

THE INVOLVEMENT

RSVP – Your Invitation to Volunteer



RSVP is a program of Senior Services of Southwest Michigan

April/May/June 2020



Engaging People 55 & Better
Meeting Community Needs
Enriching the Lives of Volunteers

Let's Talk About Reporting Your Volunteer Hours

Each month, when you take a moment to let us know where and how much you are volunteering, you have made our work possible. **Thank you to those who consistently report their hours.**



If you aren't reporting your volunteer time, **we need you to report your hours to RSVP.** It's easy to get back on track.

We are flexible and will work with you to make reporting as easy as possible. Call us at 269-382-0515 if you have questions, and thank you for volunteering and reporting your hours.

RSVP is required by our grant funding sources to account for number of hours and volunteers in our community, and the only way we can do that is with your participation in reporting. Help us reach 100% participation. Thank you.

Your Friends at RSVP

Answer the Call: Volunteer in a National Service Focus Area

Are you looking for new volunteer activities or know someone who'd make a great volunteer? You can help grow the number of RSVP volunteers making a difference where it's most needed. Consider adding something new or different to your schedule, or invite a friend to volunteer. RSVP volunteers are making a difference, but more people are needed. When you recruit new volunteers we will take good care of them, place them where they want to volunteer, and offer support. See page 4 for more opportunities to volunteer through RSVP. **To learn more call us at 269-382-0515 or 866-200-8877.**

MMAP—Medicare Medicaid Assistance Program

7 RSVP volunteers helped MMAP talk to and counsel over 1,203 older adults about health care benefits in Kalamazoo County last year.

New Volunteers Needed

Orientation: April 8, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Apply by April 10.

Training: June 2, 3 and 4.

See page 5 for more details.

Senior Services Receives RSVP Grant

RSVP was awarded a federal grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) as part of a Senior Corps competitive application process. With this award Senior Services will continue to support RSVP volunteers serving in Kalamazoo and Calhoun counties.



Today, Senior Corps engages approximately 200,000 Americans at more than 20,000 locations across the nation through RSVP, Senior Companion and Foster Grandparent programs.

We thank all of our RSVP Volunteers and Partner Agencies for all you do to make life better for others!

Tracie Wheeler, Traci Furman, Kathy Cox

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Senior Services



**Southwest
Michigan**

RSVP - Your Invitation to Volunteer

Volunteers 4 Seniors

When Does Someone Become “Old”?

It seems the older one gets, the later they think old age begins. Young people think 65 is old and older people think 65 is still young. Calling someone *old* can be considered derogatory, so what is a nice way to say someone is of advanced age without insulting them and when does old age start?



The label *old* brings thoughts of frailty and obsolescence, but these days some 70-year-olds are traveling around the world, hitting the gym every day or still on the job while others may be suffering chronic disabilities or mental decline. There’s no one word that covers this spectrum of diversity. Let’s take the term *Senior*. It’s common but not so accurate. It could also refer to someone in their last year of high school or, combined with *Citizen*, be imprecise because not every older U.S. resident is a citizen. *Elderly* conjures up visions of infirmity and *Geriatric* is precise but too clinical. *Aging* is accurate but vague and *Retiree*, well, it just doesn’t apply to everyone.

A popular way to avoid naming it altogether is to speak in terms of ranges: *people in their 70’s*; over 65. RSVP’s Tracie Wheeler terms it—“*people 55 and better*”—a kinder term that seems to imply we get better as we age. Overall, *Older* seems to be the least imperfect term and is gaining popularity “because it seems to irritate the smallest number of people”, according to Ina Jaffe, NPR journalist who helped arrange a poll on the NPR website soliciting opinions. Susan Jacoby, former journalist with *The Washington Post*, defines when someone is old as: *Old age is “when you start seeing people you know in the obituary column.”* It may not help us figure out how to refer to others, but it’s flexible, personal and to the point—and will likely age well.

Adapted from: What’s the Best Term for Referring to Old People?, Joe Pinkser, *The Atlantic*, January 20, 2020.

Kathy Cox

National Service Special Limitations

RSVP offers a reminder, as stated in the RSVP Volunteer Handbook, on service activities. If you have questions, let us know.

1. **Political Activities:** No RSVP volunteer may take any action with respect to a partisan or nonpartisan political activity that would result in the identification or apparent identification with RSVP.
2. **Religious Activities:** No RSVP volunteer shall give religious instruction, conduct worship services, or engage in any form of preaching that would result in the identification or apparent identification with RSVP.
3. **Compensation for Services:** No RSVP volunteer shall receive a fee for service from service recipients, their legal guardian, members of their family, or friends.

Opportunities to Help

Transportation

- Woman at Greenhill Apts.
- Woman on Stadium
- Woman at Crosstown Parkway Apts.
- One Time, Short Term Needs in Kalamazoo County

Shopping Assistance

- Woman in Westwood neighborhood
- Woman on Walnut
- Woman off W. Centre

Friendly Visitor

- Woman on East O Ave.

Call Kathy Cox at 269-382-0515 ext. 127.



RSVP Report

Volunteer Statistics (Nov. — Jan.)

- New Volunteers: 17
- Volunteers Reporting Hours: 231
- Volunteer Hours: 8,647.50
- Value*: \$219,905.92 (\$25.43 hour)

*Source: www.independentsector.org.

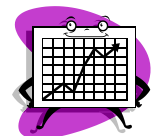
Volunteer Hours & Time Sheets

Did you report your time?

The hours you serve help us tell the story of older adult volunteers making a positive impact.

RSVP Volunteer Time = Focused

Results. Your hours are needed to report (collectively) to our funders—this keeps RSVP operating successfully. See RSVP Calendar on page 5 for easy ways to report.



Mentor Academic Success

What is an RSVP Signature Program?

RSVP Signature Programs are the volunteer opportunities that an RSVP staff member plans, develops, coordinates, and supervises. The current six RSVP Signature Programs are:

Volunteers 4 Seniors, Helping Hands Happy People (both coordinated by Kathy Cox), and Mentor Academic Success, Peer Prevention Players, Bulk Mail Team and Triad (coordinated by Traci Furman).



Mentor Academic Success has changed over the years and currently does not fit the RSVP Signature Program definition. Volunteers giving their time to mentor and tutor youth and support kids are coordinated and supervised by organizations other than RSVP. Volunteers are placed with our partners: Communities In Schools Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo Public Schools, Portage Public Schools, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Michigan, Comstock

Elementary, Curious Kids, and Kalamazoo Drop-in Child Care Center.

Over the years RSVP has had a myriad of grant requirements calling for initiatives to meet those requirements. Currently we are not required to directly plan, develop, coordinate and supervise volunteers serving children.

RSVP will continue to place and support people volunteering to help children succeed in school and life. This will not affect current RSVP volunteers reporting hours assisting children and youth with any of our partners. We will continue to recruit and welcome new volunteers to work with students in our community.

Thank you for your service to children and youth in Kalamazoo County. We are honored and proud to serve you to the best of our ability.

Traci Furman

Peer Prevention Players

Older Artists

I read Smithsonian magazine from cover to cover each month. In the March 2020 issue, there were two stories about painters who did not become famous until they were in their 80's and 90's. This made me think of the Peer Prevention Players with the current cast being between 70 and 86 years old. Each of the performers joined the group with no acting or comedy experience. They became performers later in life by volunteering in this troupe. They practice new ways to deliver punch lines, add new life to characters in their skits and research new jokes to make audiences laugh and include a message of healthy aging.

Anna Mary Robertson Moses, better known as Grandma Moses, didn't get serious about painting until her 70's. According to Smithsonian, she made her debut in New York City's highly competitive art scene at the age of 80 with a 1940 gallery exhibit, "What a Farm Wife Painted."



Zilia Sanchez was in her late 80's before the international art world began to notice her work. Smithsonian reports Sanchez lost much of her work when Hurricane Maria ripped the roof off her San Juan studio in 2017, but she rebuilt and continues to work every day, compelled, she says, by a stronger force.

These painters remind me of the Peer Prevention Players because they also are compelled to perform. They volunteer for the joy and laughter they share and they feel good when they perform.

Let these 10 volunteers inspire you to become older adult artists and pursue your desire to create and volunteer to help others. RSVP is here to support you and connect with volunteer work that feeds your soul and makes you happy.

Contact me 269-382-0515 ext. 123 or tfurman@seniorservices1.org for volunteer placement assistance.

Traci Furman

RSVP Partner Agencies

RSVP is accepting new volunteers for these activities. RSVP membership and benefits apply, and volunteers report their hours. Call Traci Furman at 269-382-0515 or 866-200-8777 ext. 123 for placement assistance.

Focus Area Volunteer Activities

Kalamazoo County

Meals on Wheels: Drivers & hoppers for regular, short-term, substitute schedules.

Volunteers 4 Seniors—RSVP: Rides to doctor or store, social visits.

Friendship Village: Companions.

Nazareth Center: Visitors, activity assistants.

Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes: Call center, grocery pantries, truck drivers, warehouse, receptionists.

Mentor Academic Success—RSVP: Reading or math tutors, mentors.

Big Brothers Big Sisters: Mentor or tutor youth ages 5-18.

Communities In Schools Kalamazoo: Mentors or tutors, classroom help in Kalamazoo Public Schools, Friday food pack distribution.

SLD Read: Reading tutors for 1st, 2nd, 3rd graders.

MMAP: Counsel older adults on Medicare, Medicaid, long term care insurance. Training provided.

Peer Prevention Players: Perform funny skits, poems to promote healthy aging and safe living.

Kalamazoo Literacy Council: Adult reading tutors, training provided.

Lending Hands: Office & computer help, clean & repair medical equipment.

Senior Services (Tuesday Toolmen): Home repairs (carpentry, electrical, plumbing) safety modifications, build accessible ramps.

Calhoun County

Meals on Wheels: Drivers & hoppers for regular, short-term, substitute schedules.

Senior Services (Handy Helpers): Basic home repairs, cleaning tasks.

Capacity Building & Community Priority Volunteer Activities

Kalamazoo County

American Cancer Society: Medical drivers, resale boutique assistants.

Area Agency on Aging 3A (Kalamazoo): Personal Action Toward Health (PATH) & Matter of Balance workshop leader.

Ascension Borgess: Gift shop.

Big Brothers Big Sisters: Receptionist.

Communities In Schools Kalamazoo: Track & organize donated items.

Friends of Kalamazoo Public Library: Sort & shelve books, bookstore clerk, answer phone.

Friendship Village: Pianist, activity assistants, gardener, resale store, happy hour hosts.

Glass Art Kalamazoo: Office, studio, events, make Journey Beads for Bronson Children's Hospital.

Heartland Hospice: Visit with patients, pet visitor, office.

Helping Hands Happy People: Knit or crochet items for those in need.

Hospice Care of Southwest Michigan: Visit with clients, pet visitor, respite, life story work, office.

Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Dept.: Records scanning. Computer & electronics troubleshooting, repair.

Kalamazoo Drop-In Child Care Center: Child care aides.

Kalamazoo Humane Society: Operation Fix-It assistant, cat grooming.

Kalamazoo Nature Center: Welcome visitors, exhibits interpreter.

Parchment Community Library: Patron services, library/grounds care, assist with library materials, events.

Portage Senior Center: Van drivers, computer tutors, clerical help for fundraising.

Reverence Home Health & Hospice: Visit patients, office help.

SPCA: Front desk assistance.

Salvation Army: Community Center assistance for youth programs.

Senior Services: Hoop house garden assistant, office help, callers.

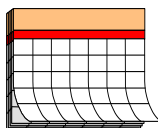
Triad: Attend meetings, event help, speak on safety topics to groups.

RSVP Calendar

RSVP Volunteer Hours

Due monthly on the 5th.

- If not requesting reimbursement you may call in your time to RSVP at 269-382-0515, 866-200-8877 or email to twheeler@seniorservices1.org
- Drop off, mail, or fax to 269-382-3189
- Visit www.seniorservices1.org, Click Volunteer button, click RSVP link, scroll down to Resources and click RSVP Time Sheet.



New Volunteer Orientation

April 17, May 15, June 19 at 1:30 p.m.

Holiday Closing

May 25

Awards & Kudos

Volunteering—Spark

- Dan Fettig
- Bambi Hamming
- Andrea Kidney



Volunteer of the Month—Senior Times

- Ginny Dinges

Rx Optical Vision Advantage

Senior Services offers Rx Optical vision savings at no cost to RSVP volunteers.



Program may be used with some vision insurance. Stop by Senior Services in Kalamazoo or contact RSVP to get a Volunteer Member Card/Brochure.

Answer the Call:

Volunteer in a National Service Focus Area

Do you like to solve puzzles and mysteries? Do you enjoy meeting and working with people? Do you face barriers and obstacles with courage, determination and good humor? Then MMAP needs you!

RSVP invites you and others to volunteer with **MMAP—Medicare Medicaid Assistance Program in Kalamazoo County.**

MMAP is a free service that helps people understand Medicare or Medicaid health benefits, and save money on health care costs. MMAP volunteer counselors help with Medicare and Medicaid issues including eligibility and enrollment, covered services and items, prescription drug assistance, Medicare fraud and abuse, appeal procedures and help for low-income persons, and more.

Comprehensive, interactive certification training, mentoring with experienced volunteers and staff is provided. Volunteers are asked to commit to a minimum of one year of service and 12-20 hours a month.

Contact Lisa Fuller, MMAP Regional Coordinator at 269-382-0515 ext. 203 for information. Complete MMAP application by Friday, April 10 to be ready for training on June 2, 3 and 4 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

“The Counselor who helped us was so efficient and knowledgeable that we were much more comfortable about those concerns.”

Pet Food Bank

- For seniors age 55 and better in Kalamazoo County who need help caring for their pet.
- Small bags of dog or cat food while supplies are available.
- Once a month requests per household.
- Call 269-382-0515 (ext. 123) 1-2 days ahead to request.
- Donations accepted anytime.



Welcome New Volunteers

- Louise Anderson
- Susan Boele
- David Boshka
- Mike Branch
- Theresa Burke
- Pamela Dalitz
- Louise Haas
- Carol King
- Charles Kinnane
- Thomas Scott Perry
- Diane Rohrstaff
- Cynthia Rowe
- Richard Snook
- Gary Stafford
- Linda Sudeikis
- Christine Wagley
- Rob Wagley
- Laura Zagarell
- Diane Zellers
- Ronald Zellers

DRIVERS NEEDED

For medical appointments and grocery shopping. Flexible schedule.

Call Kathy Cox 382-0515 ext.

Senior Services



Southwest Michigan

918 Jasper Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Kalamazoo, MI
Permit No. 1130

Triad

Triad is a group of older adults, police officers and citizens working to increase the safety of older adults and allay their fears of crime. See Triad Newsletter insert.



Place address label here

Mission

RSVP engages people 55 and better in volunteer service to meet community needs, and provides a high quality experience that will enrich the lives of volunteers.

Serving

Kalamazoo & Calhoun Counties

Funding Sources



CNCS: \$100,095 or 63% of funds

Senior Services



- Donations
- Partner Agencies (in-kind)
- Fundraising

No person on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age (eligible age is 55), disability, political affiliation, education, or experience shall be excluded from membership or benefits of RSVP.

Membership Benefits

- Opportunity to share, learn new skills
- Personal placement assistance
- Free supplemental excess accident medical, volunteer liability & automobile liability insurance
- Newsletter, *The Involvement*
- Limited mileage reimbursement for those who might otherwise find it difficult to volunteer
- Recognition for service
- Invitation to volunteer celebration
- Free membership in Rx Optical Vision Advantage Program

Staff

Phone: 269-382-0515; 866-200-8877

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Traci Furman

Special Projects Coordinator

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Kathy Cox

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Advisory Council

Kathi Fahl, Laurie Havel, Bill Krasean, Brian Pitts, Martha Terpstra & Julie VanderNoot

Recycle this newsletter, or promote volunteering and service by sharing it with family, friends, neighbors, social groups, church. Thanks!