

## Chatham County Employees Roll Up Their Sleeves In Blood Drive

By Administrator  
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PITTSBORO, NC— On April 20, 2021, Chatham County employees and residents rolled up their sleeves to give the gift of life at the Chatham County Agriculture and Conference Center in Pittsboro. Thirty-two lifesaving blood donations were collected to help hospital patients in need.

The Chatham County Employee Blood Drive is held every April with the American Red Cross; however, this year it is especially important for community members to give back as the nation, state and local community continue to battle the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, the Red Cross is experiencing the ongoing effects of the coronavirus, as roughly 1,000 drives are canceled each week due to the pandemic. As the nation transitions to a new, hopeful phase of this devastating pandemic, blood donations remain essential to the health of all communities.

“It’s important that I donate blood to help others, and it’s such an easy thing to do,” said Chatham County employee Jill Oldham, who has been donating blood for more than 20 years. “If a family member or I ever needed blood, I hope that others donate so we would have it.”

Red Cross staff and blood drive volunteers followed strict protocols to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Donors’ temperatures were checked upon entry and again during the pre-screening before their donation. Workers and donors alike practiced social distancing and wore face coverings, while seats, donor beds and computers were disinfected after each use. Each blood donation is tested for COVID-19 antibodies.

“Giving back is a way of life for me, and it’s my passion to help others,” said Chatham County resident and blood donor Paul Bolig. “I enjoy volunteering in the community, and giving blood is one more way to do that.”

According to the Red Cross, every two seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood. Patients need blood for a variety of reasons including individuals who have experienced trauma, people fighting cancers and those with chronic illness like sickle cell disease.

“My late husband received blood when he battled cancer, and I appreciate the donors who helped him,” said Chatham County Register of Deeds and blood donor Lunday Riggsbee. “There are a lot of patients out there who still need blood every day, and I hope people continue

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to give blood so it's there when they need it.”