Kindness Radiates at Kent State University

For nearly 15 years, alumni and friends have come together to uplift their local communities and those in our Golden Flash family during a day of service. Kent State has since transformed that one-day tradition into a weekend-long initiative called Flashes Give Back Week.

From April 17-22, 2023, Golden Flash volunteers offered over 70 in-person volunteer opportunities and 12 virtual options throughout the week. Also, volunteers could create their own service project or show how they are already volunteering in their communities through Share Your Project.

More than 800 golden flashes in 37 states across the nation volunteered for 3,000+ hours. They helped combat food insecurity, Kent State students, community organizations, clean up outdoor spaces and support their communities through Share Your Project.

1. Akron Zoo
Kent State University alumni and friends helped the Akron Zoo horticulture team with plant bed maintenance to prep and beautify the zoo for spring.

2. Backpacks for Kids
Volunteers packed bags full of accessible and nutritious meals for children across Stark County. The Stark County Hunger Task Force’s Backpack for Kids program is the largest backpack program in Stark County, serving more than 1,400 children each week.

3. Cleveland Kids’ Book Bank
The Cleveland Kids’ Book Bank fosters literacy and a love of reading by distributing free books to children in need through collaboration with community partners. Kent State volunteers helped sort and prepare used books for distribution.

4. International Students Care Packages
With the help of Kent State alumni and friends, the Office of Global Education collected notes of encouragement and donations of healthy snacks to create care packages for international students preparing for finals.

5. Mat Making
Volunteers created mats out of plastic grocery bags that will be donated by Streetsboro United Methodist Church to the homeless in Cleveland, providing them a dry and more comfortable surface to sleep on.

6. Read With a Student-Athlete
From April 17-21, Kent State alumni and current student-athletes took turns reading to a classroom of second grade students at Davie Elementary School in Kent.

7. LGBTQ+ Encouragement Notes
Together, the Kent State LGBTQ+ Center and LGBTQ+ Alumni Chapter collected notes of encouragement to help LGBTQ+ students feel appreciated and supported.

Check out all the images from Flashes Give Back Week to see more of the many ways our university community made an impact at www.kent.edu/FlashesGiveBackWeek.

—Melanie Secore

1960s

Anthony J. Marsella, MA ’64, Alpharetta, GA, earned a PhD at Penn State in 1968 and is currently Professor Emeritus of Psychology at the University of Hawaii, where he served as vice president for academic affairs from 1981-1990 and retired in 2003. He is also the past director of the World Health Organization Psychiatric Research Center in Honolulu and past president of Psychologists for Social Responsibility, among other roles.

Marsella is known nationally and internationally as a pioneer figure in the study of culture, psychology and psychopathology, he challenged ethnocentric and racial biases in the assumptions, theories, methods and practices in psychology and psychiatry. Among many honors and awards, he received an honorary doctorate degree from the University of Copenhagen in 1999 at a ceremony presided over by Denmark’s Queen Margrethe II.

He has served as consultant to numerous national and international agencies and organizations, and he has published 21 books and more than 200 articles, chapters, reports, reviews and articles.

Much of his present writing is on peace, social justice and nonviolence. He currently serves on journal editorial boards and scientific and professional advisory committees. He is also senior editor for the International and Cultural Psychology book series for Springer-Nature Publications (New York), a 47-volume series.

1970s

Thomas J. Jordan, BA ’72, Sturgis, MI, wrote: "After retiring from advertising, I continued my love for photography that began at Kent State. Since then, I have created nearly a dozen coffee-table books. Last year, I won silver and bronze for Amateur Fine Art/Photography, at the 2022 International Photography Awards. There were over 40,000 entries from 120 countries."

1980s

Mark Levine, MED ’73, Alpharetta, GA, wrote: "I proudly cheered for Kent State from the Georgia Bulldogs game to honor Kent State Homecoming 2022 in Atlanta. My son-in-law (a Bulldog fan, his family has had 50-yard line seats for the past 30 years) kindly took me to tailgate and cheer on my Kent State flashes this month. I met some great Kent State fans but sat with my son-in-law. The Bulldogs fan next to me jokingly asked if I (a Kent State fan) got a valuable Bulldog seat on the 50, then laughed. Although the Bulldogs were expected to win, many Bulldog fans, as well as the Atlanta TV sports show said, ‘The Flashers played a very respectable game.’"

Mark Levine earned a PhD in leadership and education with a specialty in human resource development from Barry University in Miami Shores, Florida, in 2006. He was inducted into the EHO Hall of Fame in 2017. He received the Centennial Alumni Award, which recognizes an alumni who has made significant contributions to society, whose accomplishments and careers have brought honor and distinction to Kent State University, and who has advanced the field of education, health and human services.

Linda Fifer, BS ’74, MA ’75, Hamilton, MT, wrote: “I have published my debut novel, The Road Between Two Skies (Atmosphere Press, November 2020). Brenniss Trifram is at the apex of her career when a bizarre kidnapping results in her loss of memory. She accepts who she is, now as Maggie, but as her memory recovers, she realizes who she was. Saying goodbye is the only way for her to reconcile her two lives until she knows where she belongs.”

Fred Jermyn, BS ’74, San Diego, CA, wrote: “The Kent State Men’s Soccer Alumni Reunion on Saturday, October 1, 2022, was the first time that the five Kent State men’s soccer goalkeeper were who now list in the NCAA Men’s Soccer Division I Record Book for their feats were able to gather for a group photo (see above right). The achievements of these five men to now be recognized by the NCAA as Kent State student-athletes is a phenomenal boost to the already prominent athletics programs of Kent State.”

SEND US YOUR CLASS NOTE!
Fill out the form at www.kent.edu/classnotes or write Kent State University Alumni, Center for Philanthropy & Engagement, P.O. Box 8500, Kent, OH 44242

• Try to limit your notes to 150 words or less, and include your degree(s), class year(s), and affiliation of residence.

• Holiday photos may be included.

• Notes may be edited for length or clarity and published as space allows.

Deadline for submissions: Spring – January 31 | Fall – June 30