

making a difference

Fifty Forward

By resident writer **Arlene Averbuch**
Photos submitted by **FiftyForward**

FiftyForward is a longstanding Nashville nonprofit serving older adults. Living true to its mission, the FiftyForward team members work to support, champion, and enhance life for those 50 and older.

The agency was originally launched in 1956 as Senior Citizens Inc. by Nashville Mayor Ben West. The original charter stated that the agency's purpose was to establish a community center for the purpose of providing, fostering, encouraging, promoting, and developing activity, recreation, education, personal counseling, vocational counseling, and health services among older persons. From the original center and three-day-a-week operation, the program grew into the first multipurpose center in the area and continues to grow in many new ways to serve and meet the varied needs of the rapidly growing group of older adults ranging from

The Greatest Generation through the Baby Boomers and Generation X, who are now 50 and older.

Susan Sizemore, communications director for FiftyForward, shares, "Active older adults counter isolation and maintain and improve physical, mental, and emotional health by participating at FiftyForward's seven lifelong learning centers. Two centers are located in Williamson County, and five are in Davidson County. The centers offer classes focused on health and wellness, education, recreation, and the arts, technological usage, along with engaging volunteer opportunities. Since the pandemic, our centers and programs have also expanded to offer more online and virtual programming.

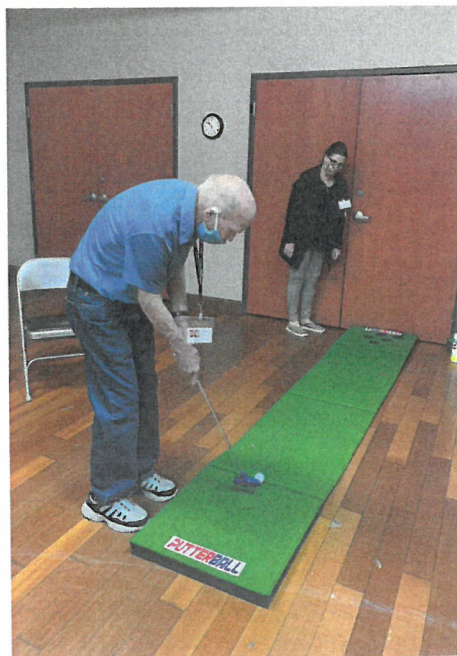
As a longtime community advocate, FiftyForward also knows firsthand that older adults may need assistance

to access services. FiftyForward Supportive Care helps older adults live independently and secure resources to meet basic needs and enhance their quality of life. FiftyForward Supportive Care Services include FiftyForward Living at Home Care Management, Fifty Forward Fresh/Meals on Wheels, FiftyForward Adult Day Services, FiftyForward Victory Over Crime, Fifty Forward Care Team, and FiftyForward Conservatorship.

Active adults are often eager to give their time, interest, and talents to benefit others through volunteer efforts in centers and the community. Through the FiftyForward RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program), a division of the federal agency AmeriCorps Senior RSVP, dedicated older adults may engage in service to their community. FiftyForward Friends Learning in Pairs (FLIP) matches adult tutors age 55+ with students in partnering Davidson and Williamson County Elementary schools for one-on-one academic support in reading and math. The FiftyForward Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) is also part of the AmeriCorps family. The program began more than 54 years ago and proudly continues to provide



Donelson lapidary student



Game day with Ray



Donelson art class



2018 ADS Nashville Mural

exceptional tutoring and mentoring for children in Davidson County.”

Belle Meade Highlands resident since 1954, Mike McAlister, has volunteered with Fifty Forward since 2012. A native of Nashville and a graduate of Parmer School, Hillsboro High, and Vanderbilt University, Mike enjoys being a community volunteer, taking pride in his hometown. He is committed to making Nashville a better place to live for those underserved. Mike, who delivers meals for Fifty Forward Fresh, proudly expresses, “I enjoy delivering meals to clients and connecting to their lives. Many seniors have an interesting story to share and need someone to listen. Over the years, I have made friends with clients, and I still check on some of them even though I no longer deliver meals to them. I am particularly excited about

our Fifty Forward Fresh connection to the Nashville Food Project. I know we are providing healthy meals on a daily basis to our clients. Fifty Forward has an excellent, open-hearted, community-spirited staff which has opened my eyes to the needs of the Nashville community. Being a part of FiftyForward Fresh has enriched my life.”

FiftyForward has a number of fund-raising events and opportunities throughout the year to benefit both the agency overall and specific programs and centers. These include Whistlestop (to benefit FiftyForward Madison Station), A Celebration to Older Americans Month (May), Hats Off to Bordeaux (summer), Barry Coggins Golf Tournament, and music events to benefit FiftyForward Fresh/ Meals on Wheels (October) and Fall for FiftyForward Breakfast (November).



Bordeaux Carolyn Hall



Belle Meade resident volunteer, Mike McAllister.

The website (www.fiftyforward.org) offers a wealth of information about the agency and its activities. For those interested in membership, a membership application is available at <https://fiftyforward.org/join/#join>. Individuals who are fifty and older and need support or access to resources should call the FiftyForward resource line at (615) 743-3416 to learn what services may be available to them. For those interested in volunteering, contact the director of volunteer engagement at rjohnson@fiftyforward.org.

Belle Meade Living is so proud to spotlight our Belle Meade Highlands resident, Mike McAlister, an outstanding volunteer, and Susan Sizemore, Communications Director for FiftyForward. We are grateful to have this wonderful nonprofit FiftyForward helping so many in our Nashville community.



If you would like us to feature a nonprofit you support, please email us at tara.biller@n2pub.com.



**Nashville
Theatre School**

presents



May 13th-15th, 2022

Williamson County

Performing Arts Center

Tickets: \$20.00

nashvilletheatreschool.com

SUMMER REGISTRATION OPEN NOW

Summer Intensives, Workshops and Camps Ages 4-18
106 Page Road, Nashville, TN 37205

ACTING | SINGING | DANCING | PRIVATE VOICE | AGES 4-18

nashvilletheatreschool.com | 615-477-1628 | 106 Page Road, Nashville | Vanessa Garner . Founder / Artistic Director