

# Decatur man wins national service award

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There's an old saying that no good deed goes unpunished. That didn't apply to Decatur native **Forrest Tuff**, whose good deeds were met with praise and admiration from the highest elected office in America.

Tuff recently received the President's Volunteer Service Award/MLK (Martin Luther King) Drum Major for Service Award for volunteering more than 500 service hours in a year.

Tuff, who grew up in the Gresham Park area, said it's important to give back to the community any way you can.

"Gresham Park was my stomping ground. I was really into sports and the older guys in the area would teach us how to play. That's how I got my interest in the community," Tuff said. "I'm an advocate for the community and I work a lot on economic opportunity. I have donated more than 500 community service hours with different organizations."

Tuff works with several different groups, but his main focus is with the national service group SCORE—a nonprofit organization that gives free business advice and workshops to individuals looking for business help.

Tuff has multiple years under his belt as a business owner. With no formal training in videography, he created his own production company.

"We mentor aspiring business owners and young entrepreneurs. A lot of people may not be familiar with the organization, but it gives free business advice. Most of the mentors are either retired business professionals or young professionals like myself," Tuff said.

Tuff also gives his time to the American Heart Association as an ambassador. He said his work with the AHA is personal because in 2011 his brother died of a massive heart attack at the age of 32.

"That's something that stuck with me. My brother died at a young age. That became a passion for me and I just stayed with them doing different community events," Tuff said.

With all the activities Tuff is involved in, he said it's sometimes hard to balance it all, considering he's the father of three girls. But through community service, Tuff said he and his family are able to bond.

Tuff is also a member of youthSparks, a group that raises awareness to stop human sex trafficking in Georgia.

"It works for me because I have three daughters. As far as balancing the time, you have to balance how much time you're going to spend. My daughters are heavily involved in community service and that's the way we get to spend time together," Tuff said.

Tuff said he doesn't plan on slowing down in the future. He plans to increase his service hours by partnering with his childhood friend **Bobby Frazier**.

Frazier and Tuff plan to create the 1911 Foundation to help young adults in the DeKalb County area. Tuff said it's his relationship with Frazier that keeps him grounded in community activism.

"If you care about people, then you can make a stance to help other people besides yourself. I was honored to be a part of that," Tuff said.



Forrest Tuff at an event with the American Heart Association



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