



Heroes of COMPASSION

Seniors Living, Loving, and Giving for a Better Community



Volunteering Improves Mental Health & Combats Loneliness

We have heard, personally, the stories from our volunteers of how helping others in the community has helped with grief, loneliness, purpose, and isolation. Our volunteer Jim Buratti shares with us his list of why he loves to volunteer and the many ways it helps with good mental, physical, and societal health. Thank you, Jim, for helping us to share the good news!

To learn more about how to volunteer contact Laura McRaniels at 405-605-3110.



Why I love volunteering, let me count the ways.

By Jim Buratti

1. Keeps the brain healthy, contributes to mental health, & other helpful, healthy benefits.
2. Meaningful & productive activity.
3. Makes you feel happier.
4. Lowers the risk of dementia.
5. Prevents loneliness & isolation.
6. Meet new friends.
7. Bridges the generation gap; interact with younger people.
8. Learn new skills.
9. Strengthens the community.
10. Gives a chance to give back.
11. Gain knowledge & understanding of other ways of life.
12. Focus on someone other than yourself.
13. Get out of the house.
14. Gives a chance to tell stories.
15. Sets an example for your family of the importance of volunteering.

Carpenter Dan Griffin

Building Community Through Volunteering



Dan Griffin, Volunteer

RSVP volunteer Dan Griffin, Oklahoma City, takes his years of experience and skill as a carpenter to help improve the homes of lower-income older adults in his community.

Through Rebuilding Together, Dan builds handicapped-compliant ramps for wheelchair-bound seniors' homes.

"There's satisfaction in helping and being able to walk away from a house and say, 'I helped build that one'," Dan said. "I was able to do that for a lot of years in the construction business. It was nice to drive down the highway and say, 'I built that building'. It's a little bit of a continuation of that satisfaction and gratification that I get using my skills."

Dan worked in commercial construction in Colorado for 20 years and after moving to Oklahoma, worked in maintenance for the Putnam City School System for 30 years.

As a retired person, and someone who lost his spouse six years ago, volunteering gives Dan a reason to get up and out of the house, he

said, and keeps him connected. In addition to Rebuilding Together, he volunteers with the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, and the Oklahoma State Fair. He also stays active with his family.



Dan Griffin, volunteering with Rebuilding Together.

Dan described a picture he saw on social media about retirement. It was of a clock, but instead of having the hours it had the days of the week: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday.

"All of a sudden, when you're retired, you have all these days to fill," he said. "Volunteering helps to fill those days. If I have at least one scheduled event per day, I'm excited to get up and out of the door."

**Interested in volunteering?
Contact Laura McRaniels
at 405-605-3110.**

Partner Agency Highlight

Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

Too many Oklahomans lose a big part of their lives when they give up trying to read due to vision disabilities or physical limitations. The Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped has a free way to enjoy books, newspapers, and magazines again by downloading digital audiobooks or having them delivered in the mail. Oklahoma subjects and books by Oklahoma authors are produced by OLBPH's award-winning digital recording studio.



Volunteer pictured at the OLBPH recording studio.

A small staff of only four, volunteers are such an important part of OLBPH's mission.

"There is no way we could get as many books or new articles out without our volunteers. We are always looking for people to come to help us out, said Kat Jenson, OLBPH Studio Director.

At this time, OLBPH is looking for volunteer editors, and narrators from diverse backgrounds to add authenticity to the productions.

Connecting Volunteers with Community Opportunities



SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital - Hospice Home Health

Through love and support, SSM Hospice helps patients and families during trials and tribulations. Volunteers provide support services to Hospice patients/families such as caregiver relief, companionship, errands, and other duties as suit the availability, preferences, and skills of the volunteer.

YWCA

YWCA's vision is to provide care and hope to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking in central Oklahoma. Our Sisters' Closet is a high-quality resale shop that provides funding to YWCA OKC through a sustainable source of revenue. When clients need clothing items, they are able to shop at the Closet for free.

Volunteers opportunities:

- Sort donations

- Stock the sales floor
- Help keep the shop clean and organized
- Administrative
- Advocacy and Education
- Special Events

Skyline

Skyline is on a mission to serve those living in the shadows of our community by bridging the gaps in their resources with kindness and respect. Together, we can achieve a transformed community where all Oklahomans are able to access the resources that meet their most basic needs.

Volunteer opportunities:

- Food Resource Center- Stocking, Greeting and Intake, Shopping Assistant
- Garden Program
- Eye Clinic - Exam Scheduler, Clinic Receptionist
- Style Shop - Receiving/ Processing, Stocking, Intake and Registration, Shopping Assistant



LEARN MORE

We have seen lives changed because of volunteering--older adults feel fulfilled, needed, and know that they are making a difference.

That's what we offer at RSVP of Central Oklahoma.

To learn more about volunteering contact Assistant Director Laura McRaniels at 405-605-3110 or email laura.mcraniels@rsvpokc.org

RSVP PHOTO CONTEST



We want to see photos of you in action, making a positive impact in the community!

#NeighborsHelpingNeighbors

To enter, simply take a photo of yourself, your spouse, or your friends while you're volunteering.

Be sure to include your name, the agency you are serving at, and what you are doing!

For each individual photo you submit, your name will be entered into a drawing for a \$75 prize. There will also be a \$50 prize for best overall photo!

Submit photos by Aug. 4th to laura.mcraniels@rsvpokc.org or on social media using hashtag: #NeighborsHelpingNeighbors



Creating Connection

In May we recognized Older American's Month as well as Mental Health Awareness Month. During that same month, a report was released by the Surgeon General that warns about the crisis in our nation of loneliness, isolation, and disconnection. The report said that approximately half (you read that right, half!) of U.S. adults are experiencing loneliness. Being disconnected affects our health, mentally,

physically, and societally. Hearing that report makes us even more determined about preaching the benefits of volunteering.

We have watched how volunteering enhances lives. It reduces anxiety and depression and increases dopamine...I call it the helper's high. Volunteers make new friends, get to use their skills and knowledge, and have something to look forward to each week that challenges them.

Help us spread the word! Tell your neighbors and friends who are 55+ that there is a whole new world open to them once they start volunteering in the community.

This year we are celebrating our 50th birthday and feel so grateful to be a part of the solution in our community of helping older adults feel a sense of well-being and connection. We hope you will join us for our upcoming volunteer appreciation/50th birthday celebration in September.

Beth Patterson,
Executive Director



In Fond Remembrance

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

Judith Ticer

A proud partner of:



Congratulations to
Nona Parrott

winner of the hours drawing.
Enjoy your gift card!

Follow us and Like us!



Provide-A-Ride: That's a Wrap!

We marked the ending of our Provide-A-Ride program in April and had the privilege of saying "thank you" to volunteer

drivers and other supporters. In the 30 years PAR operated, 335 volunteer drivers provided 1,330 low-income, elderly clients nearly 135,000 rides to their doctor appointments.

We are helping our former PAR volunteers find new opportunities in the community. We appreciate a recent compliment EMBARK paid us in a letter, reinforcing the pride we have in the legacy our volunteers helped to create.

"RSVP Provide-A-Ride and the RSVP team have been fantastic partners to EMBARK and our mobility services. Your ongoing support has been instrumental in the evolution of transportation solutions to improve access for all. The mobility landscape in Oklahoma City is better because of your work."

Thank you! We have such gratitude for the partnerships and friendships we developed over the years.

