

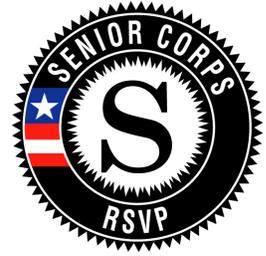
Volume 2, Issue 2

Spring 2016

A program of



Retired and Senior Volunteer Program



RSVP Center of Essex & Hudson Counties

Upcoming Events:

- July 21, 2016—Disaster Preparedness Volunteer Service Day at Unified Vailsburg Services Organization in Newark
- Fall 2016—Disaster Preparedness Volunteer Service Day in MetroWest Community, Date TDB

Special points of interest:

- Learn about current community needs and programs
- RSVP volunteers participated in the second Community Cookie Bake
- See photos from both Volunteer Appreciation Luncheons
- Find out who we spotlighted this edition
- Wrap up from the RSVP Health & Wellness Day

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Message from RSVP Director

The RSVP Center of Essex & Hudson Counties will be celebrating its 2nd anniversary on July 1st. We started without any volunteers and without placements only two short years ago. Currently we have 280 volunteers serving in over 55 agencies! I wanted to say thank you to all the volunteers who take time out of their week to serve. RSVP Volunteers read to children, visit homebound seniors, deliver meals, provide much needed support to food pantries and so much more. It is impossible to measure all the lives you touch and agencies you improve with your efforts. Volunteers have logged over 9,300 hours this past year.

Over the past two years RSVP staff has also been listening to the needs of the community and finding new ways to address them. To meet these needs, we have added new volunteer stations and created programs of our own. Out of all of our efforts, two stand out for us.

In April 2014 we collaborated with the Se-caucus Senior Center to hold a Disaster Preparedness Service Day. Volunteers put together 200 disaster kits that were distributed to homebound seniors for use in emergencies.

In January 2015 we partnered with Ange-laCARES, Inc to launch Reading Bridges in

Jersey City. Volunteers read to children Kindergarten through 3rd grade each week to help improve their literacy, listening skills and vocabulary. The program has been well received by the school, the children and the volunteers.

Looking forward, we are excited to expand on these efforts in the next year. RSVP received funding from the PSEG Foundation to host a Disaster Preparedness Service Day this July. More information on the event and how to sign up is available on the next page. We are also working on a Disaster Preparedness Service Day to benefit homebound older adult clients of Jewish Family Service of MetroWest this fall. More details of the event to come.

The launch of Reading Bridges in Hudson County was so successful, we decided to launch a sister program 'Reading Buddies' in Essex County this fall. Volunteers will read to children in local public schools once a week in a small group format. School locations will be announced soon and volunteer recruitment and training will begin this summer. Exciting things are happening at RSVP! As always, if you have any questions or feedback, please feel free to reach out to me.

-Stephanie Grove, LSW, RSVP Director

New Staff: Rebecca Silverstein, LSW, MSW

Rebecca Silverstein, LSW has been involved in the field of social work for over a decade. With a masters from University of Southern California, she served as a therapist at Malibu High School as well as Case Manager for a Senior Program for Jewish Family Services of Los Angeles. Rebecca served as the Director of a SAMHSA grant for Older Adults with Mental Illness & Addiction in the

Los Angeles area. For the past 4 years Rebecca was the Director of Development of Tikva Children's Home; a non-profit which helps save the lives of Jewish orphans in the Ukraine. Rebecca decided to return to her love of social work, and she is honored to serve as the RSVP Hudson County Program Manager and to be a part of Jewish Family Services of MetroWest.

Upcoming Event: Disaster Preparedness Volunteer Service Day

“Volunteers are needed to assemble disaster kits for homebound seniors.”

RSVP is collaborating with Unified Vailsburg Services Organization (UVSO) to host a Disaster Preparedness Volunteer Service Day on Thursday July 21st at UVSO's Teen Center at 40 Richelieu Terrace, Newark, NJ 07106. The event is being funded by a generous donation from the PSEG Foundation. Volunteers are needed to assemble disaster kits for homebound seniors in Newark. The kits will contain flashlights, local emergency numbers, first aid kits, information from FEMA, water bottles, snacks, manual can openers, hand sanitizer, blankets and more.

Volunteers will have the option of signing up for Shift 1 packaging kits from 10:00AM-12:00 or Shift 2 from 12:00-2:00PM.

If you have questions or are interested in volunteering for this disaster kit event, please contact Stephanie Grove at 973-637-1766 or sgrove@jfsmetrowest.org. Volunteers can also sign up online at <http://bit.ly/1XNyleE>.

The day of the event, parking is available on the street and volunteers will receive a free t-shirt while supplies last.



PSEG
Foundation

Community Cookie Bake

In honor of Good Deeds Day, an international day of doing good for others, the RSVP Center of Essex and Hudson Counties and Jewish Family Service of MetroWest held a Community Cookie Bake.



Over 100 RSVP and JFS volunteers came together at Congregation AABJ&D in West Orange, NJ to bake, decorate and package cookies for homebound seniors. Cookie dough was generously donated by JCHC.



Thirty additional volunteers delivered the cookies to 140 homebound seniors in the community with a smile and a visit. For more information on future events, contact Stephanie Grove at 973-637-1766.

Volunteer Spotlight: Armedia Wilson

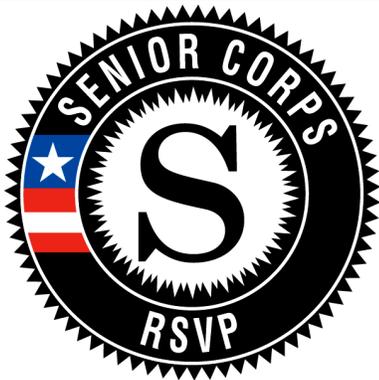
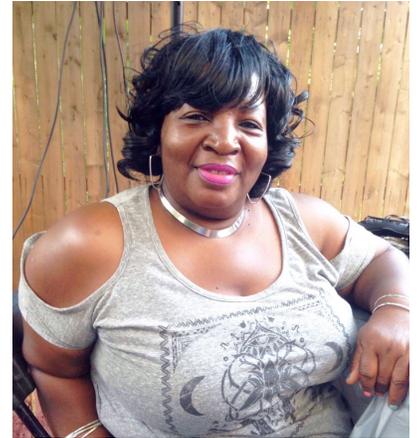
Armedia Wilson has been a dedicated RSVP volunteer since the start of 2015. Despite being a busy and devoted mother and grandmother, Armedia shared that she had the urge to give back to others and was ready to volunteer. Through the RSVP Program in Hudson County, Armedia was placed at Jersey City's Medical Center. At the Medical Center, she volunteers in security making visitor passes, answering the phones, validating parking tickets and making sure no enters the hospital without authorization.

In April, at the RSVP Jewish Family Services Hudson County Recognition luncheon in Jersey City, Armedia was honored with the President's Volunteer Service Bronze Award presented to individuals who have served at least 100 hours.

Armedia is extremely passionate about volunteering stating "I try to volunteer every spare moment I have. My children joke I am at the Medical center more than I am in my own home!" She shares that as a people person, volunteerism is good for the mind, body and soul. She commented "I am proud to be a positive source of energy and laughter and feel good knowing that I am helping others. Giving people a kind hug or smile throughout the day is something as I can offer, as you never know what a person is going through."

Armedia wants others to know that getting out of the house is good for her inner spirit, and in turn has helped her physical health improve. She finds her placement at Jersey City's Medical Center "rewarding, knowing she is giving back to the community." She is grateful for the opportunity to serve, and said that she feels secure knowing that RSVP staff is always available for support.

RSVP is proud of Armedia's devotion to volunteerism and is happy to help connect volunteers like Armedia with opportunities that enable them to give back to their local communities while getting a sense of fulfillment and appreciation for their efforts.



The Volunteer Satisfaction Survey results are in! 94% of respondents said they enjoyed their volunteer position and 100% of respondents said they felt their volunteer work made an impact in the community.

Volunteer Station Spotlight: Liberty Science Center

Liberty Science Center is a 300,000-square-foot learning center located in Liberty State Park on the Jersey City bank of the Hudson near the Statue of Liberty. It houses 12 museum exhibition halls, a live animal collection, aquariums and the world's largest IMAX Theater. It is a magnet for passionate people who love science. Staff and volunteers work side by side with guests as they learn about science. Volunteers have an integral role in everything they accomplish. Whether they're bringing science to life in their exhibition halls or welcoming students and chaperones for school visits, volunteers are an essential part of the team at Liberty Science Center.

Volunteers complete a two day training and are asked for a commitment of at least 120 hours. Volunteers have a flexible schedule and receive bonuses such as 6 complimentary exhibition passes and four IMAX passes after 100 hours of service, public transportation or toll reimbursement for those who qualify, the opportunity to meet and make new friends, lifelong learning opportunities, regular updates on programs and exhibits, access to educational and recreational programming, and so much more. If you are interested in learning more about this volunteer station or signing up, please contact Rebecca Silverstein at 201-526-9706.

Wrap up: Volunteer Appreciation Month

RSVP celebrated Volunteer Appreciation Month (April) by hosting two Volunteer Appreciation Luncheons—one in Hudson County and one in Essex County. Thank you to all the volunteers who attended and who serve regularly throughout our community! Both events were packed with fun, food and stories of what our volunteers do every day! Below are some photos from the events. We can't wait to see everyone next year!



CNCS program Specialist Colleen Homer addressing volunteers who attended the Essex County Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon on April 8th.



Essex County RSVP Volunteers at the luncheon at the JCC MetroWest.



Eunice Blackie, Monica Jennings, Melanese Stout, Angelina Ifill, Dorothy Grimsley, Janet Parker and Irma Heywood, volunteers of the Food Pantry at Christ Church/Church of the Epiphany in Orange with RSVP Director, Stephanie Grove

Janet Parker, Irma Heywood, Delores Lederman, Lurene White, Eleanor Rocco, and Sandye Garrison received Presidential Volunteer Service Awards for their service as RSVP volunteers



JFS MetroWest Executive Director Reuben Rotman addressing volunteers at the Hudson County Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon on April 15th



Bronze Presidential Volunteer Service Award recipient Armedia Wilson and RSVP Director Stephanie Grove



Reuben Rotman and Stephanie Grove with Silver Presidential Volunteer Service Award recipient James Brown



Reading Bridge Volunteers posing with PS 22 Staff

Mayor Recognition Day for National Service

On April 4th 2016 Jersey City Mayor Steven Fulop recognized the RSVP Center of Essex and Hudson Counties and the other Senior Corps programs for their work in Jersey City.



Retired and Senior Volunteer Program

Center of Essex and Hudson Counties

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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.

National Service Regional Conference

RSVP Staff participated in the Atlantic Cluster National Service Conference this May in Springfield, Massachusetts. RSVP Directors representing counties from Maine down to Delaware participated in training sessions and met with Senior Corps Staff from the Washington DC office to discuss current policy and legislation regarding Senior Corps programs like RSVP. We are happy to hear that Senior Corps has bipartisan support in Congress and continues to receive funding.

Nationally Senior Corps has 500,000 members over the age of 55. Their service impacts hundreds of thousands of lives in every area of the county. If you feel that RSVP makes an impact, contact your congressional representatives and ask them to support Senior Corps!



NJ Senior Corps Directors and Corporation for National & Community Service Staff at the Atlantic Cluster National Service Conference

RSVP Health & Wellness Day

RSVP held a Health & Wellness Day on Friday May 13th to thank volunteers for their service and to help them learn how to stay active and healthy while they continue to serve our community.

Representatives from Senior Medicare Patrol were on site to answer Medicare questions. Staff from LifeLong Montclair were present. Nurses from HackensackUMC Mountainside Hospital held blood pressure screenings. Davis Integrated Medicine provided tips on stress management, nutrition and free chair massages. Our guest speaker was



Dr. Davis from Davis Integrated Medicine who spoke on the importance of reducing stress. An instructor from the Yoga Room Studio taught free yoga classes. Healthy snacks were served and raffle prizes from local vendors were given out. We hope everyone who came enjoyed the day and learned something new!