



Heroes of COMPASSION

Getting Things Done Since 1973

Fall 2024

Celebrating Your Service & Impact



1. The First Annual RSVP Volunteer Fair
2. At Ease the Band, jazz ensemble of the 395th Army Band
3. RSVP Volunteers Pat Hobbs and Evelyn Spriggs
4. Reverend Dr. George Young, OK Senate District 48
5. Rachel Holt, President & CEO of United Way of Central Oklahoma; Karen Jacobs, RSVP of Central OK Board & Advisory Council; and Laura McRaniels, RSVP of Central OK Executive Director

On Thursday, October 3, RSVP of Central Oklahoma was honored to be able to formally celebrate and recognize the efforts and impact of YOU, our precious volunteers! This year's volunteer appreciation luncheon was held at the MetroTech Springlake Campus Conference Center, and featured a first-ever Volunteer Resource Fair, live music by the 395th Army Band's jazz ensemble, "At Ease the Band," food from Rococo, door prizes, and encouraging words from Reverend Dr. George E. Young, RSVP of Central Oklahoma Director Laura McRaniels, Volunteer Coordinator Jamie Williams, and Outreach Coordinator Andrea Post. Over 150 volunteers, twelve community partner agencies, and other supporters attended.

A special thanks goes to all the following people and groups who made this celebration possible:

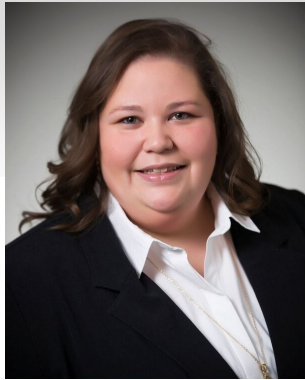
- ★ **MetroTech** (especially Tessa, Carmen, and Gloria)
- ★ **At Ease the Band and the members of the 395th Army Band**
- ★ **Rococo** (especially Mac)
- ★ **Reverend Dr. George E. Young, Oklahoma Senate - District 48**
- ★ **Members of the RSVP Advisory Council and Production Team: Karen Jacobs, Betsy Fry, Terry & Susan Smith, Jim Watson, Doug and Anjel Miesse, Cecilia Taft, along with Pat Hobbs and Faye Henson.**

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Introducing the RSVP of Central Oklahoma, Inc. 2024-2026 Board of Directors

Tena Slaughter, President

Tena Slaughter retired from OG&E after 39 1/2 years of service. While at OG&E she worked in various areas and her last position was Community Relations Coordinator for Oklahoma and Logan counties, which provided support for nonprofits and schools. In addition to currently serving on the RSVP of Central Oklahoma board, she serves on the boards of Areawide Aging Agency Advisory Council, March of Dimes and Our Kidz United. While at OG&E she served on the boards of Community Action Agency, Oklahoma Alliance Boys/Girls Club, Big Brothers Big Sisters, United Way of Logan County, Black Chamber of Commerce and Salvation Army Boys/Girls Club Advisory Council. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Management and Human Resources and an Associate Degree in Management and Marketing. She is a member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. and is a certified basketball and volleyball official. She has one son and three grandchildren.



Laura Gutierrez, Vice President

Laura Gutierrez is the Director of Business Administration at Neighborhood Services Organization (NSO), a non-profit that has served the at-risk and homeless populations of Oklahoma City for over 100 years. Since joining NSO in 2002, Laura has contributed to multiple programs, including the dental clinic and rent/mortgage assistance initiatives. She holds a mini-MBA certificate and a certification in non-profit management, as well as a dental assisting permit. In addition to her role at NSO, Laura is active in the dental community, serving on the boards of the Charitable Clinic Association and the Oklahoma Dental Assistant Association.

She has also held leadership roles within the Oklahoma Society of Dental Assistants since 2016. Laura is excited about bringing her expertise to RSVP and is grateful for the opportunity to support such a meaningful organization.

Tips for Staying Safe this Winter

from Debi Wagner, Emergency Manager for the City of Midwest City

- * Stock your car with a blanket, water, snacks, jumper cables, fire extinguisher, extra clothes, and a phone charger in case you become stranded. Carry a bag of playground sand or kitty litter and a small shovel for traction.
- * Dress in layers for extreme cold, including socks and gloves.
- * Do not use a gas stove to heat your home, and always use generators outside.
- * Have your fireplace serviced before the winter season.
- * If you're going out of town for the holidays, wait until you return to post anything on social media-don't advertise to thieves that you won't be home.
- * Keep potentially poisonous plants such as mistletoe, holly berries, and poinsettias away from children and pets.
- * Help prevent the spread of the flu. Stay home if you're sick. Wash hands with soap and water as often as possible, or use an alcohol-based hand rub. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing, and throw the tissue away after use. If a tissue isn't available, cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands.



Karen Jacobs, Secretary and Liaison to the Advisory Council

Karen Jacobs retired from the Oklahoma Department of Human Services after 45 years with the Office of Community and Faith Engagement. She has led and served on many civic boards and groups, including as President of the Ralph Ellison Foundation, Chair of the Infant Mortality Alliance, Chair of the NEOKC Food Resource Center Fundraising Committee, and member of the Interfaith Alliance Community & Social Action Committee, DV Partners for Change Planning Committee, Star Spencer High School FCCLA Advisory Board, Stroud Community in Action Committee, and Lincoln County "Unity in the Community" Coordinators Committee. At RSVP, she serves as Secretary to the Board of Directors and Chairperson of the Advisory Council, and is the liaison between both. She helps guide the Advisory Council in its work to support the RSVP Volunteer Recruitment & Placement Program and is a driving force behind the annual RSVP Volunteer Recognition event. Karen also helps coordinate the NEOKC Community Collaborative and connected RSVP with their annual Holiday Food Drive.

Maria Martinez

Maria is the Community Outreach Specialist with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Oklahoma. She holds a bachelor's degree in family studies from Southern Nazarene University. She serves on the board of Possibilities Inc., Calm Waters, serving on the fundraising committee, and the United Way, serving on the allocation committee. She has been a member of the Calle Dos Cinco civic group and served on the Citizens Advisory Board for the City of Oklahoma City. She has been a volunteer at Hilltop Pediatrics and the Integris Mobile Clinic. She and her husband, Cesar, have three children: Alejandra, Adrianna, and Cesar.



RSVP would like to thank the 2022-2024 RSVP Board of Directors for their guidance and service, and thank outgoing members Kathleen O'Toole, Marla Mercer-Cole, Tara Bradley, Kim McAllister, and Wanda Patrick.

Do you know a non-profit community leader who would be interested in serving on our Board of Directors? Please send nominations to: Laura McRaniels, Executive Director, by email: laura.mcraniels@rsvpokc.org

- * Be a lifesaver during the holidays. The Red Cross recommends at least one person in every household should take first aid and CPR/AED training. Visit www.redcross.org/take-a-class for details.
- * If using an artificial tree, be sure it is labeled fire resistant. If using a live tree, cut off a few inches from the bottom of the trunk for better water absorption. Place your tree at least 3 feet from fireplaces or heat sources.
- * Use the correct type of lighting for indoors and outdoors, and do not overload sockets.
- * Never leave burning candles or fireplaces unattended. Don't burn wrapping paper, trees, or wreaths in the fireplace.
- * Designate a sober driver for each holiday event. Plan for heavy traffic and leave early. If you're the driver, be sure everyone is buckled up, and put your cell phone away.
- * Don't advertise expensive toys, electronics, or other gifts received by the boxes left for garbage collections. Compress large boxes and place them in black garbage bags for pick-up or recycling.
- * Keep a home inventory of valuables, and add any new gifts received promptly.

Celebrating your Service & Impact, continued

Thank you also to the sponsors and supporting partner agencies who made the 51st Annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon & Volunteer Fair possible, including:

- ★ Mercer Adams Funeral Service
- ★ SSM Health/St. Anthony
- ★ Credit Union One of Oklahoma
- ★ DWG CPA/David Gandall
- ★ OG&E
- ★ The Spero Project
- ★ Tinker Federal Credit Union
- ★ Mid Del Food Pantry
- ★ Precision Optical
- ★ FryPan Partners
- ★ Daily Living Centers
- ★ Infant Crisis Services
- ★ ITN Central Oklahoma
- ★ Metropolitan Library System
- ★ Oklahoma Conservation Commission & Oklahoma County Conservation District along with Oklahoma Blue Thumb
- ★ Read OKC/Oklahoma City Public Schools Foundation
- ★ Skyline
- ★ Upward Transitions/Travelers Aid
- ★ YMCA Military Welcome Center



We hope to see you all again at the 2025 Volunteer Recognition event!

Save the Date!

RSVP Cookie Exchange & Volunteer Social

Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2024

Look for details in the December **RSVP** Response

In Fond Remembrance

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

Charlene Veazey

A proud partner of:



Congratulations to:

John Houston

winner of the hours drawing.

Enjoy your gift card!

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Giving to our Oklahoma City Community Foundation Endowment Fund ensures the support of our mission as long as it is needed. Call (405) 605-3110 for more information.