

FLIP tutor 'exemplifies the very best in volunteer service'

Robin Johnson, FiftyForward RSVP 2:10 p.m. CDT July 9, 2014



(Photo: Submitted)

Franklin resident Patty Young spends two hours a week during the school year assisting students at Liberty Elementary School in the Franklin Special School District. Young is a volunteer with FiftyForward RSVP's Friends Learning in Pairs (FLIP) program, an intergenerational tutoring program that matches adults ages 55 and older with students in kindergarten through fourth grade who need extra attention in either reading or math.

Young learned about the FLIP program while reading an article in *The Tennessean* many years ago. At the time, she was still teaching, but she knew the program would be a great fit for her once she retired. Young taught second grade, kindergarten and preschool in New Hampshire, Massachusetts and, finally, here in

Tennessee for many years.

Over the past eight years, Young has served as a FLIP tutor at Trinity and Liberty elementary schools in Williamson County. She is one of approximately 75 FLIP tutors serving in 11 schools in the Williamson County and Franklin Special school districts.

"As the former reading coach at Walnut Grove Elementary, I appreciate what a valuable program FLIP is to our schools," said Kathy Banks. "The FLIP volunteers at my school encouraged students in such a way that we saw students grow in their confidence in reading and become more proficient in specific reading skills. The students loved having their one-on-one learning time and were excited to spend time with their tutors. The students looked forward to their 'reading day,' and they couldn't wait for their turn to see their 'special teacher.'"

Each week Young meets one on one for 30 minutes each with four children who benefit from the individualized attention that FLIP volunteers are able to give their students. She and her students read together, complete engaging educational activities and work on curriculum components specified by the teachers. Young's background as an educator gives her special insight into the importance of literacy instruction, and she is able to use her years of classroom experience to benefit her students.

"Patty exemplifies the very best in volunteer service," said Sandra Thomas, director of the FLIP program at FiftyForward. "She uses the skills and talents developed throughout her years of teaching to make a real difference in the lives of students. Patty is kind and compassionate and uses best practices to help children reach their academic goals."

And while the benefits to the students and schools they serve are clear, Young is quick to tell others that she gets as much as she gives.

"The FLIP program allows me to get to know each student and see them gain confidence and skills throughout the school year," Young said. "Most of all, it allows me to watch as they begin to see how much fun reading can be."

FLIP is recruiting tutors for the 2014-15 school year. Tutors are needed for schools throughout Williamson County, including the Fairview, Nolensville, Spring Hill and Thompson's Station communities.

For more information about the Williamson County FLIP program, contact Sandra Thomas at 743-3422.

About FiftyForward RSVP

FiftyForward RSVP is a division of Senior Corps, a volunteer program partially funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Sponsored locally by FiftyForward, more than 500 RSVP volunteers serve schools and nonprofits throughout Williamson and Davidson counties. The Williamson County FLIP program is based out of FiftyForward's Martin Center off Concord Road in Brentwood. Williamson County FLIP receives generous financial support from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, The Dan & Margaret Maddox Charitable Trust and United Way of Williamson County.

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