

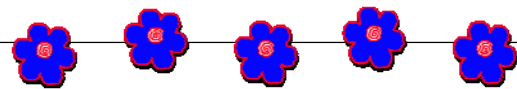
RSVP Advisory Council

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You Say You Want A Revolution?

Well, you know...we all want to change the world.



But change doesn't just happen on its own. Back in the day, we took to the streets and shouted for change. And in fact we did make some real advancements.

Today, there are new and pressing needs just about everywhere you look. So...want to do something about it? We've got a real solution.

Take some action.
Get involved. Call RSVP.
Your invitation to serve.



RSVP News

RSVP PUTS EXPERIENCE TO WORK BY CONNECTING VOLUNTEERS WITH REWARDING OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE IN TRAVIS COUNTY • MARCH 2010



Your invitation to serve.

Food Insecurity: A New Term For Hunger?

Just as concepts and technologies evolve, language changes to meet the new ways we talk about our environment. Moving into evermore common usage is something called "**food insecurity**." It's a curious term used primarily by people who speak the language of 'government-ese', many of whom determine food policy and complex aid programs on national and international levels. But what exactly does this term mean and what do we need to understand about it?



A Meals On Wheels And More volunteer delivers a nutritious lunch.

Twenty-five years ago there were over 200 definitions for "food security," many of them complicated and not all encompassing. The best definition seems to be "When all people at all times have both physical and economic access to sufficient food to meet their dietary needs for a productive and healthy life" (U.S. Agency for International Development.) *Food insecurity*, however, exists when people do not have physical, social or economic access to food as defined above.

What then does *food insecurity* look like in the state of Texas? Texas seniors experience the 4th highest rate of hunger in the nation - 9% (Meals on Wheels

Association of America.) From another perspective, when we look nationwide at people of all ages, Texas again has one of the highest rates of food insecurity in the nation (Sodexo Foundation Study.)

In Travis County it is easier to look at poverty rates which impact food insecurity: 1 in 7 Travis County residents lived in poverty in 2008; 1 in 5 children lived in poverty that same year (Caritas January 2010 report.). Each January we are reminded that it is again "Poverty Awareness Month," and that we can make a difference by dealing with that problem throughout the year. Yet, just how can we make a difference, and where can we go to do it?

Travis County RSVP has some ideas and so do many of our volunteers. Over 100 RSVP volunteers work with Food Pantries, Capitol Area Food Bank, Meals on Wheels and More and organizations such as Mobile Loaves and Fishes that help feed the homeless. These are volunteers who, in light of the problem, choose to be part of the solution. There are still many more of us who can help. We can contribute our talents and resources of time and energy to address this ever growing problem.

Hunger is a result of *food insecurity*, but it is not synonymous. When we hear food insecurity being discussed, we can understand that hunger is a critical component of the term. Hunger definitely exists here in Central Texas, and it is something that we can do something about. We have to credit the Capitol Area Food Bank for using the following words in a new organizational tag-line - in our Central Texas community, **HUNGER is UNACCEPTABLE!**



Volunteers help The Capital Area Food Bank distribute food to hungry Texans.



Food Pantries like El Buen Samaritano's help reduce hunger in the community.

hunger
is
acceptable

Austin Independent School District's 21st Century Program invites you to be a tutor and help young students with their homework. Work one-on-one with students at Hart Elementary School Mondays thru Thursdays from 3PM to 4:30PM. Please be able to commit to at least one afternoon per week. Watch these students gain confidence and have a little fun yourself!

Become a Classroom Coach with **Austin Partners in Education's** effort to strengthen our schools, support our teachers. Choose a program/location/schedule that works best for you. You will volunteer for 45 minutes once a week for about 25 weeks, working with the same group of 2-3 students each week to build important mentoring relationships. Classroom Coaching programs help students at key points in their education, such as 2nd grade Reading, 8th grade Math, and College Readiness programs. Visit ClassroomCoaching.org or contact the RSVP office for more details.

Volunteers are needed to assist **Communities in Schools** with their Tech Tots program. This program provides volunteer mentors, home computers, internet access, lab training and educational software to selected low-income families with preschool-age children in an effort to bridge the "digital divide" -- the widening gap between those with access to new technologies and those without. The project focuses on computer and technology mentoring of parents in order to enhance children's school readiness skills. Tech Tots provides mentors with family-friendly software that teaches basic math, science, language and geography skills. Volunteers should have basic computer experience and the

ability to communicate with diverse populations; they should be patient, friendly and eager to work with families; and they should be able to pass a criminal background check. Spanish helpful but not required.

Family Eldercare is building a community over the phone offering seniors an opportunity to communicate through various conversations, providing social and informative sessions, games and cognitive fitness exercises. Both participants and volunteers really enjoy the program that is experienced in the comfort of their own homes. The Lifetime Connections without Walls program now needs a volunteer to lead a bingo game over the phone on Thursdays from 1:00 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. Call today to say that you have one free hour a week to contribute to fun and games for these older participants.

Think of all the things you couldn't do if you could not read: understand the warning labels on medicine bottles; interpret traffic signs; fill out a job application; follow a recipe; read to a child. **The LifeWorks Literacy Program** seeks tutors to work with their Adult Basic Education and English as a Second Language (ESL) students. Morning, afternoon and evening sessions meet on Mondays and Wednesdays or Tuesdays and Thursdays, and tutors may teach both weekly sessions or opt to "co-tutor" and teach one day per week. Tutors are provided with an orientation and 12 hours of pre-service training. No prior experience is required, and knowledge of a language other than English is not necessary. Tutors are asked to make a 6 month minimum commitment. The only required skills are motivation, energy, and patience! Please contact RSVP for more information.

National Teen Dating Abuse Hotline- is currently looking for Volunteers to talk and chat online with teens, and the people who support them, about dating and relationship abuse. Volunteers should have a genuine interest in working with Teens and be open to differing viewpoints. Volunteers should be able to empathize, and maintain confidentiality with client information. Interested volunteers should live in the Central Texas area providing their own transportation, listen compassionately, and have a willingness to help. A criminal background check is conducted. Volunteers are provided an interactive training and introduction to the dynamics of teen dating abuse. Volunteers are supported at all times on calls and chats, even after training.

Do you enjoy creating menus, preparing food and assisting families in need? **Safeplace** seeks volunteers and donors to prepare meals for their SHP Residents' Council meetings. Meetings are held the last Thursday of the month from 6 to 7:30 PM and provide clients the opportunity to welcome new residents, get to know each other, listen to community speaker presentations, and have general discussions with one another. The menu is up to the volunteer and usually consists of a main dish, salad/vegetable, bread and/or dessert. Safeplace provides paper goods and utensils. Meals need to be prepared or purchased off-site and delivered to Safeplace by 5:30 PM (can be dropped off prior to 5:30 if necessary). Please share your time and cooking skills. Contact RSVP to find out more.

If you have ever received care at a **St. David's Medical Center**, you know that a part of the excellent care

you received there came from a fine volunteer staff. Whether in the Gift Shop, ER or Intensive Care Waiting Rooms or with patient assistance, these volunteers professionally attended to your needs. Now may be the time to give back to the hospital where you received your care. If you have not experienced a St. David's hospital as a patient, experience it as a volunteer today. There is a St. David's hospital north – North Austin Medical Center, south – South Austin Hospital, central – St. David's Medical Center and new to the list in the central sector – The Heart Hospital.

Texas Advocacy Project was established in 1982 in response to the needs of countless women with questions about their legal rights and now operates six programs focused primarily on domestic violence and family law. TAP is looking for highly organized volunteers to help our Development & Communications division with general administrative tasks. Although much of this volunteer position will involve clerical aide (i.e. filing and database entry), we feel this is a perfect opportunity for anyone interested in learning more about fundraising in non profit. We are a small, collegial office which easily lends itself to observing the

ins and outs of a particular career. If this sounds like a good volunteer fit for you, come and join the TAP team - we need your help!

Ten Thousand Villages of Austin is a non-profit store dedicated to providing vital, fair income to artisans by providing a marketplace to sell their handicrafts. Volunteers are crucial to the success of the store. There are many opportunities in which volunteers are able to assist. All you need is a friendly attitude and a desire to help! Volunteers can assist with helping customers, unpacking and checking in orders, working at booths at off-site events, marketing and PR assistance and more. Scheduling is flexible and all volunteers will be provided a brief orientation at the store. Call RSVP today to get involved with this fun and unique opportunity.

RSVP can help your agency recruit volunteers. Please contact RSVP to learn how. For more details on these and other volunteer jobs, please call Travis County RSVP at 512-854-7787.

**Friday,
May 28, 2010**
**2010 RSVP Volunteer
Recognition Luncheon**
At the Hyatt Regency Austin



Are you eligible to attend the luncheon? It's FREE to all invited RSVP Volunteers. To be eligible, your monthly reports must be up to date. All eligible volunteers will receive invitations in the mail. Now's a good time to make sure your reports have been submitted.

If you're not sure whether your reports are current, just call us. We want every volunteer to be eligible to attend this wonderful annual event!

RSVP can help your agency recruit volunteers. Please contact RSVP to learn how. For more details on these and other volunteer jobs, please call Travis County RSVP at 512-854-7787.



Small Change Makes A Big Difference

Due to a recent policy change, the Travis County Auditor's office has asked RSVP to hold a volunteer's mileage reimbursement until the total exceeds \$5.00.

For example, if you request reimbursement totaling \$3.40, your reimbursement will be held until the total is greater than \$5.00. As soon as the five dollar minimum is exceeded, the Auditor's office will process and mail your check. Thank you.



Your Randalls Remarkable Card Can Help Support Volunteerism In Central Texas

If you shop at Randalls, please consider linking your card to the RSVP account. The Good Neighbor Account Number for Travis County RSVP is **8801**.

Randalls makes a small contribution to our program based on purchases linked to our account, so please be sure to use your card every time you shop. By using our card, you will also be eligible for exclusive discounts, giveaways and other rewards from Randalls.

Thank you!

