



GADUGI CORPS 2025 REPORT

— TOGETHER —
COMMUNITY · FAMILY · CULTURE



51,120 Total Volunteer Hours

51,120 hours are collective hours served by Cherokee Nation Scholarship recipients, local and out of state volunteer groups, tornado/storm/disaster volunteers, Individual local citizens, At-large citizens who travel and stay for an extended period volunteering, volunteers that we recruit for internal and external events, external partnerships E.g. Boys and Girls Club, STIHL, various colleges, Cherokee Nation Gadugi Corps Community Leadership Fund participants, and National Service participants that serve daily in various community organizations.

5,785 Registered Volunteers

Our volunteer database consist of Cherokee Nation citizens, with a smaller portion of non-Cherokee community members that have officially joined us by signing up with us, answering a short survey, and simply agreeing to let us keep them informed of opportunities in their area to help with our mission of Cherokees and their communities, working together for the common good. We had a goal for 2025 to have 10,000 strong in our database. Learning as we go, we have recently added a more user-friendly way of joining and expect to exceed our initial goal substantially this year.

172 Participating Scholarship Recipients

Cherokee Nation Scholarship recipients are a huge part of our year. Students fulfilling their volunteer hour portion of their scholarship, have learned to depend on us to help them facilitate their hours.

1002 Volunteer Hours

included in the total hours listed, have all been done through Gadugi Corps, each one careful to be geared toward meaningful experiences while the students are giving back to the Cherokee Nation.

635 4-H Dues Funded

Attached to this budget is also the funds set aside to pay for Cherokee students' 4H dues throughout the entire Cherokee Nation Reservation





1,460 Youth and 675 Elders Participation

Gadugi Corps Community Leadership Fund: April 1st, 2025, Gadugi Corps received the honor of housing this project where youth and elders can serve their communities for 20 hours or 10 hours plus participation in our Cherokee Elder Culture Collection project. Several Cherokee households and communities were helped through this project.

64 Boots on the Ground Members

Gadugi Corps Boots on the Ground Team. Along with our Cherokee Nation Emergency Management Team we have recruited from our database, citizens that want to be a part of a local team in their area, gave them basic training on how to be volunteers in a time of crisis. These trainings covered safety, recognition of dangerous situations, when, where, and how to respond to emergencies, assessing situations, CPR, tourniquet use, chainsaw safety, and more. Higher level training courses are being offered to these committed citizens. 64 official members from Sallisaw, Jay, South Coffeerville, Bowlin Springs, Tahlequah, Hulbert, Owasso, Chelsea, Marble City, and Bartlesville, are ready for the call.

416 Families Assisted

Gadugi Emergency/Disaster Corps is honored to have a wide scope of assistance we offer. Staff and volunteers are ready to help and have when large-scale emergencies such as tornados are presented, also those emergencies sometimes not considered large but mean much to citizens when we can help elders get their overgrown grass cut, take them firewood in a time of need, etc. Storm season, sometimes the urgency from going from household to household, days on end makes documenting a challenge for there were hundreds to get to in a timely manner. 416 families documented is a number we are proud of and proud to improve in the coming year.

11 National Service Participants Placed

National Service Participation is a large part of our Community Service Corps. Various Cherokee Nation community buildings have Gadugi Corps participants placed to assist in some daily operations and be more accessible to Cherokee Nation citizens in time of need. Currently we have participants placed at NAFI, Mid-County, Tri-Web, Brushy, Bowlin Springs, Dewey, CC camp, Locust Grove, Vian, and with the Mutual Assistance group. These individual leaders are facilitating volunteer projects and meeting community needs daily. National Service participants extend Gadugi Corps into every community by serving as embedded points of connection, ensuring local needs are seen, heard, and addressed even when the central program cannot be physically present. They are the eyes, ears, and hands of Gadugi Corps in the communities we cannot physically reach every day. They extend Gadugi Corps from a program into a presence. They ensure Gadugi Corps is not centralized but community-embedded.

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

Education, Mentorship, Emergency/Disaster, Community Service, and At-Large

EDUCATION

- Sacramento Cherokee Amanda Croteau presented to students, volunteered with departments, and supported several events.
- Kenwood 8th grade academic camp included students from Kenwood, Leach, Wickliffe, and Salina. Volunteers from Rogers State and NSU led classes focused on transitioning from 8th grade to high school.
- Burbank, California middle school requested a lengthy Gadugi Corps cultural presentation via Zoom; Cherokee Nation cultural talents helped deliver it.
- Gadugi Corps hosted 45 Zoom presentations for on-reservation schools (Stilwell, Cave Springs, Brushy, Oaks, Catoosa, Sequoyah, Jay, and Epic charter) introducing students to global career opportunities. Professions included lawyers, doctors, engineers, NASA employees, and tradespeople. Notably, Tim Kelley and a panel of 5 Medtronic executives presented to Sequoyah students about cardiology careers.
- Gadugi Corps partnered with Judge Brown of Adair County to tutor elementary–high school students, pairing Cherokee Nation Scholarship Recipients with students from Cave Springs and Stilwell.

MENTORSHIP

- Charles Twist joined Gadugi Corps twice, presenting at Peavine school and Stilwell bandstand on valuing oneself and making positive impacts.
- Eve Lansford, New York Cherokee, volunteered with Gadugi Corps and other Cherokee Nation departments, assisting with ongoing needs.
- Richard Weaver, Seattle Cherokee, spent two weeks volunteering on multiple projects.
- David Hanson (California) and JJ Cunningham (Austin) assisted with tornado clean-up for a week.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Gadugi Corps partnered with Cherokee Nation Housing Authority and Legacy Living to host Chicago college and high school students in projects with Cherokee elders.
- Recruited volunteers participated in multiple events: Austin and Houston's CCO event, Georgia Cherokee Health Alliance event, service day at K-life church, Little Seeds projects with Charlie Soap, Fairland festival, Cherokee History Symposium, John Ross reunion, Cherokee National Holiday, Bricks for All, Grand Gateway, Toys for Tots, SNAP food crisis response, Veteran's summits, Marble City hog fry, and the Education Summit.
- Database-assisted volunteer connections:
- A displaced citizen in San Diego was helped by a Cherokee volunteer in human services to secure housing and resources.

EMERGENCY / DISASTER RESPONSE

- California citizen David Hanson and Austin resident JJ Cunningham assisted tornado clean-up.
- Dallas veteran received help packing and moving from local volunteers; he was relocated to a new house in Tahlequah.
- Dallas/Ft. Worth citizens, in collaboration with Gadugi Cherokee organization of Ft. Worth, supported a winter clothing drive.
- Volunteers assisted during Adair County and Owasso storms, helping hundreds of families.

AT-LARGE HIGHLIGHTS

- Gadugi Corps utilized database connections to mobilize volunteers for events and urgent needs across the country.
- Yohan Webber's Bricks for All STEM presentations brought free Legos and STEM education to several local schools.
- National and out-of-state volunteers were actively recruited and trained for various programs, increasing participation and community impact.

Gadugi Corps has the honor daily of witnessing the good that comes with us utilizing our Gadugi spirit. We strive daily to facilitate meaningful opportunities for Cherokees to help Cherokees and their communities. We meet all tasks presented to us head-on, determined to find a way to help in a hardworking, courteous manner. We are mindful daily that what we are doing helps citizens, the way we execute the help must represent ourselves, Gadugi Corps, leadership, and the Cherokee Nation as a whole, **POSITIVELY!**

Thank you,
Shawn Crittenden
Cherokee Nation
Gadugi Corps Director

