

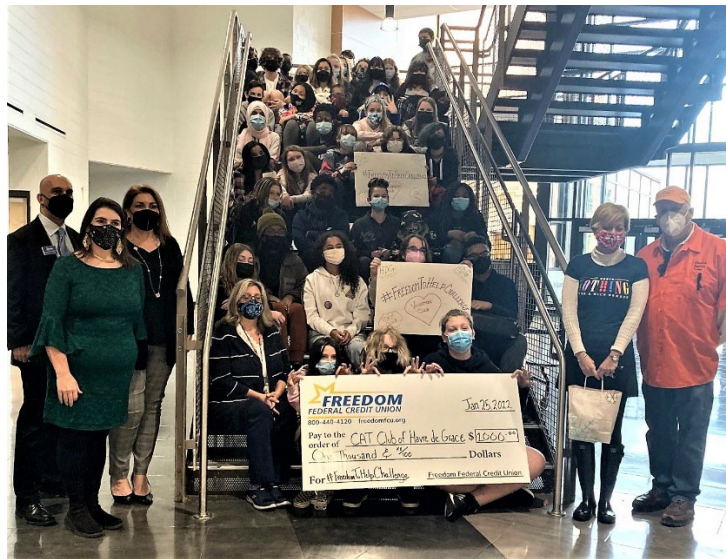
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## Havre de Grace Middle/High School Volunteer Club Wins Freedom Federal Credit Union's #FreedomToHelpChallenge

*Credit Union Awards \$1,000 to Support their Favorite Local Cause*



Freedom Federal Credit Union Representatives (Standing L to R): Carmen Mirabile, Ashira Quabili, and Lisa Snodgrass stopped by the Havre de Grace Middle/High School to present the #FreedomToHelpChallenge winner, The Volunteer Club, with a thousand dollars for a local charity of their choosing, the CAT Club of Havre de Grace. Club Advisors Laura Hahn and Beth Newby received the check with CAT Club representative, Nic Galloro (Standing R) and many of their student volunteers.

Havre de Grace, MD -- Freedom Federal Credit Union is pleased to congratulate Laura Hahn, an 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher at Havre de Grace Middle/High School, and her entire Volunteer Club, for winning the 4<sup>th</sup> annual #FreedomToHelpChallenge. The six-week social media contest called for entrants to post pictures celebrating Harford or Baltimore County volunteerism for a chance to win \$1,000 and other weekly prizes for their local charity of choice. Each week individual volunteers and non-profit organizations posted pictures showcasing local volunteerism in an effort that reached all corners of the two counties. Weekly winners and the Grand Award winner were chosen during public voting periods on Freedom's Facebook page.

“Our Havre de Grace Middle/High School Volunteer Club was so excited to be part of the *#FreedomtoHelpChallenge*,” Hahn commented. “The students, parents and community all pitched in and voted to help us win! The students were so excited!” As a long-time Freedom member, this is not the first time Hahn has participated in Freedom-sponsored community efforts. Just this past summer, Freedom Federal Credit Union selected Hahn to receive one of their prestigious Golden Apple Educator Awards, for which she received a \$1000 grant to use towards her Volunteer Club. The Club is made up of a large cross-section of Havre de Grace middle and high school students who find acceptance and inclusion through service to their community.

The *#FreedomToHelpChallenge*’s grand award is a \$1000 donation to the winner’s favorite local 501(C)3 nonprofit, and Ms. Hahn quickly designated the funds to the Havre de Grace CAT Club, a division of Community Projects of Havre de Grace. The HDG CAT Club is dedicated to keeping the streets and waterways of Havre de Grace clean and litter-free. The 10-year-old organization, directed by Al Peteraf, brings together concerned citizens all ages and walks of life who see the importance of caring for their hometown.

“The Volunteer Club is thrilled to be able to choose CAT Club for the donation,” Hahn stated. “Mr. Al Peteraf and the CAT Club have been a great community partner, always supporting Volunteer Club and helping us connect to other community organizations that we are now happy to be working with! Congratulations Mr. Peteraf and CAT Club! And THANK YOU!”

“We are humbled and grateful for the generous support of Freedom Federal Credit Union and the School’s Volunteer Club,” commented Peteraf. “Our partnership with the volunteer club at the Havre de Grace Middle School is proof positive that our efforts are worth their weight in gold. Ms. Hahn has been an amazing positive force leading the way.”

Peteraf has seen firsthand, not just the impact student volunteers have had in fulfilling their mission, but the effect on the kids themselves. He hopes to see the HDG CAT Club mirrored across the county and the state as he continues to demonstrate how their projects enhance the physical and environmental education experience of student volunteers. “CAT Club events build civic pride in a very real way,” continued Peteraf. “These kids are phenomenal and sign up voluntarily in big numbers to do this work because they know they can actually make a difference. You should hear the encouraging things they say. CAT Club gives them a purpose and will surely set many of these kids on a path to do other great things.”

Laura Hahn, along with a selection of her Volunteer Club students, and the CAT Club were all recently honored in a check presentation held at the new Havre de Grace Middle/High School by representatives from Freedom Federal Credit Union. The CAT Club of Havre de Grace, Maryland is always looking for more volunteers for their clean up events. Learn more and sign up by visiting their [CAT Club of Havre de Grace Facebook Page](#). Follow [Freedom Federal Credit Union’s Facebook page](#) for up-to-date information on the next *#FreedomtoHelpChallenge*.

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**About Freedom Federal Credit Union**

*Freedom Federal Credit Union is a community-chartered federal credit union offering consumer financial services to those who live, work, volunteer, worship, attend school, or have family in Harford or Baltimore County. Additionally, Freedom offers a full-line of banking services for all businesses, associations, and other organizations that are based in Harford or Baltimore County. Freedom has been in business since 1953 and has six locations throughout Harford and Baltimore County. To learn more, visit [www.freedomfcu.org](http://www.freedomfcu.org).*