

Thank You Volunteers!



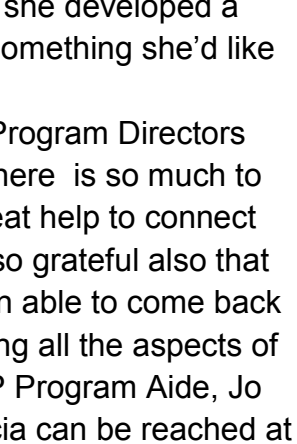
The end of the year is just weeks away, 2016 has certainly seen it's share of change! One thing that has remained constant is the dedication and spirit of the volunteers who continue to impact our community in so many positive ways. Over 100 nonprofits benefit from the over 500 volunteers who have been placed through Volunteer Connections. Each and every day, your volunteer spirit makes a difference! Happiest of holiday seasons to everyone and the most heart felt thank you for all you do!

In this Newsletter

- **New Program Coordinator Joins Volunteer Connections**
- **Pen Pal Program Grows!**
- **New VISTA members begin service**
- **Help Wanted**
- **Changes for Connections Expo**

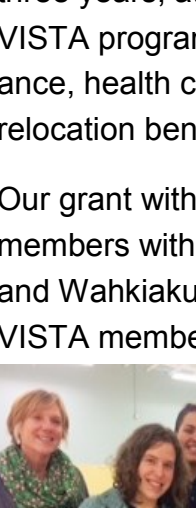
NEW PROGRAM COORDINATOR ON BOARD

Marcia Hale joined the Volunteer Connections team in late September as the new Program Coordinator. She has a strong background in volunteer program administration including developing new volunteer programs for OMSI's expansion in the early 1990's and the expansion of Chabot Space and Science Center, Oakland, CA, in 2000. Most recently she was Operations Director for the Washington County Museum in Hillsboro, OR. There she managed the volunteer program, adult public programs/events, and marketing. Prior to working at the Washington County Museum she served as an AmeriCorps member assigned to the career services office at her alma mater, Marylhurst University. While serving, she developed a workshop for job seekers on *Strategic Volunteerism*, something she'd like to offer to career changers in the Clark County area. In early October, Marcia attended a statewide RSVP Program Directors conference in Spokane. "That was perfect timing as there is so much to learn about managing the RSVP program, it was a great help to connect with other RSVP directors statewide," she says. "I'm so grateful also that former Program Coordinator, Jeanne' Phipps has been able to come back and work with me, that has been a huge help in learning all the aspects of these programs." In the coming weeks she and RSVP Program Aide, Jo Jones, will begin doing RSVP station site visits. Marcia can be reached at 360-735-3693 or by email at marciah@hsc-wa.org.



Marcia Hale joined HSC's Volunteer Connections in late September

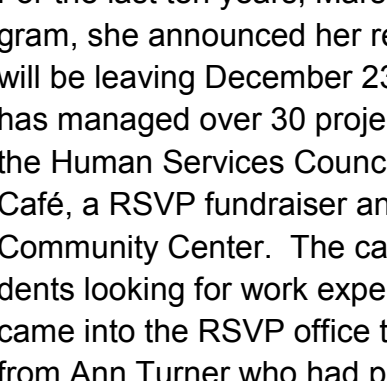
VISTA PROGRAMS WORK TO FIGHT POVERTY



Human Services Council (HSC) has been the regional sponsor for AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) in SW Washington since 2002. VISTA is a federal anti-poverty program administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). We work with nonprofits and government agencies to develop projects that increase their ability to fight poverty in low-income communities. Once a project is approved by the state office, we assist with the recruitment and placement of VISTA members and provide oversight, trainings, service opportunities and general support to the member and service sites.

VISTAs are indirect service providers. They are the "behind the scenes" program developers who help build sustainable programs that fight poverty in our communities. VISTA members may help create or expand a tutoring program, recruit volunteers, write training curriculum, develop procedures and systems, secure partnerships, conduct outreach, write grants, develop fundraising events, etc. VISTA members serve for one to three years, at their project site full-time. In return for their service, the VISTA program provides members with a modest monthly living allowance, health care coverage, an end of service education or cash award, relocation benefits, training, and other benefits if eligible.

Our grant with the CNCS state office allows HSC to place seven VISTA members within approved projects in Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Skamania and Wahkiakum Counties. Our current projects/service sites and their VISTA member include: Clark County Food Bank-Lauren Krug, Lifeline Connections-Aubre Gilbert, Second Step Housing-Ryan Gilson, Southwest Washington Elder Abuse Prevention-Jade Dudley, and Vancouver Public Schools-Danielle Hellems.



Our current VISTA team, from left rear, VISTA Coordinator Marsha Freshwater, Jade Dudley-Southwest Washington Elder Abuse Prevention; Ryan Gilson-Second Step Housing; right front, Lauren Krug-Clark County Food Bank; Danielle Hellems, Vancouver Public Schools, and Aubre Gilbert-Lifeline Connections

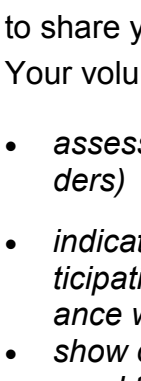
We are currently accepting applications for two new projects, one with the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration Region 3 and for the 2nd year of the Clark County Food Bank project. Details about the two projects are found on the my.americorps.gov website, search for Washington State, then Clark County Food Bank or JRA Mentor Outreach.

Service sites pay a yearly placement fee to HSC to oversee and monitor the member's progress and report results to the state office. The placement fee also helps to offset our portion of the cost of supporting VISTAS. We are continually recruiting new project partners. If you have a dream project that just hasn't been able to get off the ground due to time or staffing limitations, perhaps our VISTA program can help!

VISTA COORDINATOR MARSHA FRESHWATER LEAVING AFTER TEN YEARS

For the last ten years, Marsha Freshwater has coordinated the VISTA program, she announced her retirement from the program in November and will be leaving December 23. During her time with VISTA and HSC she has managed over 30 projects and 50 VISTA members. Marsha came to the Human Services Council originally in 2006 to manage at Connections Café, a RSVP fundraiser and training opportunity inside the Firestenburg Community Center. The café' was staffed by volunteers and local residents looking for work experience. After the café closed doors Marsha came into the RSVP office to assist and take over the VISTA program from Ann Turner who had passed away from cancer. "Leaving was not an easy, but necessary decision to make," Marsha said of her decision. "I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to my friends, colleagues, and partners. I have learned a great deal from you and will miss your company. Thank you for supporting me, and for your continued support of the VISTA and RSVP programs here at the Human Services Council. My best wishes to you all!" Program Coordinator Marcia Hale will manage the VISTA program for the interim and can be reached at 360-735-3693.

PEN PAL PROGRAM GROWS!

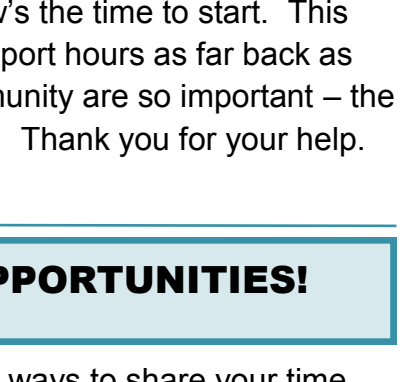


The Pen Pal program, matching caring adults with 5th graders who will spend the school year writing monthly letters to each other, has shown a big jump in involvement this year. The program, supported by a grant through the Volunteer Generation Fund, has 12 classrooms at 5 schools participating this year. Two hundred seventy two students and one hundred eighty four volunteers will exchange monthly letters and meet face-to-face at an end of the year classroom party. Over the year the volunteers usually see a marked increase in communication skills from the children. Every year the kids look forward to their monthly mail from their pen pal. In May, the kids and their Pen Pals meet for the first and only time at a special party held at the child's school. Faces and smiles are matched to the names as the final letters are exchanged between letter writers. Volunteer Connections has managed the program for 20 years, enough time that some of today's adult letter writers were once elementary school Pen Pals. This year, due to the size of the program, a team of volunteer leaders help facilitate the exchange of letters between students and adults. Currently, there is a waiting list for adult volunteers to become involved, however Volunteer Connections has other critical education needs for volunteers. Please check our story under "Help Wanted".

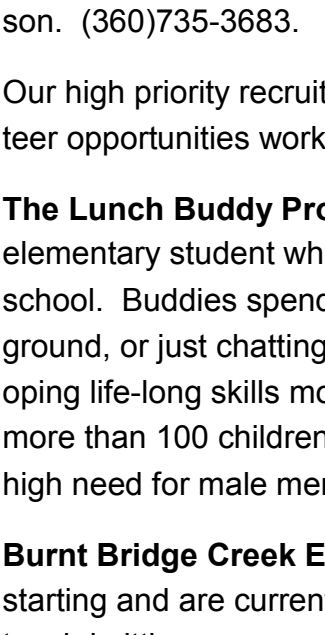
Spotlight on Information Desks

By Jo Jones, RSVP Program Aide

Volunteer Connections offers 300 different volunteer opportunities. Two of those provide directions and information to the many people who visit the Clark County Courthouse or the Public Service Center. The Information Desk at both locations is staffed by volunteers, eight hours daily, Monday through Friday. At the Courthouse once you go through security, the volunteers are right there ready to help you. Many of the people who come in to the courthouse may not be there for happy reasons; helping them is not always easy! It is estimated the volunteers help assist 1500 people a month. Training is very important for the volunteers. They have to know what services are available in every office of the five-story courthouse. The venues in the courtrooms change every day according to what cases are being heard; this can be a challenge to keep straight but the volunteers are always on top of the schedule. One of the regular volunteers at the courthouse is Ron Brown. Ron retired from the County Clerk's office 26 years, and it seems he just couldn't stay away. He's been volunteering every Tuesday morning since 2007. Ron says he still enjoys seeing folks he worked with for so long and helping the people who come in to the Court-



Ron Brown, RSVP Volunteer at the Courthouse Info Desk assists a visitor.

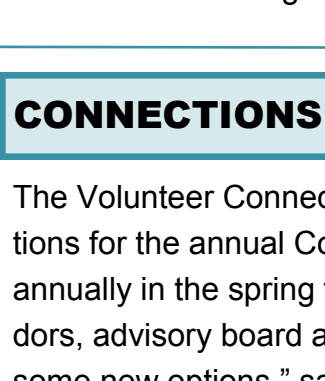


Public Service Center desk needs you! Please apply!

house. Nearby, is the Public Service Center building where we are currently seeking a cadre of volunteers to staff that information desk. A new security protocol will soon be in place in the Public Service Center that will route people right past the desk. The need for volunteers at that location is especially critical. While not quite as busy as the courthouse desk, it is still a vital service our volunteers can provide. If you'd be interested in becoming part of the Information Desk team for the Public Service Center please contact, Jo Jones RSVP Program Aide at 360-735-3690.

VOLUNTEER HOURS COUNT!

By: Jeanne' Phipps RSVP Program Assistant



The Human Services Council's Volunteer Connections program mission is to connect the wisdom, experience, and talents of volunteers with opportunities to enrich the quality of life for themselves and their communities. It is primarily comprised of federal grants. Our volunteers make a difference in this community and we want to share your successes! Your hours submission helps us do just that. Your volunteer service hours are shared with our funders to:

- assess our programs performance (a requirement for our federal funders)
- indicate in our records that you are an active volunteer eligible for participation in recognition events and RSVP member supplemental insurance while volunteering
- show our community impact/accomplishment and identify where we need to focus more community support
- provide information to our legislators about volunteer service

As part of your membership we ask you to submit your hours on a monthly basis. We provide many options for submitting hours to make it convenient for you and your busy schedule.

1. We'll email a timesheet to you at the beginning of every month; this gives you two options: You can print the timesheet, fill it out and mail, fax or hand deliver. You can also type your service hours right onto the document and email it back to us.
 2. Type your hours right into an email message (no timesheet necessary) that includes your job, agency, hours and name. Email to rsvp@hsc-wa.org.
 3. Call in your hours to 360-735-3683.
 4. If you want to record your hours on the web site, we will create an online account for you. Just let us know; we'll send you instructions that include your login and password. Just email to the above address.
- If you haven't been sending in your hours, now's the time to start. This should make it easier for you; you can even report hours as far back as April. Hours that you donate to help the community are so important – the continuation of our program depends on them. Thank you for your help.

HELP WANTED! VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES!

We are currently recruiting for some wonderful ways to share your time and talents. For a short term volunteer opportunity the **Salvation Army** is desperately seeking **Bell Ringers** for the next few weeks. It's a fun and meaningful way to give back, and it's just a two hour shift! It's a vital link in the Salvation Army's ability to serve the people who are in need. Call us if you'd like to be referred to help the Salvation Army this holiday season. (360)735-3683.

Our high priority recruiting this month has a focus on educational volunteer opportunities working with kids.

The Lunch Buddy Program: As a lunch buddy you are matched with an elementary student who you'll meet for lunch once a week at the student's school. Buddies spend time playing board games, going onto the playground, or just chatting with the student to work toward the goal of developing life-long skills modeling purpose and potential. Right now there are more than 100 children on the wait list, most of them boys, so there is a high need for male mentors.

Burnt Bridge Creek Elementary has some new after school programs starting and are currently looking for volunteers to be chess masters, teach knitting, or organize a game board club.

The Salvation Army has an after school program, S.A.Y. KLUB, for students in grades 1-5 that meet Tuesday-Friday until 6:30 PM. Volunteers will help with homework, literacy assistance, or organized activities.

The Boys and Girls Club is a place for kids to do things after school offering all kinds of recreational activities in a positive environment. Volunteers help with recreation programs or with homework or other organized activities.

To become a volunteer through Volunteer Connections visit the website at: www.hsc-wa.org/volunteer-center or call 360-735-3683.

CONNECTIONS EXPO TO CHANGE

The Volunteer Connections team is currently exploring some new options for the annual Connections 50+ Expo. The event has been held annually in the spring for over 20 years. "We've been talking to our vendors, advisory board and Expo planning committee, and we're looking at some new options," says Program Coordinator Marcia Hale. "We want to make sure the event we produce is relevant to the broader public we're trying to reach. We're going to build on the successes we've enjoyed and respond to the feedback we've collected the past few years. We're hoping to announce what we'll be offering in 2017 in the next few weeks."

The Volunteer Voice Newsletter is a publication of the Human Services Council Volunteer Connections Program.

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Human Services Council, a 501 c 3 organization

Our mission is to improve people's lives by connecting them to opportunities, information, and services that respond to their individual and family needs.

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