



**AmeriCorps
Seniors**

NEWS FOR YOU

A News Brief for AmeriCorps Senior Members who volunteer in the RSVP program of Northern Cook and Northern DuPage

August 2021



Sponsored by HandsOn
Suburban Chicago

Back to Building Back

Every year as August rolls in, we watch as parents and children get prepared to return to school. There is excitement, some frustration, and lots of anticipation. A new school year is about building upon the previous year. Even if that means a bit of refreshing is needed, the overriding goal is about moving forward and keep “building back”.

As we look at our RSVP volunteers, community partners, and the communities in which they serve, we see the commitment to moving forward; to get “Back to Building Back”. The excitement you share about serving may be met with some frustration and lots of anticipation about the continued impact of COVID-19 and its variants. However, your focus will remain on moving forward with the same resilience you have always shown. Each of you exemplifies what Nobel Laureate, Maya Angelou, said about resilience, *“I can be changed by what happens to me. But I refuse to be reduced by it.”* In spite of the time it may take, all of you will continue to focus your energy, and your resilience on serving and helping our communities get “Back to Building Back”. There is truth in what Hellen Keller said, *“Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of overcoming it.”*

Our RSVP volunteers and community partners have significantly improved the outcomes for those they serve and will continue to do so regardless of the challenges. We remain in awe of this resilient service! Your forward actions to get “Back to Building Back” confirms what writer Ryder Carroll said, *“No matter how bleak or menacing a situation may appear, it does not entirely own us. It can’t take away our freedom to respond, our power to take action.”* Thank you for all that you do to serve. Thank you for your resilience.

Carolyn Roberts

AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP Project Director



Its Back to School and We Need You

As families are getting their children ready to transition back to school, we are recruiting volunteers to serve as tutors, lunch buddies and pen pals to help returning at risk children to succeed. Do you like working with children and have time to spare? Here are some opportunities provided by our sponsor, HandsOnSuburban Chicago:



CHiL tutors provide social and emotional support coupled with homework help to prepare low-income middle school students for high school. We need both in-person and online mentors at Cooper, Holmes, London and Whitman schools to facilitate social and emotional learning activities and guide their charges in completing schoolwork. Weekly sessions are from late September through mid-December and you can choose and commit to one day: Mondays through Thursdays, 3:30-5:15pm.

More Back to School needs...



Lunch Buddies helps elementary school students improve their reading and math skills. The program -- at Jane Addams Elementary School in Palatine and Rupley Elementary in Elk Grove -- provides academic support to low-income students. We need both in-person and online tutors to promote favorable attitudes toward books and lead

games that strengthen students' numeracy skills. Tutors will enjoy lunch and work with small groups of 1-6 graders.

Weekly sessions will be from early October through mid-December and you can choose and commit to one day: Mondays, Tuesdays or Thursdays from 11:30am to 12:30pm



Senior Pen Pals fosters connections with bilingual and ELA elementary students in grades 3-5 to improve comprehension, creative thinking and cognitive abilities of at risk students. We need volunteers willing to spend 2 hours a month handwriting letters to their assigned student(s). Normally our volunteers get together to write their letters, but this may be handled virtually as it was last year.

To find out more about these opportunities email us at rsvp@handsonsuburbanchicago.org or visit our website to sign up: <https://www.handsonsuburbanchicago.org/tutor>



Be Part of the Community Paint-a-thon

Do you like to paint outside? Can you spare one day? Our Annual Community Paint-a-thon will be held on September 11, where volunteers will go out into the community to paint the exterior of houses of qualifying seniors, veterans, and other individuals who do not have the means or ability to do it themselves.

To volunteer, please contact Donnie@handsonsuburbanchicago.org or call the AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP office at 847-228-1006 x103 for additional information.





Welcome Habitat for Humanity ReStore in Arlington Heights

You don't have to pound nails to be a part of providing safe, affordable, decent housing for families in need. Our new AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP partner site - Habitat for Humanity of Northern Fox Valley's ReStore in Arlington Heights sells new and gently used building materials, appliances and furniture. The proceeds from ReStore are used to fund the building of houses and doing critical home repairs in the community. There are many volunteer opportunities available at Habitat for Humanity Restore from donation pick up to helping with sales/customer service. For more information visit our HandsOn Suburban Chicago website: [volunteer opportunities](#). Or, contact the volunteer coordinator at: lance.dailey@habitatNVF.org

Survey Says...

In May, we asked 390 of our members to please share their thoughts of their involvement with our AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP program and volunteering. We were delighted to hear back from 200 of you – **that's a 51.3% response rate!**



95.8%
responded
they find
enjoyment in
their volunteer
work.



96.4%
responded their
volunteer work
helps keep them
healthy and socially
engaged.



93%
responded
they plan to be
volunteering
next year.



53%
would encourage
friends to learn about
other RSVP volunteer
opportunities.

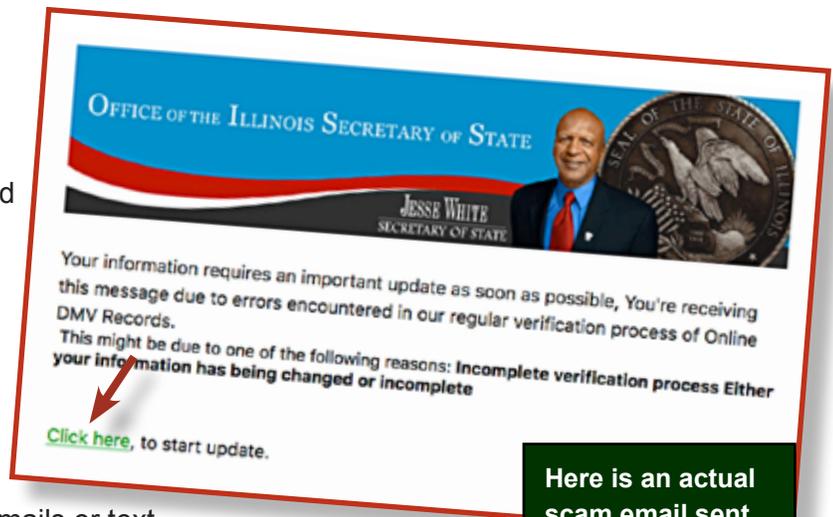
Thank you for all everyone that responded and congratulations to survey respondent **Geri Sandford**, who won the \$25.00 Target gift card drawing. Geri is a trained volunteer tutor that works with adult learners to improve their English and writing skills under the District 214 Community Read to Learn Program.

Scam Alert from the Secretary of State !

Beware of scammers who are sending unsolicited text messages or emails claiming to be from the Illinois Secretary of State. Some scammers copy the Secretary of State website logos and masthead to appear official. The Secretary of State's office NEVER requests personal information via text message or email.

- **Delete** emails and texts that promise or offer access to driver's licenses or state ID cards, and do not click on any links contained in such emails or text messages, as they may place malware on your devices.
- **Hang up** on any calls, including robocalls, which ask individuals to take immediate action or provide personally-identifiable information, such as your Social Security number or bank account number.
- **Ask** to use other types of identifiers besides your Social Security number.
- **Keep** your software up to date, including your phone and computer operating systems and antivirus protection programs. Most phones, computers and antivirus software can be set to update automatically when new software versions are released.

If you have clicked on a link, provided your personal information or believe you have been a victim of identity theft, please call the **Illinois Attorney General's Identity Theft Hotline at 866-999-5630**.



Here is an actual scam email sent to one of our RSVP members. Note: do not "Click here"! (also, note the poor grammar: "has being changed...")

Not a Scam: Driver's License Renewal Date for AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP

AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP requires that we carry supplemental auto liability insurance on all of our volunteers and have updated driver's license expiration dates on file. When your drivers license expires, you will receive a call or email from AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP requesting ONLY this information so we can update our records.



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A huge thanks to AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP volunteer Richard Westgard, for the layout and design of our AmeriCorps Seniors newsletters. It wouldn't happen without you!

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Proud Sponsor of **AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP**
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