygiene workshop for youth in our juvenile correctional facilities. She is pictured here sharing with Indian River JCF youth, talking about the importance of a clean body, mind, and spirit.

In our efforts to habilitate youth, we have found that teaching youth to give back through volunteerism empowers youth to find their purpose, to take their passion, and turn it into meaningful change. I commend our youth, both in facilities and on parole, for providing 18,009 hours of community service during 2016.

A youth at the Montgomery County Center for Adolescent Services crochets a blanket to donate to an area youth in need.
Youth from Circleville JCF helped prepare the new site for Haven House of Pickaway County, which empowers survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking.

Finally, National Volunteer Week is a great time to get involved! Find opportunities to make a difference at DYS by calling the DYS Volunteer Hotline at (614) 466-9318 or emailing Donald.Bean@dys.ohio.gov.