

## Support RSVP: Help Us Save AmeriCorps Programs

For decades, AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers have

responded to our country's most immediate and critical needs. They are the "people power" that local nonprofit, faith-based, and community organizations rely on to deliver services and make a difference in local communities. Despite being a model of efficient and effective government, the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) has taken steps to dismantle AmeriCorps. Since mid-April, DOGE directed the agency to:

- Issue stop work orders to 750 AmeriCorps NCCC and FEMA Corps members, abruptly ending their service terms with no notice.
- Dismiss nearly 85% of AmeriCorps agency staff, disrupting key functions such as program operations, member enrollment and deployment, and grant disbursement.
- Terminate close to \$400 million in grant funding, a move that will impact over 1,000 local and community organizations and prematurely end the service of over 32,000 AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers.

And in May, the President released his FY26 budget request calling for the full elimination of AmeriCorps.

We urgently need as many voices as possible reaching out to members of Congress and we are mobilizing friends of service – including alumni, parents, community stakeholders, and more – to help us send a strong message that Congress needs to protect AmeriCorps.

We hope to flood offices with calls in support of AmeriCorps over the next few days – time is of the essence!

As we move forward with these efforts, we want to lean into a positive message about the powerful impact of AmeriCorps and share stories about the real benefits of AmeriCorps for service members and communities.

### Things You Can Do:

- ✓ Call or e-mail your elected officials
- ✓ Visit: <https://voicesforservice.org> to get tips on how you can help.

Don't know who your elected officials are? Scan the QR code and enter your address and find out: —>



If you have questions about this or how you can help, give us a call. Thank you for your support.

~RSVP Staff



## Our Impact on Volunteers!

Accordingly to a 2019 longitudinal study, AmeriCorps volunteers were healthier, less stressed, and less socially isolated than those who did not serve.

Those who serve:

- ⇒ **88% reported fewer feelings of isolation**
- ⇒ **84% reported stable or improved health**
- ⇒ **78% reported fewer symptoms of depression**



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# Happy June, July, August Birthdays!

## June

ACEVES, JAILINE  
BOWMAN, ROBERT  
BROWN, LAURA  
CARR, JOANNE  
CHOISUNIRACHON, YUPADEE  
DOKIC, JEFIMIJA  
GROVES, LISA  
LAKRITA, LOUBNA  
LUSTRO, GERALDINE  
McMILLIN, BROOKE  
MORRIS, DEBRA  
NOWICKI, KEITH  
RUIZ, DAVID  
SANFILIPPO, MARK  
SHANLEY, BARB  
SINACOLA, TONI  
SKUPIEN, CHARLEEN M

## JULY

BARAJAS, VANESSA  
BROWN, MARGOANN  
CHRanko, JOSEPH E.  
COURTNEY, CAROL  
EWING, DAWN  
GUNDERSON, ROBERTA  
HERNANDEZ, KATHLEEN  
HUNT, BARBARA  
KLUBA, JANINA  
LAMACZ, LUCILENE  
LANG, DEBORAH  
LUSTRO, BARBARA  
MAYER, ROBERT  
MAYMON, ESTHERLYN  
MURPHY, GABRIELLE  
PATRICK, SHERRIE  
REKO, RUTH  
RUPSLAUK, BONNIE  
SANTANGELO, MARISA  
SHAUNNESSY, JEAN  
STUMP, BREVITT D.

## August

BARSEVICK, LINDA  
BASSO, SUE  
BRANCATO, PATRICIA  
BURTIS, BARBARA  
CUMMUTA, ROBERT  
DRENNAN, REBECCA  
DUARTE VARGAS, ROSALBA  
DUPEE, MADELYN  
FANTOZZI, ANNE  
FORS, PHILIP L.  
FOSTER, CAROLYN J.  
HARRIS, PRES F.  
HARRIS, YVONNE  
HUNT, JUNE F.  
IMPASTATO, RICHARD  
LATA, RONALD S.  
MESCHINO, RICHARD  
MESCHINO, SUSAN V.  
MURRAY, MARK  
O'LAUGHLIN, RITA  
RUSS, BETTY  
RYMARZ, PATRICIA  
SANTIAGO, IDA  
STAPLETON, ELOISE  
STEWART, NANCY  
STOYANOVA, KAMELIA  
TAKAKI, VIRGINIA  
VENDEGNA, JACQUELINE  
VITACCO, LOU

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE FOLLOWING RSVP  
VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE CELEBRATING  
ANOTHER YEAR YOUNGER!



## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: SYLVIA ELLIS



Sylvia began her volunteer journey at Zion Lutheran Church in Hinsdale, working within the Early Childhood Education Center. Her initial role as a food coordinator quickly evolved, thanks to the encouragement and support of the center's director. With determination, Sylvia earned her Infant and Toddler Certification, followed most recently by an Administration Certificate. **"Working and going to school at the same time was very hard but entirely worth it. It was a long-time dream that, as a senior, I didn't think was possible,"** Sylvia shared. With a passion for working with children, Sylvia finds joy in their self-development and says they keep her **"sharp and busy."** She also holds an Associate's Degree in Computers, which she used for 12 years in data entry at Ty Inc. Sylvia is an active community volunteer. She supports her church daycare, helps with homelessness initiatives, and contributes to the juvenile court system and Housing Forward. In her free time, Sylvia enjoys creative hobbies like coloring and play-doh recipes. Volunteering is her way of giving back through organization and care.

## What a Small World:

### A RSVP Reunion—54 Years in the Making

Former Wicker Park classmates reconnect through RSVP's Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) Program. Eyvonna Hemphill and Minerva McLaren, shared an unexpected reunion more than five decades later.

The two gals first met as students at Wicker Park Elementary, where they shared a classroom, Room 208, with their seventh-grade teacher, Mr. Davis. Though life took them in different directions after those early school days, fate stepped in years later through a shared commitment to service and education.

Currently, both ladies work side by side, helping others navigate their taxes. Eyvonna volunteers as a tax counselor, and Minerva is the TCE Program Coordinator. Their story is a reminder of how small the world can be—and how the bonds we form early in life can resurface in the most meaningful ways.



*Wicker Park Elementary School*

MRS. LEBLANC - PRINCIPAL  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS



Feb. 9, 1971

Room 208 - Grade 7 - Mr. Davies

CARRERA STUDIOS



**Where is  
Minerva &  
Eyvonna?**

## RSVP EVENTS TO LOOK

### FORWARD TO

*Please call our offices to register for any program you would like to participate in.*



### SEPTEMBER

**CETP**— Conversational English Itutoring Program: Volunteer to meet with a student in the Triton College English as a Second Language (ESL) program to help them improve their conversational English. Meetings are once a week at Triton College. This program will begin in September.

### FALL

**Homeless Mats Project**—Volunteer to collect, and/or make mats out of plastic grocery bags to donate to a local shelter. This event will occur in the fall. Watch out for details in our next newsletter.

**Volunteer Fair**—Triton College's RSVP will host a volunteer fair for local non-profit agencies that need volunteers. Additionally, we'll invite people within our service region (west suburban Cook County and southern DuPage County) to visit the fair to find a volunteer opportunity.

## Join RSVP STARS!

The **S.T.A.R.S** (Seniors Training **All** Rookies to **S**ucceed) program is a joint effort between the Cook County Sheriff's Department (CCSD) and Triton College's RSVP.



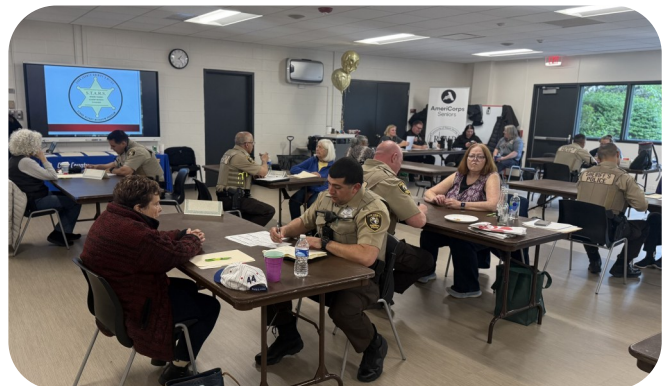
STARS began in 2017, with the goal of improving communication skills of police cadets and rookie officers.

RSVP volunteers are assigned scenarios where they role-play as crime victims. The cadets/rookies are assigned to a scenario where they interview the victims. The volunteers enjoy adding their own spin to the scenario which helps the officers be being more attentive.

Afterwards, the volunteers submit an evaluation of the encounter noting important things like did the officer have good eye contact, show compassion or empathy, and did they ask appropriate questions.

This activity provides valuable hands-on experience in interacting with older adults and writing police reports.

The RSVP-STARS program is held two to three times a year, with training offered to new volunteers before each date. To sign up for the next RSVP-STARS event, contact our office.



**Above:** A snapshot of the most recent STARS program held on May 21, 2025.

**Right:** Katie Walsh (CCSD), Minerva McLaren (RSVP Volunteer Coordinator), Penny Mateck-Greene (CCSD).





# Saying Goodbye to Excellence!

After 25 years at Triton College's Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, Minerva McLaren (Volunteer Coordinator) is retiring.

Minerva joined RSVP in 2000 after serving many years as a bank manager. Throughout her time with RSVP she has recruited and trained numerous volunteers and has helped hundreds of people in the community. Besides working with volunteers as part of her job, Minerva also understands the importance of giving back. She has given her talents and time to many agencies in the community including Triton College.

During my three and half years as Director, I've witnessed the exceptional dedication that Minerva puts in her work. She goes above and beyond in helping others.

It is my honor to invite our RSVP community to celebrate Minerva's accomplishments on Monday, June 30, at 12:00 p.m. in our multipurpose room, R-221. Call our office to let us know if you can join us on the 30<sup>th</sup> to honor and celebrate Minerva.

~Mario Porras, RSVP Director



## Calling All Volunteers . . .

RSVP is seeking artifacts from you to include in our upcoming newsletters. Drawings, pictures, or articles (about sharing news or information; NOT opinion based articles) or spotlighting a fellow volunteer or volunteer station is what we are looking for. Please keep articles under 200 words.

If you are sharing a picture/drawing, make sure to send details describing the picture or drawing including

who took/drew the picture. When submitting articles, think of a reporters main questions to be answered like who, what, where, when, why, and how.

**Note**, sending items to RSVP does not guarantee it will be printed. We reserve the right to refuse items that we deem controversial or inappropriate for our audience. Submissions will be mailed back to you once we are through. See the back page of the newsletter for the physical or e-mail address to send items.

For questions, contact Karen at ext. 3603.

## RSVP Tax Assistance Program Helps Community

For the last 35 years, the RSVP of Triton College has received the Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) grant [through the IRS], which assists low- to moderate-income seniors (age 60+) with their tax returns. Volunteers are recruited, trained, and certified to process basic tax returns.

This year, over 1,200 individuals benefited from this service, saving those taxpayers approximately \$254,800 (based on the average rate of \$200 to have their taxes done by a for-profit business). Volunteer roles include tax preparers (processing tax returns) and operators/greeters (answering calls and scheduling appointments).

If you are interested in volunteering with this service next year, contact our office.

### 2025 Tax Program Stats

**Total # of Volunteers: 50**

-14 Operators

-36 Tax Preparers

**Volunteer Hrs Logged: 2,913.75**

**Tax Returns Filed: 1,274**

**Savings to Consumers: \$254,800**

# Volunteer Jobs

For details about the following volunteer opportunities,  
call the RSVP office at (708) 456-0300, ext. 3603



## **Chicago**

### **Non-Profit Setting**

- ⇒ Apartment Set-Assistant
- ⇒ Citizenship Assistant
- ⇒ Citizenship Tutor
- ⇒ Early Childhood Classroom Aide
- ⇒ English Language Tutors
- ⇒ Friendship Partners
- ⇒ Health Advocate
- ⇒ Office Assistant
- ⇒ Youth Tutor
- ⇒ Transportation Assistant
- ⇒ Volunteer Teams
- ⇒ Legal Ombudsman

## **Franklin Park**

### **Non-Profit Setting**

- ⇒ Food Pantry
- ⇒ Office Assistant
- ⇒ Benefit Specialist
- ⇒ Community Support for Seniors

## **Glen Ellyn**

- ⇒ Adult Literacy Tutor

## **Hines**

### **Hospital Setting**

- ⇒ Clerical
- ⇒ Escort
- ⇒ Food Pantry Shopper
- ⇒ Friendly Visitor
- ⇒ Laboratory-Clerical
- ⇒ Library
- ⇒ Pharmacy-Office
- ⇒ Red Coat Ambassadors
- ⇒ Voluntary Service Office

## **Maywood**

### **Housing Shelter Setting**

- ⇒ Receptionist
- ⇒ Room Assistant at Economy Shop

### **Hospital Setting**

- ⇒ Clerical
- ⇒ Pet Therapy

## **Melrose Park**

### **Hospital Setting**

- ⇒ Clerical
- ⇒ Gift Shop Helper

- ⇒ Information Desk

- ⇒ Pharmacy
- ⇒ Pet Therapy
- ⇒ Spiritual Care
- ⇒ Transporter

## **Norridge**

- ⇒ Meal Delivery Driver
- ⇒ Friendly Visitor
- ⇒ Telephone Reassurance

## **North Riverside**

- ⇒ Admin/ Clerical
- ⇒ ADNR Advocate (Medicare)
- ⇒ ADNR Outreach Associate
- ⇒ Caregiver Resource Center
- ⇒ Meal Delivery Driver
- ⇒ Senior Health Assistant

## **Oakbrook**

### **Hospital Setting**

- ⇒ Administrative Service
- ⇒ Bereavement Service
- ⇒ Creative Service
- ⇒ Direct Patient Care service
- ⇒ Knitting & Sewing Service
- ⇒ Music Enrichment Services

## **Oak Park**

### **Animal Shelter Setting**

- ⇒ Clinic Support
- ⇒ Office Assistant
- ⇒ General Event Volunteer
- ⇒ Fundraising & Donor Engagement
- ⇒ Second Retail Shop
- ⇒ Cat Enrichment
- ⇒ Dog Enrichment
- ⇒ Dog Walker

### **Clinic Setting**

- ⇒ Economy Resale Shop
- ⇒ Library Aide
- ⇒ Pet Therapy
- ⇒ Floor Staff
- ⇒ Front Door Greeter

### **Medical Setting**

- ⇒ Clerical
- ⇒ Information Desk
- ⇒ Records Dept.
- ⇒ Same day / Outpatient
- ⇒ Visit Patients

## **Museum Setting**

- ⇒ Clerical
- ⇒ Occasional event

## **Non-Profit Setting**

- ⇒ Community Advocate SMP
- ⇒ Community Educator
- ⇒ Benefits Specialist
- ⇒ Community Outreach
- ⇒ S.H.I.P Assistant
- ⇒ FIT & STRONG Facilitator
- ⇒ Meal on Wheels Driver
- ⇒ Phone Check-ins/Wellbeing Check-ins

## **Shelter Housing**

- ⇒ Case Aide
- ⇒ Economy Shop
- ⇒ Meal Provider
- ⇒ Meal Scheduler
- ⇒ On Site Assistant
- ⇒ Breakfast Host
- ⇒ Evening Shelter Host

## **River Grove**

- ⇒ Advisory Council RSVP
- ⇒ Clip Coupons for our Veterans
- ⇒ ESL Tutor/ CES (Conversational English Second Language)
- ⇒ Special Events Help Service

## **River Forest**

- ⇒ Graphic Design Service
- ⇒ Program Aid

## **Schiller Park**

- ⇒ Blood Drive

## **Winfield**

### **Hospital Setting**

- ⇒ Admin Support
- ⇒ Escort/ Transporter
- ⇒ Friendly Visitor
- ⇒ General Support
- ⇒ Gift Shop Helper
- ⇒ Information Desk
- ⇒ Organizing Donations for Pediatric Dept.

# Join a RSVP Club !

RSVP sponsors two local community clubs that encourage older adults to remain active and social. Learn more about the clubs below and call us if you have any questions.

## TRITON COMMUNITY HORTICULTURE CLUB

The Triton Community Horticulture Club (TCHC) started in 1969 with the purpose of stimulating interest and advance learning in horticulture and floriculture while aiding in the preservation of natural resources. We want to promote an understanding and love of plants through informative programs, field trips, and classes. Membership is open to anyone, regardless of age, that aligns with the club's purpose.



**Meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month** (excluding January and February) at Triton College in the Robert Collins Center (R-building), room R-221, from **12:30pm to 2:30pm**.

### 2025 Meeting Dates:

**\*July 8   \* August 12   \* September 9   \* October 14   \* November 11**

For more information about the TCHC, contact anyone on the club's leadership team.

**President:** Douglas Peck

**Vice-President:** Jean Wypychowski

**Triton College Liaison:** Mario Porras

**E-mail:** poopzee1@gmail.com

**E-mail:** jkwypy@aol.com

**E-mail:** marioporras@triton.edu



## Active Retired Citizens Club

The Active Retired Citizens Club (ARCC) is an educational, social club for retirees and older adults that provides activities and networking opportunities to help expand their social and intellectual lives.

The club meets the **first Friday of each month** (excluding January, June, & July) at Triton College in **room R-221**, in the Robert M. Collins Center ("R" building), from **12pm to 2pm**. Coffee and snacks are provided.

**Types of Activities:** Workshops on topics facing the senior population • Luncheons • Craft projects • Movies • Educational/ informative presentations • And more!

**To Join ARCC:** Call us to have an application sent to you, or come to our next meeting. There are annual membership dues (approximately \$15) collected at the August meeting.

Questions about ARCC, contact the RSVP office at (708) 456-0300, ext. 3603

### 2025 Meeting Dates:

**\* August 8   \* September 5   \* October 3   \* November 7   \* December 5**



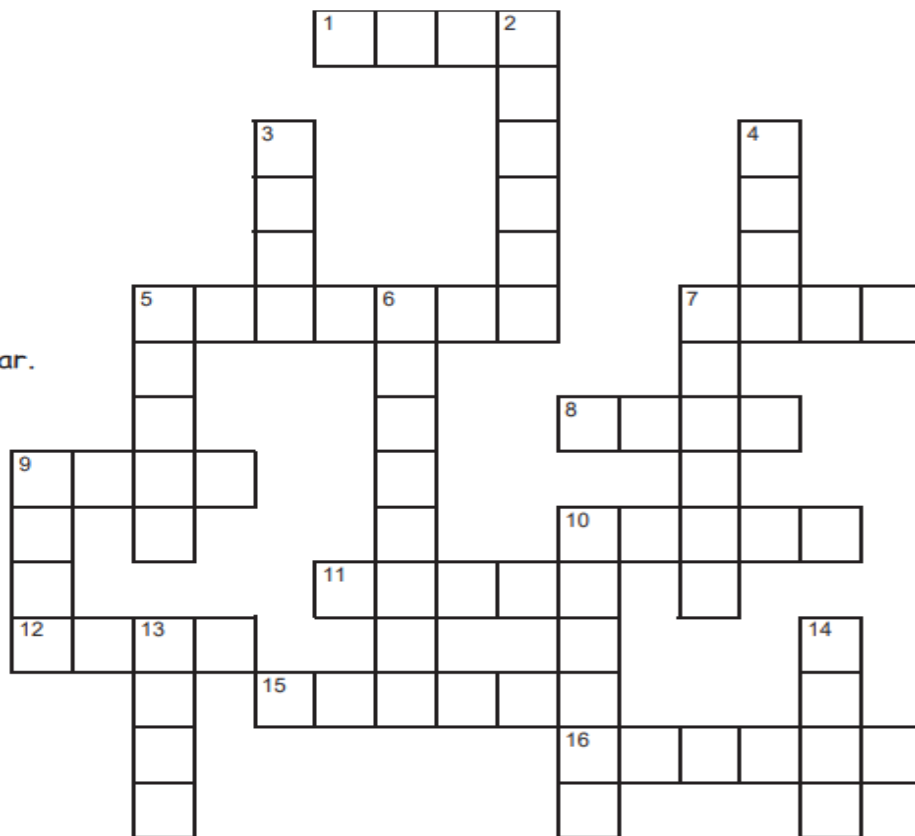


## Across

1. Grains on the beach.
5. Living in a tent.
7. It warms you up.
8. Two wheeled transportation.
9. Comes with a shovel.
10. Full of daylight.
11. A sandy shore.
12. Area of inland water.
15. Warmest 3 months of the year.
16. Top for warm weather.

## Down

2. Plunging into the water.
3. Move through the water.
4. Summer hazard.
5. House in the woods.
6. Frozen treat.
7. Trail walking.
9. A place to swim
10. Pants for hot weather.
13. Toy
14. Mild




facebook

## Connect with Us!

We invite volunteers to post pictures when working with our volunteer stations!

 Tag us on Facebook @Triton College RSVP

 or email us your pictures and we'll share them for you karenmorales@triton.edu



Retired and Senior  
Volunteer Program

### Triton College Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)

Serving West Suburban  
Cook and Southern  
DuPage Counties

**2000 Fifth Ave., Building R, Room 221;  
River Grove, IL 60171**

**Phone:** (708) 456-0300, ext. 3603

**E-mail:** [rsvp@triton.edu](mailto:rsvp@triton.edu)

**Web:** [www.triton.edu/rsvp](http://www.triton.edu/rsvp)

#### Staff

Mario Porras, Director  
Minerva McLaren, Volunteer Coordinator  
Beth Sanfilippo, Program Assistant  
Karen Morales, Program Assistant

