



SENIORS in SERVICE
GEARED UP TO SERVE

GEARED UP News

Seniors in Service presents
the News You Need to Know
About Community Service in Tampa Bay

BayCare Partners with Health Buddies to Improve Lives!

BayCare is helping adults with chronic conditions improve their mental and physical wellbeing by providing 3-years of funding for our Health Buddies program. Thanks to their support Health Buddies will provide encouragement and health coaching for 1,240 individuals who struggle with loneliness and isolation due to their chronic health condition. Health Buddies provide friendly, informative phone calls to help individuals improve their health knowledge, decrease preventable hospital visits, and connect to community resources that can improve their quality of life and self-sufficiency.

Do you know someone who could use a Health Buddy? Refer a client or sign up to be a Health Buddy by scanning the QR code!



Scan the QR code here to watch Health Buddy Shelley meet her client Joyce in person for the first time on Spectrum Bay News 9.

We're delighted to introduce Steve Marciano, the latest addition to the Seniors in Service Board of Directors! Steve brings with him a wealth of experience as the Manager of Business Operations at St. Anthonys Hospital, part of the amazing BayCare organization. He is a community leader, collaborator, and innovative thinker. Welcome aboard, Steve! Together, we're ready to create positive impacts and make a difference in the lives of seniors.



SPECTRUM NEWS BN 9



Congratulations to Operation: Veteran Connect Graduates!

Mission accomplished! We proudly honor and recognize the achievements of ten of our most committed Operation: Veteran Connect members, who have dedicated four years of service in assisting Veterans throughout Tampa Bay. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to each of them for their invaluable contributions towards enhancing the quality of life for those who have selflessly served our nation.



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Seniors in Service volunteers are a pillar of Tampa Bay, transforming lives in the communities where they serve. Recently, they shared at our Bridging Generations Breakfast with our partners, supporters, and community leaders how making a difference in their communities helped them step into the best years of their lives.

Raymond Van Loon expressed how hard it was to lose his wife, spending the last six months of her life in hospice care. His experience motivated him to become a hospice volunteer and encourage others through their difficult time. Volunteering has given him a new sense of purpose after losing his wife.

Asleen Griffin shared how she thought she would only volunteer as a Senior Companion for a few weeks to fill a need. Now, 12 years later, she can't imagine giving it up. She loves providing companionship to isolated seniors in her neighborhood.

Arthur Givens explained how volunteering in the schools was never part of his retirement plan, but watching his students' confidence strengthen as he tutors and mentors in the classroom gives him an overwhelming sense of joy.

Our volunteers wake up feeling grateful for another day to make a difference. They see the beauty of the human experience by sharing their knowledge, wisdom, and compassion to mentor and tutor children, provide companionship to seniors, help a struggling veteran rebuild his or her life, and help fight food insecurity in our neighborhoods.

Volunteers who use their lifetime of experiences and wisdom to transform lives are invaluable to our communities, inspiring people everywhere to look for ways to get involved and make a lasting difference. Check out page 5 of this newsletter to get a recap of our Bridging Generations Breakfast and to learn how our volunteers are shaping future generations to come.

-Robin Ingles, CEO

Better Living for Seniors Cares for Elders in Pinellas

Better Living for Seniors Pinellas is helping seniors maintain their independence and overcome isolation by providing a \$2,000 grant to support our Senior Companion Services. Through their support, we are dedicated to helping homebound seniors achieve self-sufficiency and experience joy.



Fostering Lasting Friendship

Our Senior Companions Program connects seniors searching for companionship with enthusiastic volunteers eager to make a difference. Senior Companions not only bring people together but also generate a ripple of change, as evidenced by this heartfelt testimony from Ms. Angela Parker:

"Doris [my Senior Companion volunteer] is like a role model to me. She opened my eyes that I still have longevity and happiness. It feels like we should have been lifelong friends because she was the perfect match."



Doris and Angela enjoy catching up over the phone, attending exercise classes together, going out to lunch, and celebrating special events like birthdays with one another. Angela invites Doris to events in the local area and is grateful for her friendship. Because of Doris, Angela has blossomed out of her shell and enjoys venturing out more.

The simple act of connecting a client and a volunteer can have profound effects on both. For clients like Angela, Senior Companions offers a renewed sense of purpose and belonging. It dispels the notion that age or circumstance should limit one's happiness and fulfillment. Doris is an inspiration, proving that every stage of life holds opportunities for growth and joy.

Become a Senior Companion and make a positive impact on a senior in your community. Scan the QR code to learn more.



Kindness Kit Project Puts a Smile on Seniors Faces

Special thanks to Grace's Food Pantry, Cindy Carleton and the folks at the Galen Wilson Senior Center, ForCare Medical-Dermatology and Marianne Brawer for the generous donations for our Kindness Kit project! For two hours, wonderful volunteers packed kits filled with hygiene supplies and food for their pets, for 130 homebound seniors! Each senior received a handwritten card, provided by a Seniors in Service volunteer. These supplies went out with Volunteer Way's September Brown Bag delivery to brighten the day of many Pasco County seniors!



Seniors in Service Team Dives into Tampa Bay Equity Incubator

Seniors in Service was one of only four local nonprofits chosen to participate in the 2022-2023 Tampa Bay Equity Incubator (TBEI) inaugural cohort. TBEI's goal is to help nonprofits be more equitable, inclusive, and increase capacity to more closely reflect the communities they serve.



With support from Pinellas Community Foundation and expertise from Inclusivity, Inc., we received expert cultural competence coaching, consulting, and workshops to educate our staff, leadership, board, and volunteers about how diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) can be woven into our organizational culture and services. As a result, we made positive changes like adding actual stakeholder photos on our marketing materials instead of stock photos, adding a Spanish translation option on our website, creating a cheat sheet with common Spanish phrases for our non-bilingual staff to use with clients, and even translating our entire volunteer recognition event to accommodate both English and Spanish-speaking attendees.

In addition, we now have at least one staff member from each impact area who enthusiastically serves as an Equity Champion. Equity Champions meet monthly to ensure changes recommended in our equity coaching sessions are embraced and implemented by each of our programs. Equity Champions also lead monthly Diversity Equity Inclusion discussions at our team meetings. All staff participate in expert trainings provided by Inclusivity, including "Inclusion Begins with I."

For over 39 years, long before Diversity Equity Inclusion (DEI) became a topic of conversation, Seniors in Service has served diverse, traditionally underserved populations with a focus on equitable outcomes. Now, after participating in Tampa Bay Equity Incubator's inaugural cohort, our entire team is poised to respond as "equity champions", sharing the belief that the presence of diversity plus the practice of inclusion within an equitable environment is vital for ongoing innovation and success.

Welcome Aboard New Ambassadors

Our latest class of Seniors in Service Ambassadors just completed their certification training! These wonderful volunteers understand the value of serving others and are now ready to help you find the volunteer opportunity of your dreams. As Seniors in Service Ambassadors, they are ready to share their experience, knowledge, and passion for our mission to help others in the community get GEARED UP TO SERVE!



For more information about the Ambassador Program, contact Chris at 813-492-8916 or cnoble@seniorsinservice.org.

SAGES Honors Community Heroes

Congratulations to Seniors in Service Community Engagement Manager Chris Noble who was honored at SAGES (Senior Actors Guild & Education Services) Delivered with Heart Awards in the category of Leadership.

Each year SAGES hosts the Delivered with Heart Awards to recognize individuals age 50+ who exhibit the following qualities in their work with seniors in our Tampa Bay community: Advocacy, Connection, Direct Care, Family Care, Leadership, Spirit, and Volunteerism.

Chris Noble knows how important it is for seniors to stay active and have a purpose. He leads our AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP (Retired & Senior Volunteer Programs) in three counties. As the "brainchild" behind our Volunteer Ambassador Program, Chris trains passionate volunteers to share our mission with the community, encouraging even more seniors to serve. With Chris at the helm, his team helps over 800 Tampa Bay seniors' step into the best years of their life through volunteering.



Bridging Generations Breakfast Inspires Community Leaders!



Scan the QR code here to get the recap of the event!



Thank You to Our Sponsors



- Bob Wood
- Dr. Daphne Fudge
- Dr. Seymour Brown
- Marina Choundas
- Mark Hall
- Steve Marciano
- Susan Boyd
- Tracie Bergman

Wash your Car at Woodie's Wash Shack - Change a Veteran's Life

Looking for ways to support our Veterans? Starting now until March 2024, when you buy a premium car wash at Woodie's Wash Shack, 40% of your purchase will support our Operation: Veteran Connect Program. With hundreds of Veterans in Tampa Bay experiencing homelessness or hunger, every donation can make an impact and transform a life. Each premium car wash purchased will help support our efforts to enable a Veteran to secure permanent, safe and affordable housing. Your car wash purchase will help us show Veterans how much we appreciate their sacrifices while helping them on their personal journey toward self-sufficiency.



How does it work? **Scan the QR code here and purchase the wash through the provided link.** Choose the premium \$30 car wash ("The Pipeline"), which entails triple foam, wheel cleaner, spot-free rinse, tire shine, hot wax, and rain repellent. After purchase, a coupon will be sent directly to your mobile phone via text that you can scan to use at any Woodie's Wash Shack location.



Woodie's Wash Shack isn't just a car wash. They are a true community friend, neighbor, and partner. They believe in giving back to the communities they serve. Just like us, they want to make a difference, and YOU can help too.

Operation: Veteran Connect's 9/11 Day of Remembrance Service Project



Operation: Veteran Connect members serving with AmeriCorps and Volunteer Florida dedicated their 9/11 Day of Remembrance Service Project to help beautify the grounds at The Franciscan Center in Tampa. They helped garden and clear debris from recent storms to prepare the center for the Restoration and Restore Program for Tampa Bay First Responders to enjoy.

Thank you to our funders!





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Classroom Grandparents Eagerly Return for a New School Year



The fall season brings the start of a new school year, and our Classroom Grandparents are thrilled to get back into the classrooms to help teach children to read. Check out the photos below of our ecstatic classroom volunteers on their first day back to school. They are so happy to be meeting students, parents, and teachers, and helping pack backpacks filled with fun educational supplies for our Readers in Motion families! We wish them a very successful school year filled with fun and lots of learning!

