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FiftyForward gains national nod for successful RSVP program concurrent with celebration of Senior Corps Week, May 16-21

Senior volunteers contribute an estimated \$77 billion to U.S. economy

Nashville, Tenn. – FiftyForward Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) recently gained national exposure for its exceptional efforts to provide older adults with volunteer opportunities positively impacting the community.

According to 2015 *Volunteering and Civic Life in America* research by The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the federal agency that administers Senior Corps, this monetary impact is a whopping \$77 billion in volunteer hours bolstering the U.S. economy.

From serving veterans and providing academic assistance for elementary students to assisting with Meals on Wheels food preparation and delivery, the impact this volunteerism has on the older adults and those they serve is tremendous.

Fred Frazier, 66, has been a FiftyForward RSVP volunteer for 3 years. Frazier delivers meals twice a month as part of the Operation Stand Down lunch run, drives the Nashville VA Medical Center van once a week and is a Friends Learning in Pairs (FLIP) tutor at Pennington Elementary.

“When I retired, I wanted to give back to the community, said Frazier, “Helping veterans doesn't take a lot of time or trouble and it's rewarding and fulfilling to all concerned. It's easy to do, there are many programs in place that match volunteers to vets in need.”

FiftyForward RSVP received visibility specifically for its efforts to support at-risk youth, older adults and veterans across Davidson and Williamson counties in Tennessee. In 2015, 531 FiftyForward RSVP volunteers supported 2,500 U.S. armed forces members, 1,200 service family members, and 500 veterans. During the 2014-15 school year, 124 RSVP volunteers provided one-on-one academic assistance to 446 elementary school students, contributing 4,556 service hours.

In addition, 55 FiftyForward RSVP members served 2,632 hours for preparation and delivery of meals to homebound older adults through the FiftyForward Meals on Wheels program.

“We are honored to receive this recognition at the national level,” said Robin Johnson, director, FiftyForward RSVP. “Equally as important to this national recognition is that we have tangible results of how we are favorably impacting lives at a local level. We see the positive results for our older volunteers as well as the members of the community we serve. Volunteering offers a valuable win/win for society.”

According to the CNCS, the impact Senior Corps volunteers have in communities across the country will be recognized during the sixth annual Senior Corps Week, May 16-21, in conjunction with Older Americans Month.

Today, nearly 270,000 volunteers age 55+ serve through Senior Corps' three programs – Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and RSVP. For more than four decades, Senior Corps volunteers have used their lifetime of skills and experience to meet community needs.

Created in 1971, the RSVP program marks 45 years of providing volunteers an opportunity to use their skills and experience to tutor and mentor disadvantaged and disabled youth, renovate homes, and respond to disasters.

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About FiftyForward

Founded in 1956, FiftyForward enriches the lives of adults 50+ by providing pathways to health, well-being and lifelong learning. With seven active aging centers offering educational and wellness programs throughout Davidson and Williamson counties, the non-profit organization also features FiftyForward Adult Day Care Services, FiftyForward Meals on Wheels as well as the FiftyForward Care Team offering care assessment and services to homebound adults. FiftyForward Travel offers adventures (near and far) and Senior Center for the Arts and The Larry Keeton Theatre, located in FiftyForward Donelson Station, features performing arts for all ages. Get social with us - friend us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter. Learn more about FiftyForward resources and volunteer opportunities by visiting: www.fiftyforward.org.