

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves today acknowledged the volunteers of the year at the Tartu Centre for Creative Activities, which included volunteer leaders and the company whose employees have contributed most to volunteer activities in the past year, Elion Ettevõtte AS.

"It is remarkable how many people have consistently contributed to the work of third sector organisations without expecting lots of recognition and the praise of everyone in return. A well-run organisation and the achievement of jointly established objectives represents the biggest gratitude for these people," President Ilves told.

"I wish for these people to receive recognition from society as a whole and not just within third sector organisations," added the Estonian Head of State.

As in every other organisation, third sector organisations are engaged in a number of efforts and activities that usually fail to attract the attention of the public and media, but are still highly important for the operation of the organisations and to satisfy the demands of their target groups. This year, the volunteers who do not shine as the stars of third sector organisations on a daily basis are given the acknowledgement. These are the people who build a solid foundation for third sector organisations by being committed to regular activities and often fulfilling routine functions.

This year, ten good people received a letter of thanks for Volunteer of the Year from President Ilves – Pia Hanslep, Vergi Suiste, Ulvi Rannaste, Ain Laurits, Ester Ravalepik, Elve Lepik, Kaido Taberland, Lembit Liiv, Evelin Raadik and Juta Vallikivi. Siim Kuresoo, Geit Karurahu and Erik Sikk were acknowledged as the volunteer leaders.

This year, Elion Ettevõtte AS was recognised for supporting the volunteer activities of its employees and for participation in the volunteer activities pilot programme of 2011. Within the framework of the programme, the whole company contributed to the activities of the Estonian Scout Association. Empathy, experiences and the skills of the employees of Elion Ettevõtte AS have helped the Estonian Scout Association take steps in developing the IT sphere and improving their general visibility in the society.

The event is organised by the Centre for the Development of Volunteer Activities (www.vabatahtlikud.ee), supported by the administrative sphere of the Minister of Regional Affairs and the National Foundation of Civil Society. The appreciation event also serves to celebrate the international Day of Volunteers on 5 December.

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