



A PROGRAM OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES OF WASHTENAW COUNTY

# RSVP QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Spring 2018

## RSVP REPORT

2017 Volunteer Hours: 36,619.75

2017 Value: \$904,141.63

New Volunteers in January – March 2018: 13

We had a great start to 2018 with 8,372.15 hours served from January to March.

**Keep up the amazing service!**



## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

As many of you know, I will be retiring from my position as RSVP Program Director on May 3rd! Andrea Traskos, currently our Volunteer Coordinator, will be stepping into the role of Program Director. I trust that you will be as supportive of her as you were to me when I started in this position. This seems like the right time to tell you how much I have appreciated you for your continued commitment to service through RSVP. You have been inspiring, courageous, thoughtful, and considerate. I've enjoyed the opportunity to work with you for the past six years and appreciate all that I have learned from you. Through this position, I've had the honor of working with people who have shared their wisdom and experience in ways that have made our community stronger and better. I leave you with this thought from [www.everydayheroes.life](http://www.everydayheroes.life):

*"The Everyday Hero is the person who smiles at you on an off day. It is the war veteran fighting for freedom and equality for all. As well, it's your friend, parent, or mentor sacrificing for your happiness. The Everyday Hero is within every single human being on this planet, and is expressed by simple, ordinary actions. Heroes do simple acts; of kindness, courage, and love."*

Thank you for being Everyday Heroes!

—Peggy Harless

## NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

April 15 through April 21 was National Volunteer Week! RSVP celebrated some of our wonderful volunteers by visiting a few of our service locations and recognizing our RSVP volunteers. We got to see how volunteers served and what inspires them to volunteer. Thank you to all RSVP volunteers who make a difference in our communities. It is really amazing to see the impact of your service!

Take a look at what some of our RSVP volunteers had to say:

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Visit us at [www.csswashtenaw.org](http://www.csswashtenaw.org).



# NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

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## **DELORIS NOTTEN** **MANCHESTER COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER FOOD PANTRY**

"I've been with the CRC for five months, since serving at the St. Joseph Mercy Chelsea Hospital. I enjoy volunteering at the food pantry. I have a medical background which helps me to

have good communication with others and help families know they are not alone. I feel that I've made a difference in the lives of the people we serve. I know that others do care and thank us for our service. I encourage others to continue to stay active in your community."

The Manchester CRC supports and enhances the welfare of individuals and families in the Manchester area by volunteerism, referrals, emergency financial assistance, and food programs. At the CRC, volunteers help sort and stock pantry goods and assist low-income household shoppers at the food pantry. In a given week, the food pantry serves ten unique households in the area. Volunteers spend time sorting and stocking food, as well as helping shoppers as they choose nutritious items through the food pantry.



Deloris Notten



Judy Parker & Andrea Traskos prepare meals for Milan Seniors

"I feel good about giving back to this community. After thirty-seven years, I love it here and will probably stay indefinitely. At some point, no doubt, I could need assistance to stay in my own home." Judy is sometimes joined by her husband Gordon, who primarily serves at Aid in Milan.

## **JUDY PARKER** **MILAN SENIORS FOR HEALTHY LIVING** **MEAL PREPARATION FOR HOMEBOUND SENIORS**

Through the Senior Nutrition Program at Milan Seniors for Healthy Living, volunteers prepare, package, and deliver Meals on Wheels to homebound seniors Monday through Friday. Approximately 165 meals are delivered per week. Volunteers assist with food arrival, sorting, preparation, and delivery.

### **Win RSVP Swag!**

Refer a friend to join RSVP and you'll be entered to win some RSVP swag! Your friend must give your name and sign up with RSVP. After completing 1 month of service (4+ hours), you'll get some exciting RSVP swag!

### **Congratulations!**

To Nancy R. for winning the RSVP Surprise Prize last Quarter! Nancy won some RSVP swag including a water bottle, a pedometer and a Meijer gift card.



**BETH DEMERITT  
YPSILANTI MUSIC  
MAKER'S GROUP  
BRINGING MUSIC  
TO SENIORS**

"I was doing my Bible story or reading a book at the Ypsilanti Township Community Center when Donna Hewitt and the Music Makers convinced me to join their group. They restored my love of music and



confidence to play instruments and sing. I now play the tambourine, spoon, train whistle, etc. We play once a month at several nursing homes. The people especially like to hear the spoons... and have even asked for the spoon lady to stand up. Our group is like a family, and we often have lunch together or go to my house for a potluck and a movie. These volunteers have become some of my best friends. I'm so thankful for this group and activity in my life."

—Beth DeMeritt

You can catch the Ypsilanti Music Maker's Group at the Ypsilanti Township Community Center and around the county performing at local senior living communities and nursing homes.

"Every Friday morning, dedicated volunteers at the Saline Area Senior Center (SASC) gather to sort through and hand out donated bread from Panera and Ed's Bread to SASC members. They then take the donations to Mill Pond Manor and Liberty School. The Bread Program has run for fifteen years, and the volunteers donate about six hundred hours of their time throughout the year."

—Megan Kenyon, Program Coordinator, SASC.

**MEGAN KENYON  
AL BLEECHER  
SALINE AREA  
SENIOR CENTER**



*Al Beecher, Judith Slater, Carole Lewis, Charles Jeffries, Barbara Beecher, Bette Rae, Virginia Drexler, Elsie Reynolds (left to right)*

"I like the idea of picking up the bread and bringing it back. I like talking with the people and members who come into the Saline Area Senior Center. I enjoy taking bread over to

Liberty School. There's a program over there called the Liberty Club Saline Young Adult Program, where they focus on maintaining independence and learning academics to help gain information to help in their own life experiences. We also enjoy taking Panera products over to Mill Pond apartments, subsidized housing for seniors. Both are appreciative of receiving bread products, especially when we take them to people who do not have a way to get out in the community or who do not have a car. On rare days, if the center is closed due to a snowstorm, we take the bread products over to Michigan Ability Partners in Ann Arbor, as well. We are a team. I really enjoy working with everyone in the kitchen. We've all become really good friends. These are a bunch of good-hearted people who really enjoy coming in every Friday morning to help distribute and go through the bread. It really is a great team effort. If someone is thinking about being a volunteer, I say go for it! Being a volunteer means you have endless possibilities to help others in your community. There's always a place or organization who could use the extra support." —Al Beecher



# VOLUNTEERING: THE HAPPINESS EFFECT

Simple Changes, Big Rewards: A Practical, Easy Guide for Healthy, Happy Living  
Harvard Health Publications



A study at the London School of Economics analyzed the cause and effect of volunteerism and happiness in a large group of American adults. Researchers found that the more test-subjects volunteered, the happier they were. Those who served monthly saw their happiness increase by 7%; those who served every two to four weeks increased by 12%. Volunteering does have its benefits—it connects you to others, it's good for your mind and body, and it brings fun and fulfillment to your life.

Reasons to volunteer:

- Make it better around where I live
- Meet people who are different from me
- Try something new
- Do something with my spare time
- See a different way of life and new places
- Have a go at the type of work I might want to do as a full-time job
- Do more with my interests and hobbies
- Do something I'm good at
- Give back to my community
- Share my wisdom, skills and experience

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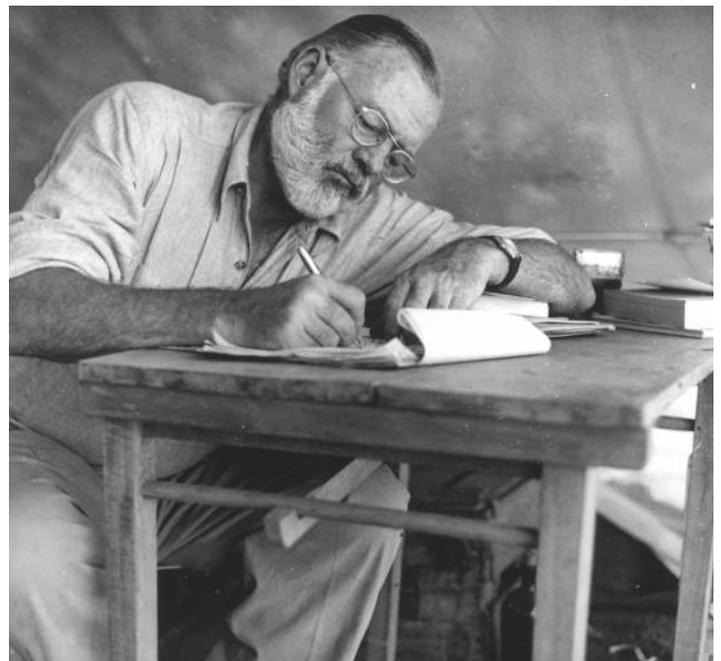
## ATTENTION ALL RSVP VOLUNTEERS

### Update Form Needed by July 5, 2018

Help us ensure that we have current information about you and your service by completing the enclosed Update Information Form. This is needed so we can provide you with supplemental accident and liability insurance coverage at no cost to you! Please return the completed form to our office by July 5, 2018.

Call us at 734-712-4325 if you have any questions.

Thank you!





# OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED

## Share Skills and Talents

Be an activity assistant, pianist, pet therapist, or musician at senior living communities.

**Visit a Homebound Senior** Provide a break for caregivers as you discuss history & current events, listen to music, chat over meals, or play cards. Background check required. Training provided. No direct care is involved.

**Food Distribution** Drive and deliver food on scheduled routes, prepare meals, help at a food pantry or warehouse.

**Farmers Market** Greet and assist local vendors, conduct surveys, help with activities, take photos, provide information about food assistance.

**Growing Hope Market** needs new volunteers who are 55 and better on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

Opportunities include:

- Greet and count customers
- Assist local vendors
- Assist with market logistics
- Assist with interactive activities and surveys
- Set up and monitor kids' table activities
- Take photos and videos
- Provide customers with information about how to access food assistance at markets

**Visit a Veteran** Talk, listen, and engage while you give a Veteran's caregiver a much-needed break. No direct care. Background check required. Training provided.

**Insurance Counseling** Assist retirees and seniors with filling out applications and claim forms. Explain Medicare or Medicaid insurance options. Training provided.

**Medical Support** Help restock a medical clinic exam room each week (table paper, gauze, tongue depressors, soap & hand sanitizer, etc.). Assist with storage room organization and maintenance, for 2 hours a week.  
*Medical Professionals:* Assist with rooming patients (getting vitals, medication reconciliation, assisting clinicians).  
*Nurses:* Do chart reviews (intakes and outtakes).  
*Pharmacy Techs:* Work in the pharmaceutical dispensary.

**Hospital Welcome Ambassador** Greet and assist patients and guests navigating the hospital. Must be able to push wheelchairs and walk distances easily. Wayfinding & Service Excellence Standard Training provided.

**Tinkerers, Do-it-Yourselfers, and Repairers** *Tool Time* volunteers assist older adults in and around their home. Tasks may include: changing light bulbs, painting, raking leaves, or checking smoke alarms. Should commit to 2-6 hours per week. Background check required. Training and equipment provided.

**Front Desk volunteers** needed at SOS Community Services in Ypsilanti.

## Ypsilanti Historical Society

Be a docent—educate the community and support the museum.

Keep up with the latest opportunities at:  
[www.volunteerwashtenaw.org](http://www.volunteerwashtenaw.org)  
Click **RSVP: Senior Volunteering** on the left.





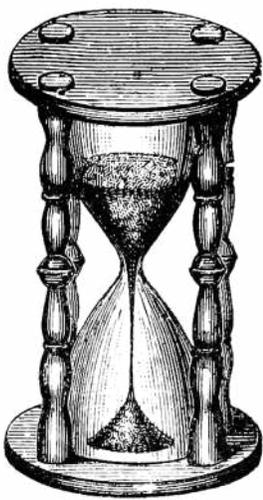
## JUNE IS FRUIT & VEGGIES MONTH

Join Growing Hope & RSVP for  
**SENIOR DAY**  
The Farmer's Market  
6 South Washington St.  
Downtown Ypsilanti  
**Tuesday June 26**  
**3:00 PM**

Stroll through the Farmers Market, enjoy a "Plant a Seed and Learn" class with a take-home project, find new volunteer opportunities, and learn about community resources for seniors.

Senior Day will be held outside and inside the Farmers Market building at 6 S. Washington St. To learn more about this event call 734-712-4325 or email [rsvp@csswashtenaw.org](mailto:rsvp@csswashtenaw.org).

## HOURS



Thank you to those of you who submitted your monthly service hours!

Remember, if you don't report hours, we don't know you're serving! Please take the time to report the hours you serve in Washtenaw County. As a federally-funded program, RSVP must abide by the accountability and compliance guidelines and standards set by governmental agencies. By reporting hours by the 5th of each month, you make our work *possible*.

Reporting hours also keeps RSVP volunteers insured. If we have no written documentation of your hours, our supplemental insurance policy will not cover any injuries or other mishaps you may experience.

Only those volunteers who are serving in the current year are eligible to enjoy the benefits of RSVP, such as supplemental insurance, recognition events and the newsletter. Help us reach 100% participation!

We are flexible and will work with you to make reporting your hours as easy as possible. Call us at 734-712-4325 if you have any questions. Thank you!

Volunteer Hours Due Monthly, on the 5th  
Email hours to [rsvp@csswashtenaw.org](mailto:rsvp@csswashtenaw.org)



# SAVE THE DATE!

Calling all RSVP Heroes to **The Annual Luncheon!**

Wednesday, September 12, 2018  
11:30 AM - 1:30 PM



We invite our real-life superheroes (RSVP Volunteers) to join us for a fun luncheon and raffle. We want to thank all RSVP volunteers for making an impact in our communities. Invitation to follow.

## COLD BODIES WARM HEARTS T-SHIRT DRIVE

What began as a simple suggestion for a sock drive morphed into a t-shirt drive for the veterans at the Ann Arbor VA. Kameron, an intern serving with CSSW, took the lead on this project. Kameron worked with building managers on Eastern Michigan University's campus and made arrangements to set up donation boxes for collecting T-shirts at the Student Center, Best Hall, Downing Hall, Wise Hall, and the REC/IM. He also arranged for boxes to be placed at the senior centers located in Dexter, Saline, and Ypsilanti.

Kameron explained, "During the course of this project I have learned some things about myself. I learned that I have the capability of networking with others to assist me when it comes to projects such as these. Another aspect I learned about myself is my willingness to ask for help and my ability in making advertisements, I've also taken note of my leadership abilities and organizational skills. We collected 60 T-shirts! To those that donated, we humbly thank and appreciate you".





5361 McAuley Dr.  
Ypsilanti, MI 48197  
734-712-4325

[www.csswashtenaw.org/rsvp](http://www.csswashtenaw.org/rsvp)

For RSVP email updates, email  
[rsvp@csswashtenaw.org](mailto:rsvp@csswashtenaw.org)



# RSVP

## RSVP Mission

RSVP is America's largest volunteer network for people aged 55 and over.

## Join RSVP

and you join over 250,000 volunteers across the country who are tackling tough issues in their communities.

RSVP of Washtenaw County assists with placing volunteers age 55 and better who are interested in contributing their time and talents to serve local nonprofit organizations.

To ensure a mutually beneficial experience, the program considers the skills and interests of each volunteer when arranging placements.

## Member Benefits

- Opportunity to share talents
- Placement assistance
- RSVP Newsletter
- Recognition for service
- Free supplemental accident, excess auto liability, and personal liability insurance

## Staff

### Peggy Harless

RSVP Program Director

734.712.2586

[pharless@csswashtenaw.org](mailto:pharless@csswashtenaw.org)

### Andrea Traskos

RSVP Volunteer Coordinator

734.712.4325

[atraskos@csswashtenaw.org](mailto:atraskos@csswashtenaw.org)

## Advisory Council

Beverly Conatser

Linda Klimach

Christy Learman

Darlene Leifson

Alia Onawola

Moncia Prince