

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program



Center of Essex & Hudson Counties

RSVP introduces Volunteer Incentive Program (VIP)

The RSVP Center Of Essex and Hudson Counties is a year old as of July 1, 2015! We have 132 volunteers across 57 Volunteer Stations in Essex and Hudson Counties. In honor of our volunteers, RSVP is excited to announce its new Volunteer Incentive Program (VIP)! Volunteers will receive gifts in recognition of their service based on the hours they log each year running July–June. The program will begin each year on July 1 and continue through June 30th of the following year. The program will reset each year making volunteers eligible for yearly awards and recognition.

When volunteers log 50 hours of volunteer work in a year, they will receive a VIP gift in the mail from RSVP to thank them for their dedicated service to their community.

As volunteers surpass that milestone, they will receive The President’s Volunteer Service Award (PVSA). This award is the premier volunteer awards program, encouraging citizens to live a life of service through presidential grati-

tude and national recognition. The Presidential Award is as follows: 100 hours – Bronze Award, 250 hours – Silver Award, 500 Hours – Gold Award.

President’s Lifetime Achievement Award will be awarded to individuals who have completed 4,000 or more hours in their lifetime.

RSVP understands that not every volunteer can dedicate 50 or more hours a year to volunteer work. Some of our best volunteers visit home-bound seniors one hour a week or bag food at pantries once a month. To include all volunteers in our program, we will also select volunteers at random to receive a VIP gift throughout the year.

To be eligible, RSVP Volunteers must actively log the hours they volunteer so we can track how close they are to each milestone. Hours can be logged online using our web assist program or by emailing or calling in your hours at the end of each month.

Special points of interest:

- Learn about current community needs and programs
- Wrap up for RSVP’s Disaster Kit Event
- The benefits being a volunteer on your health and career
- Volunteer Spotlight
- RSVP receives proclamations from four local mayors

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Volunteer Station Spotlight: American Red Cross

The American Red Cross exists to provide compassionate care to those in need. Their network of generous donors, volunteers and employees share a mission of preventing and relieving suffering, here at home and around the world. Join the Red Cross in achieving their mission today. RSVP recently added new Red Cross positions including Fire Safety Preparedness Volunteer—respond to disasters in the local community as a Disaster Action Team (DAT) within the North Jer-

sey Region, Volunteer Photographer at local events and functions, Pillowcase Project Presenter— administer a preparedness education program for children in grades 3 – 5, which teaches students about personal and family preparedness, local hazards, and basic coping skills, and Disaster Responder Trainee—train the members of the Disaster Action Teams (DAT) in the region.

To sign up, contact RSVP at 973-637-1766.

“RSVP is organizing it’s next Disaster Preparedness Day on September 30th in Nutley—stay tuned, more details to come!”

Wrap up: Disaster Kit Event

On Wednesday April 22nd approximately 30 RSVP volunteers came together at the Secaucus Senior Center to pack 200 disaster kits to benefit homebound seniors in the community.

The disaster kits included first aid kits, can openers, packages of bandages, soap, wash clothes, shampoo/conditioner, water bottles, flashlights, FEMA pamphlets, magnets with local emergency numbers, etc. All materials for the kits were donated by local charities and businesses.

After the event, Secaucus Meals on Wheels volunteers delivered the kits to homebound seniors in Secaucus to be used in case of an emergency.

Everyone at RSVP would like to make special mention of the efforts of the volunteers who at-

tended, The United Way of Hudson County, the Secaucus Emergency Fund and Secaucus Senior Center for making this event happen.

Due to the success of this event and the continued need to prepare for disaster, RSVP is organizing it’s next Disaster Preparedness Day on September 30th in Nutley—stay tuned, more details to come! Another event will also be held in Hudson County in the Spring of 2016.

For more information on ways you can help prepare for a disaster year round, contact Stephanie Grove at 973-637-1766 or email her sgrove@jfsmetrowest.org.



200 finished disaster kits waiting to be delivered

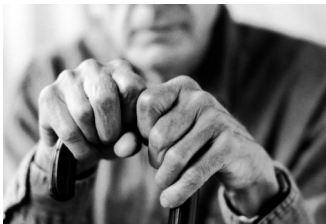


Lisa Snedeker (Secaucus Senior Center), Stephanie Grove (RSVP), James Clancy (Secaucus Councilman), Alexandra Nagy (RSVP), Judy Kennelly (Secaucus Senior Center)



Volunteer Donna Cullen helps pack supplies in disaster kits

Impact of Friendly Visiting Volunteers



It has been shown that loneliness and isolation endanger the health and wellness of older adults. Homebound older adults with limited social networks or who feel lonely are shown to have worse mental and physical health, are twice as likely to develop Alzheimer’s Disease, and have an increased risk of developing heart disease, high blood pressure, bad sleeping patterns, and worse cognition over time according to a study by FriendshipWorks.

Friendly visiting programs match homebound seniors one-on-one with a caring volunteer. Vol-

unteers are typically encouraged to visit the older adult they are matched with once a week for an hour. Visits reduce isolation of the older adult and can help alleviate depression. These volunteers provide social companionship and a listening ear. The older adults look forward to visits and gain a valuable human connection.

Thank you to all of the volunteers who provide these services to older adults in our community. The impact these volunteers have on the people they visit is immeasurable and we hope to see these Friendly Visiting programs continue.

Volunteer Spotlight: Lycette Nelson

Lycette Nelson joined RSVP of Essex and Hudson Counties this year to give back and help improve her community, while using her skills as an attorney. Lycette met with Hudson County Program Manager, Alexandra Nagy to learn what programs were available in her area and how she could incorporate her career history, availability and interests into a local volunteer position. Based on this information, Alexandra connected Lycette to the Hudson County Superior Court House where she currently volunteers for the Juvenile Conference Committee (JCC) and the Guardianship Monitoring Program (GMP).

Lycette meets with the JCC once a month to review court cases in which a juvenile is a first time offender and the offense is not a serious felony. She and the other panel members meet with the alleged offender, the offender's family, the victim and the victim's family. They review the case and make recommendations to the judge to help deter the alleged offender from repeat offenses. Recommendations can vary from community service or requiring the offender to write about the incident. The Committee sets a specific timeframe for the juvenile to complete the recommended action and report back to the Committee. In the Guardianship Monitoring Program, Lycette will be reviewing guardianship case files to determine if the court-appointed guardian for a person who has been judged to be incapacitated in certain aspects of their lives is performing his or her duties as the law requires. Lycette will look for specific issues in the case files and enter all of the relevant information into a statewide database. This program will help reduce financial exploitation, neglect and abuse of seniors and people with cognitive impairments and help the courts identify and address problem areas. The role Lycette performs is a tremendous service to those unable to speak for themselves.

Lycette has volunteered in the past as a board member for Hudson Pride Connections and as an advocate for the LGBT community. She currently resides with her long-term partner in Jersey City where they are raising their daughter. Lycette is passionate about riding her bike, skiing, tennis and swimming. She has practiced law for over 12 years in NYC with a focus of assisting people with mental health issues. She recently opened her own practice in Downtown Jersey City. If you are interested in contacting her, Lycette can be reached at lnelson@lycettenelsonlaw.com.



Benefits of Volunteering

Perhaps the first and biggest benefit people get from volunteering is the satisfaction of incorporating service into their lives and making a difference in their community and country. The intangible benefits alone—such as pride, satisfaction, and accomplishment—are worthwhile reasons to serve. In addition, when we share our time and talents we: solve problems, strengthen communities, improve lives, connect to others, and transform our own lives.

Over the past two decades we have also seen a growing body of research that indicates volunteering provides individual health benefits in addition to social ones. This research, provided by the Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS), has established a strong relationship between volunteering and health: those who volunteer have lower mortality rates and greater functional ability than those who do not volunteer.

Comparisons of the health benefits of volunteering for different age groups have also shown that older adult volunteers are the most likely to receive greater benefits from volunteering, whether because they are more likely to face higher incidence of illness or because volunteering provides them with physical and social activity and a sense of purpose at a time when their social roles are changing.

According to CNCS research “Volunteering offers significant health benefits to volunteers. Not only do older volunteers who regularly serve tend to live longer than non-volunteers, but a number of studies also demonstrate that those individuals who volunteer at an earlier point experience greater functional ability and better health outcomes later in life.” Volunteering can also lead to greater life satisfaction and lower rates of depression in older adults.

Additionally, a study, “Volunteering as a Pathway to Employment: Does Volunteering Increase Odds of Finding a Job for the Out of Work?” finds that unemployed individuals who volunteer over the next year have 27 percent higher odds of being employed at the end of the year than non-volunteers. The relationship between volunteering and employment holds stable regardless of a person's gender, age, ethnicity, geographical area, or job market conditions. This report shows a definitive relationship – volunteers are more likely to be employed a year later than non-volunteers. We know that volunteering can help job seekers develop skills and expand professional contacts, creating a positive impression that can make a big difference in a competitive job market.

The benefits of volunteering on our community are undeniable and now we have exciting new research that volunteering has its perks for volunteers too!

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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.

Mayors Day of Recognition for National Service

The nation's mayors and county executives are increasingly turning to national service as a cost-effective strategy to address local challenges. By unleashing the power of citizens, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs have a positive and lasting impact – making our cities and counties better places to live. To spotlight the impact of national service and thank those who serve, mayors across the country participated in the third-annual Mayors Day of Recognition for National Service on April 7, 2015.

On this day, mayors and county executives held public events and used traditional and social media to highlight the value of national service to the nation's cities. This year, 2,786 mayors representing more than 110 million citizens participated in the third-annual Mayors Day of Recognition for National Service. The initiative is led by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the National League of Cities, and Cities of Service.

As a Senior Corp program, RSVP, was honored with proclamations from several local mayors including Jersey City Mayor Steven Fulop, Livingston Township Mayor Michael Silverman, Newark Mayor Ras Baraka and Secaucus Mayor Michael Gonnelli. For these mayors, participating in Mayors

Day of Recognition for National Service highlights the impact of citizen service, shows support for nonprofit and national service groups, and inspires more residents to serve in their communities. RSVP hopes to expand our reach to include all the mayors of Essex and Hudson Counties for next year's Mayors Day of Recognition for National Service.



Jersey City Mayor Steven Fulop presenting Alex Nagy (RSVP) with a proclamation.



Livingston Mayor Michael Silverman presenting Marion Medow (JFS Board) and Stephanie Grove (RSVP) with a proclamation