On March 14, 1986, legendary Ohio State football coach Woody Hayes delivered a commencement address to the graduating class of The Ohio State University. In his speech, Coach Hayes introduced the now famous concept of “paying forward.” He explained to the crowd that paying forward entailed returning good received by directing good toward others. To him, it was much more than an idea; paying forward was an attitude toward life.

Paying forward toward community service is the attitude the Ohio State football program has since embraced. Building on the practices established by Coach Hayes, the Buckeye family of coaches, players and staff has made directing good toward others, specifically in the Columbus community, a top-notch priority.

For generations, Central Ohio has offered an unparalleled passion for Ohio State football. Through programs ranging from education to health and wellness, the Buckeyes aspire to return that passion through the good of service. Over the course of any given year, the Ohio State football family will pay forward more than 1,000 man hours of community service.

The following report will offer a glimpse into some of the outreach efforts and programs the Ohio State Buckeyes have engaged in under the direction of Coach Urban Meyer.
“I’ve seen all the different cultures across this country and there’s a culture in the Midwest and a culture certainly in this area. And that culture is not just from Woody Hayes but he was a big part of it, with Bo Schembechler and all that, there was a culture of a pay forward mentality. It’s community involvement, a premium placed on academics, community service, toughness, and doing things the right way. This is our way of adding on to that.

- Urban Meyer Head Coach
**FOOD SERVICES**

*Serving with a Smile*

Several times a year waves of players assist at two Columbus food service locations – the Mid-Ohio Foodbank and LifeCare Alliance – by packing boxes of food and building trays of food for senior citizens and others in need.

The Mid-Ohio Foodbank packs these boxes once a month so the food arrives to the seniors around the time when fixed-income finances can get tight. As many as 975 boxes have been packed by the Buckeyes in one day with supplies that included canned fruits and vegetables, cereal, boxed milk, dry beans, pasta, rice, juices and various canned proteins (meat, chili and stew, etc.)
**LifeCare Alliance**

LifeCare Alliance provides food, health and nutrition services to 15,000 individuals annually who are on a fixed income of typically less than $600 per month. The Buckeyes hear those numbers and then go to work ... always happy to help.

“When you are distributing 55 million pounds of food each year, you need a lot of volunteers. Having the Ohio State football team helping brings awareness to our causes and helps raise support for our organization so we can make an even larger impact. We look forward to this week in more ways than one. The Buckeyes advance our cause and we are thrilled to have them help.”

- **Marilyn Tomasi**  
  Mid-Ohio Food Bank Vice President
**GIVING BACK**

**Playing it Forward**

This past summer the defensive football Buckeyes spent a day at the King Arts Complex Paying Forward. The team helped the younger peers by reading, playing games, and discussing the importance of doing well academically.

The Buckeyes worked throughout the day with all of the students as part of the Paying Forward philosophy. They emphasized the importance in doing well in school and the value of developing positive attitudes and great effort.

“I learned it from Earle Bruce: for some reason football players start thinking they’re something more than a student-athlete, and they’re not. It’s our job to make sure they remember that. Our guys, they get it. There’s no pushback whatsoever to come here and spend all day with the students.”

- **Urban Meyer** Head Coach
“It is a marvelous opportunity to have the OSU football team visit our summer camp - it is indeed the highlight of summer camp. The players read to our kids, mentor them and are engaged in nearly every part of the camp. We benefit greatly and the players enjoy the opportunity to give back and pay it forward. It is a win-win.”

- Demetries Neely
  Executive Director, The King Arts Complex
Tackling Illiteracy

Tackling illiteracy is something the Buckeyes engage in on almost a weekly basis throughout the year at area middle schools.

The 2nd & 7 Foundation, with help from the Ohio State student-athlete community, typically reaches 5,000 Central Ohio second graders in more than 60 schools. The foundation has published six books aimed to instill qualities in new readers such as teamwork, valuing diversity and kindness.

Taking a page of an idea from the 2nd & 7 Foundation, defensive line coach Larry Johnson had his student-athletes visit the King Arts Complex this year where they learned about history, participated in discussions and read to the children.
Recent Schools Visited
Liberty Elementary
Imagine Charter School
Prairie Lincoln Elementary
Heritage Elementary
St. Timothy School
Sycamore Creek Elementary
Cassingham Elementary
Moler Elementary
Wilson Hill Elementary
Glen Oak Elementary
Johnson Park Middle School
G.E.M.S.
Worthington Hills Elementary
Oak Creek Elementary
Walnut Creek Elementary
Highland Elementary School
Windsor Stem Academy
Gables Elementary School
Wyandot Elementary School
Columbus City Prep School
Greensview Elementary
Robert Louis Stevenson Elementary
In a partnership between NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell and Ohio State head coach Urban Meyer, Ohio State hosted a first-ever OSU-NFL Moms Football Safety Clinic at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center. More than 500 Ohio mothers were welcomed to the event.

The three-hour clinic included a town hall, providing the mothers an opportunity to ask Commissioner Goodell and Coach Meyer questions. The participants then rotated through a variety of sessions, which brought together an assortment of football and medical experts, including Dr. Russell Lonser, Chair of Neurological surgery at OSU and member of the NFL's Head, Neck & Spine committee, who spoke on concussion awareness. Other sessions focused on parents engaging with their child’s coaches, hydration and nutrition, as well as heads up tackling and proper equipment fitting.
Ohio State Football Women’s Clinic

The football staff, with help from players, now conducts an annual Ohio State Football Women’s Clinic. Approximately 700 women of all ages have taken over the Woody Hayes Athletic Center for a day of football, fun and fundraising for one day in each of the last three springs.

Although the photo sessions with Coach Meyer and the rest of his coaching staff are always a big hit, the most substantial draw for the clinic is the fact that all proceeds are donated to cancer research at The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center – Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Richard J. Solove Research Institute. Along with demonstrations of offense, defense and special teams, representatives from The James Cancer Hospital also hit the stage for a presentation catered to all the clinic’s attendees.
On a Saturday morning in May, expect to find Ohio State head coach Urban Meyer and members of his football team at Whetstone High School to help kick off an exceptional and remarkable event: the Columbus City Schools Special Olympics.

The day starts with the recitation of the Special Olympics creed: “Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.” And it continues with a parade of more than 700 athletes and then the competitions, which are cheered on by the Buckeyes, dignitaries and loved ones.

“It means a lot to the Special Olympics program and to all the athletes that Coach Meyer and the players are here. These athletes are all so wrapped up in Ohio State and it makes them feel so important that the players and coach took the time to come out and watch and see how they are doing.”

- Sherrie Andrus
  Special Olympics Coordinator for the Columbus City Schools
“It’s exciting to be out here. The Special Olympians get excited to have us here, but we are excited to be here and to see them.”

- Ron Tanner Ohio State Buckeye
Student Appreciation Day

The third annual Student Appreciation Practice at Ohio State was held in April inside the Woody Hayes Athletic Center in front of a crowd of approximately 2,500 students, future Buckeyes, parents and media.

“Let’s have some fun in front of these students,” Ohio State coach Urban Meyer told his team before the start of the two hour practice. “And then afterward, I want you players to go thank the students for their support. This doesn’t happen anywhere else and I want you to let them know how much you appreciate them.”

The Ohio State students have supported this event extremely well in each of its three years and their appreciation of Meyer and the coaching staff is clearly evident.

Many of the students were included in stretching and sprints to open the practice. A d-jay was spinning records, and a couple individuals tried their leg at kicking field goals with the first unit.
“Coach Meyer does a great job incorporating the students into his program and making us feel like we matter. He wants the students to feel like part of the team and this is proof.”

- Juliana Tremont
Junior speech pathology major
Hospital Visits

Making Smiles

The Ohio State Buckeyes make visiting sick patients and visiting hospitals a primary emphasis of their community relations efforts. Team members take trips to hospitals dozens of times each year, with local visits to Nationwide Children’s Hospital, the Ohio State Medical Center, The James, Ohio State’s Comprehensive Cancer Center, and the Veterans Administration Hospital.
BUCKEYES CRUISIN’

The eighth annual Buckeye Cruise for Cancer – extended nearly 36 hours because of a strange fog in the Gulf of Mexico that halted all traffic in and out of the Port of Tampa – was a clear success for cancer research as the six-day cruise raised more than $2 million for the Urban & Shelley Meyer Fund for Cancer Research and The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center - Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Richard J. Solove Research Institute. The Buckeye “cruises” have now raised more than $8.5 million for cancer research.
The Ohio State University football team is committed to helping the Central Ohio Community by paying forward through its community service efforts, good deeds and by helping others.

2nd & 7 Foundation • Liberty Elementary • LifeCare Alliance • Imagine Charter School • Mid-Ohio Foodbank
Columbus City School’s Special Olympics • Prairie Lincoln Elementary • Ohio State Medical Center
Cassingham Elementary • King Arts Complex • Moler Elementary • Ronald McDonald House
Heritage Elementary • Faith Mission • Wilson Hill Elementary • Special Olympics Ohio • Glen Oak Elementary
Nationwide Children’s Hospital • Johnson Park Middle School • Columbus After School All-Stars
St. Timothy School • Homeless Families Foundation • Athletes In Action • Worthington Hills Elementary
Oak Creek Elementary • VA Ambulatory Care Center • Walnut Creek Elementary • West Broad Street Elementary
Highland Elementary School • Windsor Stem Academy • Gables Elementary School • Wyandot Elementary School
Columbus City Prep School for Boys • Grasp Program • Cordle Cares Foundation • Special Olympics Invitational

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