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**Havre de Grace Warriors Youth Basketball Wins Freedom Federal Credit Union's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual #FreedomToHelpChallenge**

*Credit Union Awards Winning Participant, Lisa Belcher, a \$1,000 Donation to Support her Favorite Local Cause*



Freedom Federal Credit Union Representatives presented #FreedomtoHelpChallenge winner, Lisa Belcher, with a check for \$1,000 to contribute to her favorite local nonprofit organization, Havre de Grace's Warriors Youth Basketball Program, a subdivision of Havre de Grace Parks and Recreation.

Havre de Grace, MD -- Freedom Federal Credit Union is pleased to congratulate Lisa Belcher, Vice President of the Havre de Grace Parks and Recreation Warriors Youth Basketball Program, on winning the Credit Union's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual #FreedomtoHelpChallenge.

The five-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 through November and early December, 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.

Belcher is no stranger to Freedom's viral social media contests. Over the summer, she submitted several creative photos into Freedom's well-known #SummerofFreedomFCU photo contest, winning both a weekly contest and an honorable mention in the grand finale. When she found out that Freedom had another social challenge geared towards local non-profits, she used her experience to win the most votes for her beloved youth basketball program, where they are always in need of uniforms, equipment, and many other out-of-pocket expenses. Thanks to Belcher and her many supporters, the basketball program received a \$1,000 donation from the Credit Union.



Lisa Belcher's winning entry featured program volunteers and some of their young players.

"That 24-hour grand finale was a real nail biter because I could see the numbers increasing for the other non-profit participants and the winning program was not announced until the very end," Belcher commented. "This competition brought to light just how invested our program participants are. It was a matter of sending out emails and text messages saying, 'I need you to *like* our program's basketball picture on Freedom Federal Credit Union's page,' and in a matter of minutes we had hundreds of votes. We are all so proud to be a part of such a great program filled with great coaches, players, families, and friends. As they say, 'it takes a village'."

Now it will be up to the Board of Directors to decide how to best spend the funds. Belcher mentioned several times that it would be tempting to put it towards new uniforms, but they'll be considering league, equipment, and other expenses to ensure the maximum benefit to the program.

Belcher was impressed to see an effort that truly brought awareness to small local non-profits like the Havre De Grace Youth Basketball Program, while demonstrating to friends and neighbors that Freedom believes in making positive changes for the community. "In a county where citizens have lots of choices on where to bank, why not choose Freedom", a credit union that inspires its community; this is where to go if you want more than just a bank," stated Belcher.

In just its final hours, the #FreedomtoHelpChallenge reached over 17,000 people with images and stories celebrating volunteerism across the community. Several previous award winners were back in the final round including the [Volunteer Club of Havre de Grace Middle/High School](#), [Breathe 379](#) and [The Brandon Tolson Foundation](#). [Harford Family House](#), [Sea Scouts Ship 1808](#), [755 Alliance](#), and [Soroptimist International of Havre de Grace](#) were among the other finalists.

Lisa Belcher, along with several representatives from their board, and four of their teams were recently honored in a check presentation held at Meadowvale Elementary School by Freedom Federal Credit

Union's President and CEO, Mike MacPherson and key staff members involved in the challenge, including Carmen David Mirabile, Lisa Snodgrass, and Ashira Quabili, who acted as contest facilitator.

The Havre de Grace Warriors Youth Basketball program is a volunteer, non-profit organization. Children, aged 5-14, are eligible for registration each September through the first week in October. The program emphasizes the teaching of basketball fundamentals, sportsmanship, physical fitness, and teamwork. Players have the opportunity to participate in several community parades, March Madness, and get to visit Harford Community College.

The program includes 31 teams, over 320 players, and over 90 volunteers. Learn more and find registration information at [hdgrec.org/basketball-youth/](http://hdgrec.org/basketball-youth/). 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).*