

Volunteer Voice

Newsletter for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) at Triton College
Serving West Suburban Cook and Southern DuPage Counties



Fall 2023:
September-
November



RSVP Celebrates 40!

This year marks RSVP's 40th anniversary at Triton College. For 40 years, this program has helped older adults find volunteer opportunities in the community. Through volunteers' support, local organizations have been able to provide more services to people in need.

"This amazing program not only helps community services but it also helps older adults live more fulfilled lives," said Mario Porras, current Director of RSVP.

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is a grant-awarded program that is a branch of the national AmeriCorps organization. RSVP helps older adults (aged 55+) find volunteer opportunities in the community. The program was created in

1969 and currently has over 200,000 active volunteers that help communities all over the country.

In 1983, Triton College was awarded the first RSVP grant. At that time, one full-time employee led the program with a handful of volunteers serving in the community. Over the past 40 years, the program has grown and flourished. RSVP now serves communities in west suburban Cook and southern DuPage counties; has had over 500 volunteers enrolled in the program; has helped over a hundred community partners; currently has two full-time and two part-time staff that administer the program. Happy Anniversary to RSVP at Triton College!



Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon



RSVP is excited to

announce the return of an in-person volunteer appreciation luncheon. This event serves as a way to thank and honor all RSVP volunteers who have selflessly given their time and talent over the year. In addition to the volunteers, the program will also recognize and thank the many community partners who serve as volunteer stations.

RSVP is also celebrating its 40th anniversary at Triton College.

"We are thrilled to be hosting the luncheon again and at a time when we celebrate our 40th anniversary at Triton College," said Mario Porras, RSVP Director. "We are also inviting former RSVP directors and Triton College officials to thank them for their commitment to

the program."

This year the luncheon will be held at White Pines Golf Club in Bensenville, IL, on Sunday, November 5, from 11:30am to 1:30pm. "The beautiful landscape of the golf course will be an excellent backdrop for this celebration," said Mario.

Within the upcoming weeks, volunteers will receive a formal invitation to the luncheon. It is important to send back the reply card (in the pre-paid postage envelope provided), so the program knows how many people to expect. Volunteers may bring a guest with them to the luncheon for a \$25 fee—please send payment with the reply card.

For questions about the luncheon, contact Minerva McLaren.

RSVP Offices Temporarily Relocating



RSVP offices and the Continuing Education multipurpose room (located in R-221) will be under construction for some much needed renovations from September to December 2023.

RSVP offices will be temporarily relocated to the third floor in the "R" building in rooms 303, 305, and 307. To find us, take the elevator to the third floor, then turn right, and turn right again at the first hallway. There will be signs in the building to help guide you.

Our phone numbers will not change. Call (708) 456-0300, ext. 3896, 3835, or 3599 if you need help locating us. We are grateful to Triton College for these improvements and look forward to showing off our new space once construction is complete.

~Mario Porras, RSVP Director

RSVP'S Tax Season



For the past 33 years, RSVP has offered free tax preparation services to senior citizens in the area through a program called Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE). TCE is a grant-funded program through the IRS that helps low- to moderate-income people aged 60 and over with free tax preparation and tax education.

Over the years, RSVP has helped educate hundreds of residents in the area and saved them thousands of dollars.

“We are very proud of this program because of the direct impact it has on the community,” said Mario Porras, RSVP Director.

RSVP recruits and trains volunteers to become IRS-certified tax preparers. Starting in late January, RSVP begins accepting calls to make appointments for tax preparation. The tax-certified volunteers are assigned to one of several sites around the area to help lessen travel for residents. Appointments start in February and stop in mid-April.

Mr. Porras says he’s thankful and grateful to all of the volunteers and staff for their time and commitment; “it’s because of them that this program is successful every year.”

The nine sites this year were at: Melrose Park Public Library, Elmwood Park Public Library, Eisenhower Public Library, Proviso Township office, Westdale Park, Norridge Senior Assistance Center, Triton College, and the two new sites were La Grange Park Public Library and Schiller Park Community Center.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) sponsors the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs. TCE offers free tax assistance to individuals aged 60 or older. The Revenue Act of 1978 authorizes IRS to enter into agreements (via grant competition) with private or nongovernmental public non-profit agencies and organizations which will provide training and assistance to volunteers who provide free tax counseling to elderly individuals. RSVP at Triton College has been awarded this grant and has offered this program since 1990.

2023 RSVP TCE Tax Data



Over **1,138** people helped



1,108 Tax Returns Filed

Approx. **\$265,200** saved on preparation fees*

*(based on average cost of \$240 to go to a tax preparation business)



For the people served:

\$570,210 generated in federal returns

\$93,840 generated in state returns



40 RSVP/TCE Volunteers



9 Sites around the area to serve the community



Are you interested in becoming a certified tax volunteer?

- ✓ NO experience necessary—we train you!
- ✓ MUST have a valid driver’s license & reliable transportation
- ✓ Orientation workshop in December & Training in January

For more information, contact Minerva at (708) 456-0300, ext. 3835

Triton Traditions Returned

In April 2023, Triton College saw the return of the RSVP Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser and Triton Troupers Circus (the last time these events occurred was in April 2019 because of the pandemic).



April 1 was the breakfast fundraiser. RSVP raised \$500, which will be used to supplement RSVP programs/activities throughout the year.

Triton Troupers Circus returned to campus to celebrate their 50th anniversary, and the community showed

up to celebrate. The event was sold out for many of the performances from March 30 to April 1.

Over the years, the pancake breakfast has coincided with the circus. Promoted in the community to bring your families for a late breakfast and stay to see the afternoon performance of the circus. RSVP looks forward to continuing this partnership and hosting this staple in the community.



Volunteering is Important

“Doing something for others/volunteering is a selfless act that is good for your soul and body.” ~Anonymous

Retirement is something that many people look forward to--no more long days of work and going to jobs you may not enjoy. After retirement, you can spend the rest of your life doing things you enjoy, whenever and with whomever you want. However, many people need or desire to stay productive so they can feel a sense of purpose.

Volunteering not only helps strengthen communities, but it also has important emotional and physical benefits, especially for people after retirement.

According to a study done by AmeriCorps, Americans over the age of 60 that volunteered reported lower disability and higher levels of well-being compared to those who did not volunteer. Whether that activity is helping with a local sports team or walking around your neighborhood while volunteering as a companion, maintaining a healthy level of fitness helps fend off diseases as you age.

Other benefits of volunteering include:

Improved Psychological Health - Research has shown



that volunteering leads to lower rates of depression and anxiety, especially for people 65 and older. Volunteering reduces stress and increases positive, relaxed feelings by releasing dopamine. Volunteers report feeling a sense of meaning and appreciation by

spending time in service to others, both given and received, which can have a stress-reducing effect. Reduced stress further decreases the risk of some physical and mental health problems, such as heart disease, stroke, depression, anxiety, and general illness.

Nurture New and Existing Relationships -

Volunteering increases social interaction and helps prevent senior isolation. One of the best ways to make new friends and strengthen existing relationships is to participate in a shared activity. Volunteers have reported that through their service, they have met new friends and added new hobbies to their life.

Bridge the Generation Gap - By interacting with younger generations, seniors are able to share important life lessons. On the flip side, younger generations are able to teach seniors new ways of looking at life. By building a connection with each other, both generations can offer the respect and affirmation that humans crave.

Volunteering is best for all parties involved when you are doing something you enjoy. It's never too late to get started. Whether you just retired or are in your later years, there is an opportunity out there for you.

Contact the RSVP office at Triton College to learn about volunteer opportunities near you. SEE PAGE 4 of this newsletter for some of the jobs available.



Active Retired Citizens Club (ARCC)

Triton College's Active Retired Citizens Club is a social club that provides activities and networking opportunities to adults who are young at heart. For more information or to join, call Gerrie @ (708) 456-0300, Ext. 3896.

Upcoming programs held in the "R" building, in room R-319; 12pm-2pm.

September 15 - Senior Services in Leyden Township: A representative from the township will talk about the services and resources available for seniors in the area.

October 6 - Watch a movie: "Jerry and Marge Go Large": Based on the true story about a married couple who win the lottery and use the money to revive their small town.

November 3 - Community Resources & Your Health: A representative from Ascension Living Scalabrini Village will present a program about utilizing community resources to improve your health.

December 8 - Holiday Luncheon & Holiday Presentation: Celebrate the holidays at the luncheon (\$5 for members and \$10 for non-members) and stay to watch 'Twas the Night Before Christmas: American Christmas Traditions, a presentation by Martina Mathisen. This event will be in the "B" building, in room B-204.

Volunteer Opportunities

For details about the following volunteer opportunities, call the RSVP office at (708) 456-0300, ext. 3835

Animal Care League (Oak Park)

- General Shelter Support
- 2nd Chance Shop Volunteer
- Dog Walker
- Cat Care Assistant

Catholic Charities

- Food Pantry Helper

Forest Preserve of Cook County

- Ecological Stewardship Volunteer
- Trail Watch
- Community Service
- Litter Cleanup
- Nature Centers
- Nature Ambassadors

Housing Forward - Interim Housing Program: 211 N. Oak Park Ave., Oak Park

- Welcome Wagon
- Collection Drive
- Computer Software Skills
- Reading Classes
- Food Donations
- Administrative Duties

Housing Forward - Maywood Office: 1851 S. 9th Ave. Maywood

- In-kind Donation Inventory Volunteers
- Graphic Design Volunteers

Housing Forward (Other)

- Economy Shop: 301 S. Grove Ave., Oak Park
- Moving Team
- Employment Programs

Loyola Medicine

- Patient Experience Ambassadors
- Welcome Ambassadors
- Child Life Volunteers
- Waiting Room Ambassadors
- Musicians
- Gift Shop
- Spiritual Care
- Pet Therapy Volunteers

National Alliance on Mental Illness-West Suburban (NAMI)

- At the NAMI Drop-In Center in Oak Park
- Front Door Greeter
- Floor Staff
- Group Leader

Opportunity Knocks

- Program Volunteer



Rush Oak Park Hospital

- Information Center Volunteer
- Office Administrative Volunteer
- Outpatient Therapy Volunteer
- Cardiac/Pulmonary Rehab Volunteer
- Front Desk Laboratory Volunteer
- Emergency Room Volunteer
- Unit Assistant Volunteer

Solutions for Care

- Clerical
- Outreach Associate
- Caregiver Resource Center Assistant

Triton College

- RSVP Office - Coupon Collector
- Access to Literacy Program - ESL tutors
- Horticulture Department

World Relief Chicagoland

- Transportation Assistant
- Friendship Partners
- English Language Tutor



Visit our website for more opportunities, along with details.
www.triton.edu/rsvp

Find us on Facebook

facebook

Like our page to get the latest updates on volunteer opportunities and events happening at Triton College & the community. Search: Triton College RSVP

RSVP Autumn 2023 Word Search

Find the words listed on the right, that are associated with autumn. Words can go in any direction and do not share letters.

T F S A H P G I F S H H T B I M G D B C
 S K O Q I S J F B T J O K L E N V K O E
 E Y F O R B C I B E Y M D U I D I M D W
 V G O H T W N V Z E H P E V J I P O A O
 R X G K D B D Q V W O B I V H A H A P S
 A E F G F D A D O S T G N F S E R Q T E
 H O C Y V W W L P O S I E S G E P M R Q
 N Z E W B H O W L K U K I C C Q V T C L
 M P E F T Y H R N J O O R Y J U W Y Y N
 P X T L L L Z A C Y N A M C U A K L H K
 H B H E E K H L T E U D E V Q K F F D Z
 U H E A G T E U S L R R E L O O C L V K
 A E V S N I K P M U P A Z N K E R X N B
 V E L L U A P Z S N Z G C X Q L U U R U
 S D R G Y Q O J T R N P Z S C E K R M F
 J A U G G Z Y P E A C E F U L C Q J N X
 Z Y L W W U Z B I L N K T J H T Q J M Q
 N B N Y G S N S S R Y Q Y U P I R W J N
 F N K H W M E S W X E F W B C O S K L C
 K L F Y Q L X F H V P N U Z O N Q U K V

- COMPASSION
- COOLER
- ELECTION
- FOOTBALL
- HARVEST
- LEAVES
- PEACEFUL
- PUMPKINS
- SCARECROW
- SNUGGLE
- SWEETS
- THANKSGIVING



CONTEST!

Submit your completed word search to the RSVP offices by Thanksgiving to be entered in a drawing to win a gift certificate!

ATTENTION RSVP Volunteers!



FREE Chicago Botanic Garden Ticket & Parking!

RSVP has 50 admission/parking passes to Chicago Botanic Garden. Contact the RSVP office to reserve your free ticket!

Call (708) 456-0300, ext. 3896

Special thanks to Commissioner Maggie Trevor (9th District) for her donation.

Contact Us

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Visit us on Facebook:
"Triton College RSVP"

On the web: www.triton.edu/rsvp

Staff

Mario Porras, Director

Minerva McLaren, Volunteer Coordinator

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Beth Sanfilippo, Program Assistant



AmeriCorps
Seniors



There's
a place
for you.

**From 9/14/23 to 12/15/23,
temporary offices in R-303*

What is your plan when an emergency happens?

Using your phone is usually not a viable option. Be prepared wherever you are with an Electronic Caregiver Premier health and safety system. One touch of the wrist pendant, and help is on the way!

Donna Kutzer

Master Care Partner

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<https://ecgcarepartner.com/donnakutzer>

Fall Registration Still Open for Continuing Education Courses



The Continuing Education Department at Triton College offers courses for non-credit or certification.

Older adults (aged 60+) living within Triton's district will have registration fees waived and reduced tuition rates on **some** classes.

Many classes begin in early September and some have later start dates.

To review the fall schedule of classes, go online to www.triton.edu, scroll down and look for "REGISTER FOR FALL," and click "Fall 2023 Schedule." See page 44 for CE classes.

For questions about CE classes, contact the CE office:
(708) 456-0300, ext. 3500.