



Retired
Senior
Volunteer
Program

Heroes of COMPASSION

Seniors Living, Loving, and Giving for a Better Community



Shirley McKinney, a long-time volunteer at the Harrah Senior Citizens Center, answers phone calls while fellow RSVP of Central Oklahoma volunteers are busy in the kitchen, moving in a swift, rhythmic-like motion.

She has volunteered with the Center for 23 years. In fact, she says, she started volunteering before she was even a senior herself and has done a little bit of everything. She has served on the board and filled out daily nutrition program reports, as well as ordered food, prepared meals, and sold dinner and auction tickets, to name only a few things.

“I think being able to help others is one way to do things for the Lord,” Shirley said.

Retiring from AT&T after 34 years of service,

THE GIFT OF

CONNECTION DURING COVID

“Being here for me is like having another family.”

Shirley said she was used to a busy, fulltime schedule and stepped into volunteering in almost the same manner. She volunteers every weekday, about 1,200 hours a year, and is described as “irreplaceable” by the current and former long-time Center directors. She’s accumulated 24, 698 hours with Harrah Senior Center as an RSVP volunteer .

“Being here for me, and for a lot of seniors, is like having another family,” she said. “It helps people to have a place to go to and get out among people. That’s why it’s been so important to stay connected with our seniors during COVID. The Center helps people to not be so lonely.”

If you would like to learn more about becoming a volunteer, contact Laura McPheeters at laura.mcpheeters@rsvpokc.org or call 405-605-3110.



library that comes to the apartment, and watches her favorite television station, PBS.

“We are all trying to do what we can and I feel so badly for those in the hospital or who have lost loved ones.”

While the Provide-A-Ride (PAR) program was suspended, she depended on a friend to take her to doctor’s appointments and other errands. Laverne, who is 79 and has been a PAR client since 2004, was happy to know the program reopened in September and looks forward to resuming rides for future doctor’s appointments.

“In all the years I’ve been with RSVP, I’ve had wonderful, reliable volunteer drivers,” she said. “It’s a miracle that people are there to volunteer their time and service. It’s really a life-saving program for seniors who don’t drive.”

To learn more about PAR, contact April Lucas at april.lucas@rsvpokc.org or call 405-605-3106.

I Am Thankful for PROVIDE-A-RIDE

Laverne Lippen has lived as most seniors have these past few months during COVID-19 — with her circle of activity drawn in a little tighter. Visits with friends at Isenbart Trinity Gardens Senior Center, where she lives, are in the hall instead of in each other’s apartments, she checks out books from the mobile

PARTNER AGENCY HIGHLIGHT

Since the pandemic, the Harrah Senior Citizen Center’s five volunteers, all seniors themselves, and four staff members have not skipped a beat.

When COVID-19 hit, the Center closed for gatherings, but the small but mighty team shifted into high gear, meeting a big need in their community for seniors now stuck at home—meals.



“We went from serving 60 meals a day before COVID to preparing 100 meals a day for delivery and drive-by pickup,” said Harrah Senior Citizens Center Director Kim Reynolds. “And our volunteers have showed up every day.”

In August, the Center served more than 3,200 meals. The ability to meet this continuing need is possible only with the help of the volunteers, staff, and the financial support of the Oklahoma County Nutrition Program, the City of Harrah and Areawide Aging Agency, said Reynolds.

Volunteers make phone calls to check in with the homebound seniors. Some of the programs



have recently opened back up—medical appointments and shopping trips, and patio bingo just started. Reynolds hopes that the Center will be completely reopened by early November.

“It is a very important social connection for our seniors,” said Reynolds. “If we weren’t here during this time, I’m concerned we would have lost some of our seniors.”

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT

Junior Achievement is the nation’s largest organization dedicated to “giving young people the knowledge and skills they need to own their economic success, plan for their futures, and make smart academic and economic choices.” Virtual volunteer opportunities for JA for the school year of 2020-2021 include:

Record a Career Speaker Video
A volunteer will share their career story, expertise, career path, etc. Average time of a career speaker video is 5-10 minutes and will be shared with local schools as well as the JA USA library of videos.

“Beam In” Volunteer
Volunteers will “beam in” to the classroom via zoom or google meets, to lead one 10-20 minute session (curriculum and training is provided!)

“Virtual Remote Live”
For middle or high school, volunteers will virtually teach one 30-45 minute lesson a week (just like typical, in-person visits) with the help of the classroom teacher and using the curriculum kit!

OK Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

Be an Oklahoma Telephone



Be the **Mentor** you needed as a child.

Reader Volunteer! The Oklahoma Telephone Reader is an on-demand dial-up information service of the OK Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped intended for use by anyone with a disability that prevents them from reading standard print materials.

Seven Days a week, volunteers from all over Oklahoma record articles from “The Oklahoman”, “Tulsa World”, and other publications including news, editorials, sports, grocery advertisements, obituaries, and a variety of other information not normally available on radio or television into the OTR system.

Volunteers can record at the library, from their workplace, or from their home or cell phone. “The amount of time a volunteer dedicates to the service is flexible, but every hour spent working for the service helps open up the world to our library patrons”

Post Adjudication Review Board (P.A.R.B.)

P.A.R.B. is a group of informed local citizens that review juvenile court cases where a child has

been removed from their home due to abuse or neglect of the child, working with the court in an advisory capacity by making recommendations focused on ensuring the best interests of the child are met. There are currently several boards with openings on them. While meetings are currently virtual, training is being offered either virtually or in-office. Volunteers can expect to spend 2-3 hours a month reviewing and/or collecting information to aid in the review, to help identify and remove barriers for kids in need!



QUESTIONS? I’M HERE TO HELP!

Laura McPheeters
Volunteer Coordinator
405-605-3110



YOU ARE **HOPE** IN OUR COMMUNITY

If we've learned anything from 2020, it's to value what we have right in front of us, this moment. We can't predict the future. I've noticed that fear is "at-large" as these unpredictable times seem to drag on.

HOWEVER...I've also seen an amazing light emerge in 2020. The light that **you**, our volunteers, have been spreading through the community. I hear stories of conversations you're having, connections you are making. I hear how you volunteer virtually and in person, how you adapt and innovate, so that you can continue to serve and to lift the community around you.

In a time where most people feel they don't get to connect to many people daily, and are advised to "keep a 6 foot distance", it's easy to feel separated, isolated, and alone. But I know something about the RSVP volunteers, you are a hardy bunch. You don't quit easily. You see the bigger good, and you have been working with hope in a brighter future. I see you. And the community does too.

We are working hard at RSVP to continue to provide safe, protected ways for you to volunteer, and I thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for your persistence to do good for so many. Thank you for all you continue to do, as volunteers, as drivers, as donor and friends. You are very, very needed.

Beth Patterson

Beth Patterson
Executive Director



In Fond Remembrance

In loving memory of our volunteers whose generosity in service touched all our lives.

*Deanna Dillingham
Jo Gilmore*

A proud partner of:



Congratulations to
ODESSA ROSS

(600 Hours this quarter!)

winner of the hours drawing.

Enjoy your gift card!

FOLLOW US AND LIKE US!



**BELIEVE
IN THE
GOOD** ♥

**In a time when it's easy to
focus on the bad**

**We want to remind you to
believe in the good**

DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ You have spent *thousands* of hours volunteering each month, making our community better...through food pantries, tutoring, museums, libraries, children's services, veterans, tech programs and more than 80 locations all over our city.
- ▶ Your gifts of \$25 have provided *hundreds* of rides for seniors like Laverne (story pg. 2) so they can continue to live independently.

LOOK AT ALL THE GOOD YOU DO! KEEP IT UP!