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Give the Gift that Keeps on Giving!

Every dollar you donate to Seniors in Service until December 31 will be matched by Suncoast Credit Union up to \$70,000. Your DOUBLED donation will train and mobilize compassionate volunteers who use their talents to transform the lives of children, seniors, veterans, and families throughout Tampa Bay.



People of all ages need to feel socially connected and valued. Yet many adults aged 55 and better struggle after retirement, loss of their spouse, or relocating to our warmer climate. Many who are still vital and energetic feel lonely, wondering: Who am I? What's my purpose? Do I matter?

Did you know loneliness has devastating health consequences, especially for older adults? It can increase the risk of premature death as much as smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day. It is also associated with an increased risk for anxiety, depression, and dementia.

Volunteering is the solution. At Seniors in Service, we specialize in helping older adults reduce or prevent loneliness by engaging them in volunteer opportunities designed to develop meaningful social bonds with others who share common interests.

Then the real magic happens! Our army of 1500+ compassionate, trained volunteers tutor and mentor struggling students, provide companionship for isolated elders, help disheartened veterans access the resources they need for a better life, and provide nutritious meals for hungry families.

Your donation will help older adults feel connected and purposeful, while using their experiences, skills, and passions to improve life for all in our community.

In the following pages, you'll read about the life-changing impact our volunteers have made in 2023 because of donors like you and funding partners like Suncoast Credit Union. Together we can achieve even more! Donate today to change a life.



We are proud to partner with a company like Suncoast Credit Union that represents our shared values. They are passionate about improving life for all Floridians, especially those from traditionally underserved populations. As a financial institution, everything they do is with their members' financial success in mind, from lower rates on loans to their many free services. Suncoast is also committed to giving back to the community. Their outreach programs help seniors and veterans stay protected from scams, socially connected to the community, and living well. They also support educational programs to help kids succeed in school and beyond.



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A Message from Our CEO

Three o'clock is my favorite time of day! Our entire team meets on Zoom to share the exciting, uplifting, or challenging events of the day. We talk about the partners we've met, the obstacles we've overcome, and most importantly, we share stories of how our volunteers make a difference.

I get to hear stories of children succeeding in the classroom, homeless veterans finally being able to move into their own apartments, seniors who were lonely but now have a friend, and volunteers who have improved their health through service to others. I'm inspired by these stories every day.



This impact report is your invitation to experience our 3:00 p.m. meeting. You'll get to read success stories and celebrate our 1500+ volunteers who LOVE what they do. They return day after day, week after week to use their talents to lift up our community. Their ongoing commitment snowballs into thousands of lives being changed, hundreds of inspiring stories, and meaningful, lasting change throughout Tampa Bay.

-Robin Ingles, CEO

Recognized for Outstanding Volunteer Engagement



We are Certified Volunteer Experts!

Seniors in Service joined a prestigious group of nonprofits committed to effectively delivering our mission by strategically engaging volunteer time and talent. This year we completed the Points of Light Service Enterprise Certification, proving to be experts in volunteer engagement. We joined the top 11% of nonprofits nationwide who demonstrate leadership in leveraging skills in the community to increase our capacity to support vulnerable communities through meaningful, intentional service.



Volunteer Ambassadors are Geared Up for Service!

In 2023 we launched Volunteer Ambassadors, an innovative way to engage even more seniors to serve our community! There is no better spokesperson for the benefits of volunteering than seniors with lived experience. These highly trained, passionate representatives of our organization are our eyes and ears in the community. They share their love of volunteering through community presentations and outreach events, recruit volunteers, build new partnerships, and expand the reach of our mission into new communities.

Recognized for Outstanding Service



Operation: Veteran Connect member Keith Smith Recognized as Volunteer Florida's Volunteer of the Year!

Keith Smith is a Vietnam veteran whose name may be ordinary, but his service to his fellow veteran brothers and sisters is anything but. An active member of our Operation: Veteran Connect initiative, Keith demonstrates the power of our 'veterans serving veterans' model, helping veterans who are at risk of homelessness transition to their own apartments. He delivers donated beds and other household essentials to create a comfortable home and give hope that living independently again is possible. When Keith discovered that veterans needed bicycles for transportation to get to work, he immediately sprang into action. He set up a bicycle repair garage, rekindling skills from his youth, and collecting donated bikes throughout the community to repair and put back into use. Recognized as Volunteer Florida's 2023 Volunteer of the Year, Keith shows the power of extraordinary service, helping one veteran at a time achieve a better life.



Classroom Grandparent Barbara Burnett inducted into St. Petersburg's Senior Hall of Fame!

Barbara Burnett was among a select group of St. Petersburg volunteers inducted into the Senior Hall of Fame for their significant contributions toward enriching the quality of life for others. "Grandma" B., as her students lovingly call her, serves over 60 hours every month tutoring children in their classroom. She feels passionately about helping children learn to love reading, so they can succeed in school and beyond. Grandma B's love for serving others extends beyond the classroom and radiates kindness throughout St. Petersburg. Since 2005 she has volunteered at over ten organizations impacting the lives of everyone she meets. She has forever changed the lives of St. Pete residents by being a leader in her church, a wellness advocate, a literacy champion, and a resource for every neighbor. When you cross paths with Grandma B, you have a friend for life.



Seniors in Service Honored as a Florida Blue Foundation Sapphire Award Winner

The Florida Blue Foundation Sapphire Award recognizes outstanding organizations distinguished by exemplary leadership, innovation, and documented outcomes. Their focus this year was on Mental Well-being.

Seniors in Service was proud to be recognized for our multiple innovative community-based solutions for promoting mental well-being, including providing meaningful service opportunities for seniors aged 55+ to improve social connection and sense of purpose. Their service also promotes mental well-being for underserved individuals throughout Tampa Bay, mentoring at-risk children, offering companionship to lonely seniors, providing supportive resources to struggling veterans and nutritious meals to food-insecure families. Our mission to engage seniors as volunteers creates a connected, resilient, supportive community.

This year 1500+ volunteers served over 280,000 hours to transform lives.

Every hour of service has the potential to transform someone's life. Volunteers can create lasting change. We engage 1500+ volunteers who are passionate about sharing their time, talent, and experiences to support others. Each volunteer contributes to a community powered by compassionate, impactful service.



39

Operation: Veteran Connect Members

Helped 6,195 of their fellow veterans access health care, nutritious food, affordable housing, and resources to improve their quality of life.



54 Veterans

Experiencing homelessness now have a place to call home

"I serve to give someone a better day than they had yesterday."

-Dale Menninger
Operation: Veteran Connect
Member and Marine Veteran

237 Classroom Grandparents provided 146,266 hours of tutoring in the classroom

98% of Students

Improved their literacy skills

1,354 Students

Received 1-on-1 tutoring for the entire school year





86 Health Buddies

Provided health coaching and encouragement to help seniors living with chronic conditions self-manage their condition, reducing unnecessary hospital visits

“My Health Buddy has been a true lifesaver for me. I’ve been going through a lot and knowing I have someone who cares about me and enjoys speaking with me has genuinely saved my life.”

- Health Buddies Client

“My client told me I was an angel sent to help him when he needed it. His daughter loves him very much but has small children and is not always available to help her father during the daytime. I love being able to spend time with him so he isn’t so lonely.”

-Ligia Medina,
Senior Companion Volunteer



73

Senior Companions

Provided 48,009 hours of social connection and support for 181 seniors.



Volunteers provided
49,000 Hours

Of emergency food support for hungry families

223

Vulnerable individuals and families were empowered for success through meaningful interventions provided by a Resource Advocate.

Teachers Praise Our Classroom Grandparents

"Grandma Linda is an integral part of the smooth running of my kindergarten classroom. The kids in my classroom gravitate to her nurturing personality and are assured that she is always there to give help and support. She ensures that all the kids are safe, fed and given academic support. Many feel that she is their real grandma. I cannot imagine not having her in my classroom as my children and I would be at a great loss. I remember a particular autistic child who responded to no one but grandma's soothing tones when he had his meltdowns. She would take the time to calm and reassure him that he would be okay. She is endeared to his family to this day."

-Ms. Murray, Robles Elementary

"Ms. P, as we affectionately call her, is a vital part of helping our students feel cared for and confident in themselves so they may learn new skills that are necessary for their academic success. Ms. P works daily with small groups of students in various grades to ensure their understanding of key skills being taught in the classroom. Without Ms. Perkins help with sight words, math fact practice, and comprehension skills checks, our students would not be as successful as they are."

-Ms. Hambrick, Sullivan Partnership School

"Granny B" as the kids call her, is such an asset to our school family. The students' faces light up when she comes into the classroom. They love giving her hugs. She has extreme patience working with our 5 and 6 year olds. She has made an impact by helping students who are below level in reading with their letters and sounds. She also assists with students who need extra support with counting. She even assists with shoe tying, as that seems to be a theme in Kindergarten! A major impact she has had is reading books with students on their level because they might not have someone to read with at home. We love her."

-Ms. Palmeri, Frost Elementary



Catherine Finds New Purpose Through Volunteering

Catherine lives with Multiple Sclerosis (MS), a chronic medical condition. Complications from MS were the impetus for her decision to retire early from a career she loved. After retirement, she kept asking herself, "What's next? What's my purpose?"

She called Seniors in Service, and we connected her with an opportunity to volunteer that accommodated her physical limitations. Catherine shared, "That was one of the best calls I ever made. I feel I am making a difference by serving others. Volunteering for Seniors in Service has given me a new sense of purpose."

Now, as one of our trained Volunteer Ambassadors, Catherine loves to share how volunteering improved her quality of life to help other seniors benefit from volunteering. Her favorite quote is by American poet Addison, "No one is more cherished in this world than someone who lightens the burdens of another."



Senior Companions are Joanne's Lifeline for Independence

Joanne, wants to remain in her own home. Like many at her age, she needs extra support to be able to live independently, but she doesn't have family nearby to help care for her. Our Senior Companion volunteers have been her lifeline.

For over seven years, Senior Companion volunteer Christine Grimes helped Joanne with errands, reading her mail, and light housekeeping. They became close friends, and Joanne didn't know what she would do last year when Christine moved out of state. The friendship Christine and Joanne developed has lasted both the test of time and distance. They talk regularly on the phone, and Christine continues to make sure Joanne is cared for. Their lifelong friendship helps them both.

Joanne's eyesight is failing so she needs someone close by to help her continue to live at home. Pam Green has served as a Senior Companion for over eight years and eagerly stepped in to help. Pam and Joanne became fast friends.

Joanne shared, "Pam opens the world to me. She helps me with my cell phone, reads me my mail and emails, Facebook, and other things. Pam brightens the days she's here and I look forward to her visits. Thank you for sending Pam to me two days a week, she is my eyes."

Thanks to our Senior Companion Program, Joanne now has two compassionate friends who care about her wellbeing and provide the support she needs to remain independent.



Operation: Veteran Connect Creates a Home for Phil

On a bright and sunny Saturday morning, the parking lot of Madison Highlands was bustling with activity as it transformed into a hub of giving. This low-income apartment complex houses a significant 30% veteran population, many of whom have relocated from New Beginnings temporary housing.

Phil, a wheelchair-bound veteran had recently moved from temporary housing into his own apartment but had only a bed to furnish his new home. Thanks to donations collected by our dedicated Operation: Veteran Connect members, he was able to fully stock his apartment with essential food items, kitchenware, utensils, pots and pans, as well as several pieces of furniture.

With a beaming smile on his face, Phil joyfully wheeled around the parking lot, expressing his heartfelt gratitude to each member and volunteer. Their generosity of time and the donated household items from generous community members were a great way to show Phil how much we appreciate the military service that benefited us all.

For veterans experiencing homelessness, navigating the complicated system to receive housing benefits can be overwhelming. Especially when so much of their daily energy is focused on ensuring their immediate needs of food, shelter, and healthcare are met. This year our Operation: Veteran Connect members helped 54 veterans living in temporary housing move into their own apartments. Unfortunately, these apartments are empty, lacking the essential items to make it a livable space. Our members advocated for donations in the community and were able to secure thirty-two beds and provide twenty-nine fully equipped essential apartment move-in kits to settle the veterans in their new homes.





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