

Volume 2, Issue 1

Winter 2016

A program of



Retired and Senior Volunteer Program



RSVP Center of Essex & Hudson Counties

Upcoming Events:

- Ongoing Holiday Deliveries
- April 5th—Mayor Recognition Day for National Service
- April 8th—Essex County Volunteer Appreciation Party
- April 10th—Good Deeds Day Community Cookie Bake
- April 15th—Hudson County Volunteer Appreciation Party

Special points of interest:

- Learn about current community needs and programs
- See how RSVP is celebrating Good Deeds Day
- Find out who we spotlighted this edition
- Measure the growth in RSVP in 2015
- Do you know the Senior Corps Pledge?

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Presidential Volunteer Service Awards

Congratulations to all of the volunteers who earned Presidential Volunteer Service Awards!

Bronze Awards—100 hours of service

- Eunice Blackie
- James Brown
- Peggy Decker
- Irma Heywood
- Angelina Ifill
- Janet Parker
- Eleanor Rocco
- Robert Sabreen
- Connie Soto
- Nancy Trehwella
- Armedia Wilson

Silver Awards—250 hours of service:

- Sandye Garrison

Awards will be mailed within the next few weeks.

In addition to the Presidential Volunteer Service Awards, RSVP also awards volunteers based on

service and random drawings through our Volunteer Incentive Program (VIP).

Everyone can qualify for VIP awards no matter how many or how few hours you volunteer each year. Volunteers just need to log the hours they serve to be qualified. Hours can be logged online or by contacting an RSVP staff member. To find out more, contact Stephanie Grove at 973-637-1766.



Volunteer Station Spotlight: Jewish Vocational Service

JVS is a nonprofit, community-based health and human service organization, delivering a wide array of personalized services on a nonsectarian basis to nearly 20,000 individuals each year. The people they help range in age from 14 to 100+. They provide services to individuals throughout New Jersey and business-to-business services to hundreds of companies across the State.

JVS uses its special skills, knowledge and training to help its clients become economically self-reliant, productive citizens earning their own living in constructive careers. At all levels of ability,

people deserve the opportunity to be useful and share in the dignity of work. JVS's highest priority is helping those individuals who need its help the most, including the unemployed, the disabled, immigrants, aging workers, single parents and more.

Volunteers can serve at JVS working behind the scenes in administrative roles or hands on assisting clients with ESL classes, resume writing, job searching, etc. To find out more about how you can help contact Stephanie Grove at 973-637-1766.

“clients were delighted to have visitors and cookies to share.”

Good Deeds Day

Good Deeds Day is an annual celebration that unites over 60 countries around the world in doing good deeds. In 2015, RSVP and Jewish Family Service of MetroWest, NJ participated in Good Deeds Day by hosting a “Community Cookie Bake” at Congregation AABJ&D in West Orange. Volunteers came together to bake and decorate over 750 cookies! The cookies were packaged and hand delivered by adult and children volunteers to homebound JFS clients. The clients were delighted to have visitors and cookies to share.

For Good Deeds Day 2016, RSVP and JFS are planning on hosting another Community Cookie Bake at AABJ&D, only bigger and with more opportunities for volunteers to help brighten the day of a homebound senior!

Volunteers will be needed in shifts to help roll out dough, decorate and bake cookies. Once they cool, volunteers will package the cookies and label them. Children will be able to help decorate cards and bags for

the cookies.

Volunteers can also sign up to visit and deliver cookies to homebound seniors in their area.

The Community Cookie Bake will be held on Sunday April 10th at Congregation Ahawas Achim B'nai Jacob & David in West Orange, NJ.

Registration information will be sent out to RSVP volunteers a few weeks before the event. For more information on Good Deeds Day or the Community Cookie Bake, contact Stephanie Grove at sgrove@jfsmetrowest.org or 973-637-1766.



Community Challah Bake

The 2nd Annual Community Challah Bake was held on Tuesday February 9th. Held by the Jewish Federation of MetroWest, volunteers braided and baked 850 challot at the Community Food Bank of NJ in Hillside. The challot were packaged and distributed to Jewish Family Service and local kosher food pantries for distribution to clients in need.

Thank you to all of the RSVP Volunteers who helped deliver challah to homebound JFS clients. JFS relies on volunteers to deliver food and holiday packages throughout the year. If you would like to sign up for the next holiday delivery, please contact sgrove@jfsmetrowest.org or 973-637-1766 for more information.

Save the Date!

One of RSVP's biggest priorities is making sure our volunteers feel appreciated! We are excited to announce that this year we are holding two volunteer appreciation parties: one in Essex County and another in Hudson County.

The Essex County Volunteer Appreciation Party will be held at the JCC MetroWest in West Orange on Friday April 8th.

The Hudson County Appreciation Party will be held in Jersey City on Friday April 15th at the Bethune Center.

So save the date for the party in the county in which you serve! Formal invitations to come. As always, volunteers are welcome to bring a guest. If you know anyone who is interested in learning more about RSVP, this is a great opportunity for them to see what RSVP is about.

Keep an eye out for your invitation!

Volunteer Spotlight: Beverly Sisto

Beverly Sisto contacted RSVP in November 2015 wanting to give back to her community in her free spare time. She was still working full time, but her interest in helping others led her to volunteer positions with Daughters of Israel (DOI), a multifaceted nursing home that serves over 300 residents, and the Friend Advocate program at Jewish Family Service (JFS) of MetroWest in which volunteers visit homebound seniors.

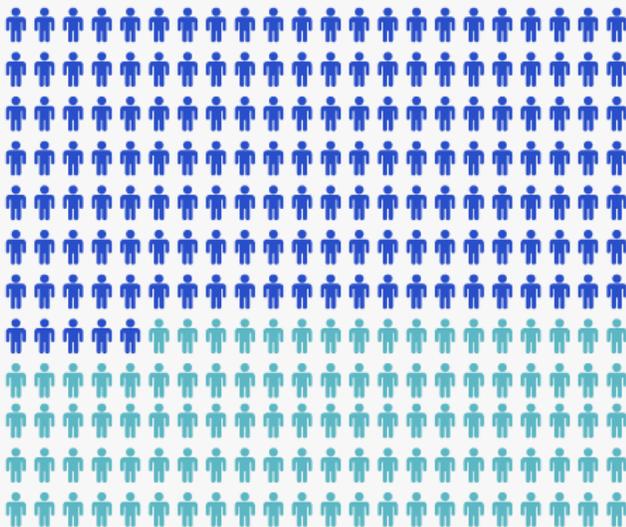


Both DOI and JFS cannot stop praising her. Eve Goldberg, Director of Women's League and Special Events at DOI said, "Beverly was a gift from the day she walked in. When asked about the type of volunteer opportunity she was seeking, she responded with 'whatever you need me to do.'" Beverly's dedication and compassion have led her to become a favorite there among staff and residents. When asked about volunteering through RSVP, Beverly says "it is extremely rewarding and worthwhile, the satisfaction I get from being of service to others and touching their lives in significant ways."

If two days at DOI were not enough, Beverly also signed up to assist a homebound senior through JFS's Friend Advocate program. Suzy Berman, the program's coordinator says, "Beverly is a dedicated, enthusiastic and caring volunteer. She assists a local senior by reading her mail, organizing papers, paying bills and spending quality time with her. Her client recently lost her husband and is very overwhelmed with the paperwork so Beverly's time, assistance, and company are invaluable."

Beverly does all this while also working full time. She is truly an example of how one person with a little time and a lot of heart, can make a tremendous difference in the lives of others. Beverly says "volunteering helps me use my free time in a worthwhile way. I am truly humbled and thankful for life. It was taught to me that regardless of the challenges we face in life we all have something worthwhile to offer to one another. Volunteering helps me to grow as an individual and in character. I am grateful for the opportunity." RSVP is proud to connect Beverly and volunteers just like her with opportunities to serve in the community.

2015 YEAR IN REVIEW



● 2015 ● 2014

127 NEW VOLUNTEERS SIGNED UP – BRINGING RSVP TO 211 VOLUNTEERS STRONG.

Thank you to all the volunteers who made a commitment to serving their community in 2015!

VOLUNTEERS SERVED 6269 HOURS IN 2015.



● Hours Served in 2015

Aging in Place with Tiny Homes

Tiny homes are becoming the latest craze in the housing market as they offer the average American numerous advantages compared to the normal size home. They are cheaper in cost, maintenance, and offer more savings than the average home. However, these tiny homes have hidden benefits that can be of sustenance for people as they age.

In the US, Americans usually spend \$250,000 for a 1,000 square foot, 3 bedroom home with a backyard. And as we know, housing in this area is much higher than the national average. In contrast to tiny homes, a person can spend \$23,000, with the space ranging from 100 to 400 square feet. Not only does this reduce the cost of maintenance, but the cost of electricity and heating are drastically less. Another benefit to these tiny homes is they can be placed on a smaller property leading to less property tax.

These houses offer friendly age options that allow older adults to retain their independence and their own living space. These tiny homes are great for the older adults who enjoy traveling and visiting family members and adult children because many of these homes travel well. They can easily be transported and placed on a family member's property allowing everyone their own space. These homes can be designed to a person's specifications to meet their new living needs as they age such as lower cabinets, kitchen countertops or modified bathroom.

They offer financial relief in the form of property income. Older adults also have the option of renting their normal size home while living in a tiny home on their property or vice versa. Finally, for a family who is caring for loved one that requires 24 hour care, these tiny homes can be used by the live-in aide.

This article was writing by Alexandra Nagy, LSW who serves as the Hudson County Program Manager.



Reading Bridge

The RSVP Center of Essex and Hudson Counties is pleased to announce our collaboration with AngelaCARES on the Reading Bridge program. Reading Bridge connects volunteers age 55+ to first grade students at the Reverend Dr. Ercel F. Webb, Public School #22 in Jersey City.

AngelaCARES, Inc. is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization headquartered in Jersey City, NJ. Their mission is to serve as an advocate and support system for senior citizens, their caregivers, and a mentor to the youth by educating and empowering them to volunteer. They are committed to strengthening communities by enhancing the quality of life through the generations.

The mission of Reading Bridge is to introduce the love of books and increase the literacy of young children in Hudson County, NJ. According to the 2013-2014 Annual Report by Jersey City Public Schools, 40% of schools are deemed low performing and 70% of children receive free or reduced lunch, putting them below the poverty line. RSVP and AngelaCARES put a huge value on education and literacy. Early literacy is not only linked with academic achievement, but higher graduation rates and enhanced productivity in adult life.

Reading Bridge is currently seeking volunteers interested in spending one hour per week reading books to first grade students at Public School 22 in Jersey City. If you are interested in learning more about becoming a Reading Bridge volunteer, please contact Alexandra Nagy at 201-526-9706 or anagy@jfsmetrowest.org.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program

Center of Essex and Hudson Counties

Jewish Family Service of MetroWest New Jersey
256 Columbia Turnpike, Suite 105
Florham Park, NJ 07932

Essex: 973-637-1766, sgrove@jfsmetrowest.org
Hudson: 201-526-9706, anagy@jfsmetrowest.org
www.jfsmetrowest.org/RSVP



USA
Freedom Corps

The President's Call to Service

The Retired and Senior Volunteer program is part of the Corporation for National and Community Service and the USA Freedom Corps.

RSVP Center of Essex and Hudson Counties is a comprehensive community service organization through Jewish Family Service of MetroWest New Jersey designed to mobilize members of the community who are 55 years of age and older in giving back to their own neighborhoods through volunteer service. We currently cover the counties of Essex and Hudson.

RSVP is a federally funded program of the Corporation for National & Community Service whose mission is to provide opportunity for individuals 55 years of age and older to provide volunteer service in their community. It has over 500,000 members nationwide.

For the potential volunteer, RSVP provides a single location where they can review a number of local volunteer opportunities and receive the help of a trained Volunteer Coordinator.

Senior Corps Pledge

I will get things done for America – to make our people safer, smarter, and healthier.

When faced with a pressing challenge, I will bring Americans of all generations together to strengthen our communities.

When faced with children at risk, I will help them stay in school and on track for a brighter future.

When faced with older adults in need, I will provide support and compassion so they may age with grace and dignity.

Working for the greatest good, I will use my lifetime of experiences to improve my country, my community, and myself through service.

I am a Senior Corps RSVP volunteer, and I will get things done.

Teamwork: Many volunteers serve in teams, building affiliations and mutual support, engaging in joint problem-solving, and drawing on the complementary skills of the team members.

Diversity: Senior Corps volunteers represent a diverse range of incomes, ages, genders, physical abilities, and ethnic and racial backgrounds. But they share a common desire to make a difference.

Capability: Everyone has unique gifts to share, and our volunteers make significant contributions by putting their best talents to work, as leaders, entrepreneurs, organizers, builders, caregivers and mentors.

Presence: The high number of Senior Corps volunteers and their level of commitment make them an essential resource in meeting critical community needs.

Flexibility: Volunteers can move in and out of options as their circumstances and interests change, and as the community agencies' needs for volunteers change.

Service-learning: Volunteers develop skills through training and new experiences; they are active participants in the training process, acting as facilitators and discussion leaders.

Senior Corps values the contributions our volunteers make through service to their communities. Their knowledge, skills, and life experience are of immeasurable value to the organizations and people they touch.