

**2022**  
**Virginia Statewide Neighborhood Conference, Inc.**  
**NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS**  
**Award Winners**

**PROJECTS OF THE YEAR**

**1) Rosas Blancas, Fairfax, VA**



Rosas Blancas, a community-based nonprofit organization, was formed in March 2020, during the start of the Pandemic to help those affected by COVID-19 when many residents were unable to work and provide for their families. One of the many services provided by Rosas Blancas was to distribute food throughout their neighborhoods by preparing meals and/or obtaining food from community partner Arcadia Farms. Rosas Blancas also partners with Fairfax County Health Department to help connect community members with services that the Health Department offers. Additionally, they raise money to help pay medical bills and other expenses.

As with any community, we know that unity among its neighbors is very important. Rosas Blancas Community Leaders attend meetings to become educated on the events and issues in their communities. They then bring the information back to their neighbors and members to share so that all are up to date. Their purpose is to empower the community to live a resilient life through equitable opportunities, supportive tools, and collaboration with partners. The organization believes achievements, opportunities, and growth begin with individuals. To that end, they offer a series of leadership trainings to equip participants to become self-sufficient and to advocate for their communities and residents. All these actions lead to stronger communities.



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Yessenia Sanchez is the President and Reina Bermudez is the Vice President of Rosas Blancas. The organization functions through a union of effort, wisdom, power, care, and love. Ms. Sanchez and Ms. Bermudez are here to express how this organization's efforts help to bring communities together and to share with us why they are also winners of VSNC's Project of the Year.

## 2) Do Gooders, Hampton Roads, VA



Do Gooders of Hampton Roads was established in 2017, with the purpose of putting together events that would positively impact the community of Shell Road. They never expected their efforts would reach the entire city of Hampton and Newport News, but it has.

The highlight of their year, the Do Gooders forgo their Christmas Day with their families so that they can serve others who cannot celebrate the holiday with families or others for whatever reasons.

During this Christmas Feeding, as it is called, the Do Gooders are able to provide everything from the clothes, scarves, gloves, hats, underwear, socks, t-shirts, coats, backpacks with school supplies, and especially the toys! Shell Road and Hampton Roads residents are very grateful and look forward to what Do Gooders do for them during this time of year. They especially enjoy seeing the faces of young children sitting with Santa and Ms. Clause for a picture, going through rooms picking toys, and sometimes riding down the ramp with a new bicycle!

They partner with the Virginia Department of Health Services, Anthem, Optima, Butterball, LLC, Perdue Farms, Inc., the Virginia Peninsula Foodbank, Hampton City Council, Hampton Branch of the NAACP, and the Hampton City Police and Fire departments to get things done.



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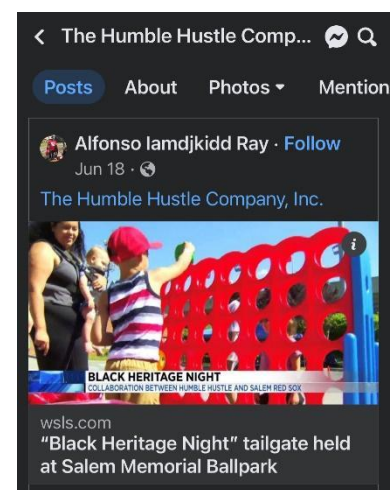
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The Do Gooders' annual Christmas Feeding has doubled in size, starting with 150 families in 2017 to over five hundred families in 2019. Even after the pandemic in 2021, they served and helped just over 130 families. Those are just some of the things that the Do Gooders have done and do. But I would like to introduce the person who nominated them and one of the Do Gooders herself who can tell you better than I can why they are one of our Project of the Year winners.

### 3) The Humble Hustle, Roanoke, VA



On June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022, The Humble Hustle Company, Inc. partnered with Salem Red Sox baseball team to host the first "Black Heritage Night". The experience was carefully organized to create cultural experiences which connected baseball and the black community together through various partner collaborations and events. Black Heritage Night was something Xavier curated out of his need to give back to the community. He instantly noticed the need to give Black people a space to come together in unity. What better way to do so in a place where diversity is not regularly celebrated? Black Heritage Night did exactly that which created an overflow of joy throughout the greater Roanoke and Salem community.

Black Heritage Night consisted of tailgating, a nice VIP experience, exclusive HMBLE HSTLE Merchandise, a clothing line which supports the Non-profit organization, Humble Hustle throwing the first pitch, unity, and diversity, as well as an abundance of laughter and outstanding vibes. For some, this was their first exposure to the game of baseball and first time ever stepping foot inside a baseball stadium. As Xavier Duckett, the Founder & CEO of the Humble Hustle Company, Inc. said, some had never even watched baseball on TV. More importantly, this event brought a lot of diversity to Salem, Virginia, which over the years has begun to grow in numerous ways . Here to tell us more about this positive experience is Mr. Xavier Duckett.



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## **YOUTH GROUP EFFORT OF THE YEAR**

JR M.A.S.K. / HR M.A.S.K., Hampton Roads, VA



Youth can empower a movement like no other when they have the motivation to do so. JR MASK was born out of HR MASK because youth wanted to become active and take a stand against senseless gun killings in their communities. HR MASK – Hampton Roads, Mothers Against Senseless Killings was created by Shana Turner after her son was killed senselessly by someone with a gun.

Both organizations are committed to educating people and especially youth and rising awareness about gun violence in and throughout their communities and the world. They have collaborated with various organizations such as Norfolk's Commonwealth Attorney Community Outreach, Newport News Police Department, Stop the Violence Teams, City Council Engagement, March for Our Lives, City of Chesapeake, and many more throughout the Hampton Roads areas, about anti-gun violence and the effects this senseless violence has and has had on their lives and the lives of their loved ones.

There is so much that I can say about how this Youth Group Effort has made an impact on this community and how this young lady, Ms. Mayanna Brickhouse decided that enough was enough and that she had to take a stand, but I would like for this group to tell us of their efforts because they can do it so much better than I can. Before I call them to the screen, I would like to say on behalf of VSNC, Inc. congratulations to the JR MASK under the leadership of Mayanna Brickhouse for their work and for being one of the winners in our Youth Group Effort of the Year



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Every neighborhood community has a success story. Don't be left out next year! Start now to prepare for the 2023 Virginia Statewide Neighborhood Awards Program so you can let YOUR success story be heard!

Visit [www.vsn.org](http://www.vsn.org) for more info and be sure to submit your 2023 Awards Nomination Application form early!