

making a difference

Connecting with **COMMUNITY** **TO DO GOOD**

Working alongside those around the world—and around the county—on an international volunteer day

On the heels of last year's inaugural Good Deeds Day in Howard County, the Jewish Federation of Howard County is gearing up for this year's day of doing good with new volunteer sites and expanded community involvement.

The international Good Deeds Day movement, which launched in Israel ten years ago, has since grown to include over a million volunteers participating in 14,000 volunteer projects across 75 countries! Last April, the Howard County community joined the growing list of participants, as local volunteers worked with organizations like the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Days End Farm Horse Rescue and the Ellicott City Volunteer Fire House to plant trees, care for horses, wash fire trucks and do other acts of service.

Among the 200 volunteers who participated in last year's Good Deeds Day, River Hill residents Laurie and Brian Avrunin viewed their work planting trees outside the Lubavitch Center of Howard County as a great opportunity to give back to the community as a family.

"Brian and I feel that it is so important for our boys, Brayden and Logan, to understand the gift of giving and doing for others," Laurie says. "Now, Brayden often asks how the trees that we planted are doing and if we can go see them! What a sense of accomplishment they will feel when they see the trees fully grown and remember that it was because of their digging, getting dirty, planting and using their strong muscles that the trees look so beautiful today."



On last year's Good Deeds Day, River Hill residents Laurie and Brian Avrunin with sons Brayden and Logan helped clean the outdoor grounds and plants trees at the Lubavitch Center of Howard County. (Photo courtesy of Eric McCormick Photography)

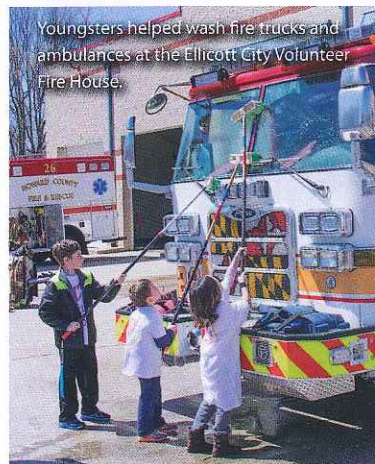
This year's Good Deeds Day on April 2nd will provide similar opportunities to work with organizations like Hearts & Home for Youth, Success in Style and the Facilities and Sustainability Team (FAST) at Howard Community College on various volunteer projects.

For Dr. Rachael Simon, VP of Programming at the Jewish Federation, generating positive change like this is part of the Federation's core value of *tikkun olam*—helping make the world a better place. "Part of the excitement is putting our values into action: getting out in the community, engaging our children and helping those in need," she says.

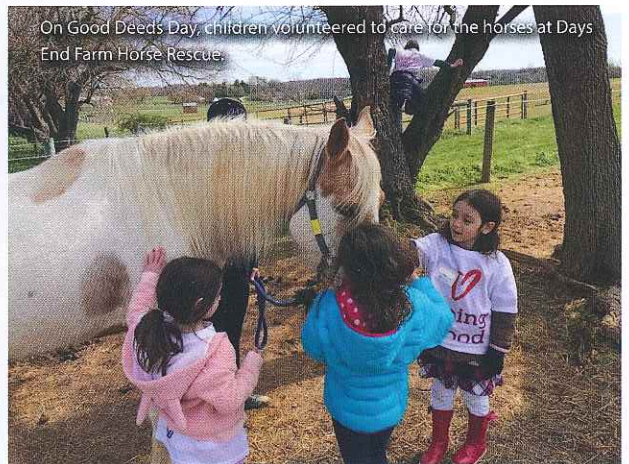
Good Deeds Day not only incorporates Jewish values and the power of family giving—it emphasizes the reach of an entire community. That is why this year, the Jewish Federation is partnering with other religious groups as part of an interfaith effort. Federation committee member Jeremy Goldman, who first brought the Good Deeds Day concept to Howard County, has reached out to several local churches and organizations like the Howard County Muslim Council to participate in the program.

"As the goal of the program is to give back to the community, this is a great opportunity to include other facets of the broader community" Jeremy says. "It's also a great reflection of Howard County's goal of inclusion. If we can do some of these events together, it can only help strengthen our unity."

Good Deeds Day is April 2, 2017. For more information about how you can get involved, visit JewishHowardCounty.org/GoodDeedsDay.



Youngsters helped wash fire trucks and ambulances at the Ellicott City Volunteer Fire House.



On Good Deeds Day, children volunteered to care for the horses at Days End Farm Horse Rescue.