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How To Contact RSVP

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**Agencies,
Tell Us
What You Need**

If you work with a nonprofit or public agency, tell us how RSVP can help your organization. Do you need volunteers? Tell us. Do you need professional training opportunities? Let us know. We're here for you.

Please take a moment to write us a letter, send an email, or give us a call today.

Our email address is RSVP@co.travis.tx.us and our mailing address is PO Box 1748, Austin TX 78767. Or you can phone us at (512) 854-5872.

We'd love to hear your story. We're listening!



RSVP
News



RSVP PUTS EXPERIENCE TO WORK BY CONNECTING VOLUNTEERS WITH REWARDING OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE IN TRAVIS COUNTY • NOVEMBER 2009

Groups Who Give With Their Hands & Hearts

We live in a country where immediate gratification is the norm. When you want something, you can get it fast and for a good price at any "discount" store in town. There's high speed internet, fast food, drive through banks. You can get almost anything you need in record time.

But, can we stop for a minute and take a breath? Remember the good old days when life was less hectic, the pace was slower and good things came in good time? When a neighbor was sick and you would spend all day making homemade chicken soup to make them feel better. When cooler weather arrived, you would knit hats and scarves and sew quilts to keep you warm instead of driving to the local discount store to buy one.

Even in today's fast paced world, you can still find good folks out there who are keeping this tradition alive. People using their talent and time to give back to others they don't even know. Many are learning new skills and making new friends in the process.

Samina Qureshi is the Site Manager for the Senior Nutrition Program at South Austin Neighborhood Center. According to Samina, she was "inspired" after attending the RSVP

recognition luncheon in May. Seeing what so many RSVP volunteers do to help their community and others, she was motivated to return to her center and find a project that would allow her seniors to give back. After getting approval and the buy in from the powers that be, a new group was born. Their South Austin Neighborhood Center Crochet Class produces 25 hand stitched hats every month. The hats are donated to the Austin Chapter of the American Cancer Society. Many cancer patients loose their hair after they receive chemotherapy treatments and these hats keep their heads warm and snug. These aren't plain hats either. The group goes to great lengths to make sure all of their hats are made with love and decorated with beautiful adornments of all sorts.



South Austin Neighborhood Center Crochet Class



Las Colcheras de Conley Guerrero Senior Activity Center

their minds open and active, learning new skills, and feeling happy and relaxed. It is therapy for their hands, minds and spirits. There is even one participant who is paralyzed but still crochets with one hand. Some volunteers even bring the hats home with them to work on and about half of the class participants learned how to crochet for the first time thanks to this class being created.

Participants work together at the center every Thursday morning. Pictured (below, left) from right to left are: Estella Hernandez, Maria Enriquez, Irma Medrano, Zulema Esquivel, Jose Garza, Elizabeth Anikwu, Samina Qureshi, Elda Morales, Dora Hansen, Maria Ledesma, Mary Lou Ledesma, Petra Dominguez, Helen Camarillo. Not pictured: Alvina Garcia, Dora Jasso, Dina Ovieda.

Margarine Beaman instructs a weekly quilting class called Las Colcheras de Conley Guerrero Senior Activity Center. The class started two years ago on a temporary basis and because of its

popularity, it became permanent. Currently there are about 12 participants active in this class, many of them in their 50's. Many of these

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 work 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.

The Christmas Bureau of Austin & Travis County was founded in 1964 to serve as an umbrella organization encompassing community groups and citizens of Travis County to work together in giving to the needy during the Christmas season. The Bureau matches needy families with agencies/sponsors who provide a suitable uncooked holiday meal and gifts for the children. They are seeking volunteers to help us two or more hours a week at our office located near Burnet Road and Anderson Lane to answer incoming telephone calls as well as help a possible sponsor select a family to help during the holidays. The office will open in mid-November and they are seeking volunteers anytime between

Monday, November 30th through Wednesday, December 23rd between the hours of 9AM and 5PM.

Seton Medical Center Austin is seeking volunteers to help in the new expanded gift shop. Volunteers are also needed in the new Corner Cafe, admitting, information desks and the 'At your service' desk. The Customer Service Volunteer Program is expanding and needs volunteers to help foster an environment where both patients and visitors/family are comfortable. Times and the number of hours in this service area are very flexible. There are also many other service areas. Most service areas prefer 4-hour shifts. Seton Medical Center is located in Central Austin on 38th Street. All training will be provided. Free parking.

Faith in Action Caregivers volunteer drivers needed. Have you ever thought what you would do if you were unable to drive? There are thousands of seniors in the Greater Austin area that experience this each day wondering how they are going to make doctors visits, get to the grocery store or even get their hair done. Faith in Action Caregivers provides help to seniors in the area thru volunteers. Currently they are overwhelmed with requests for rides and really need your help! Support your senior neighbors' independence by driving them to the doctor, grocery store or on errands. As a volunteer, you are able to pick your schedule and drive when you are available. There are 10 Faith in Action Caregiver groups in the Greater Austin area, including, Pflugerville, Round Rock, Cedar Park, Georgetown and Elgin so you are able to volunteer close to your home or business. One ride a week,

month or quarter would be a great help to your senior neighbors.

If you are able to organize the space around you (and marvel that others can't seem to), working with the files in the **Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services** has the volunteer opportunity for you. Located at 51st and Lamar, these DADS Community Services Contract files need your skill and talent. Call today to learn more about training for this responsibility.

Calling all NUTTY volunteers! You are needed to crack pecans and/or sell nuts from November 2 through February 26 at the **Senior Activity Center** on Shoal Crest Ave. Shifts are available Monday through Friday in four hour shifts from 8 AM to 12 PM and 12 to 4 PM. Volunteer jobs include: nut crackers who will move sacks of pecans weighing up to 30 lbs, operate and clean the pecan cracking machine, prepare receipts for customers, and collect money for nut cracking; "nut house" volunteers will accept pecans brought in for cracking and will lift and weigh pecans brought in, prepare receipts for customers, and collect money for nut cracking; substitute volunteers are also needed in both areas to fill in for shifts lacking support. Go nuts and offer your help today!

It's that time of year again! **Foundation Communities** is gearing up for the 2010 tax season and is looking for individuals to help with the preparation of taxes for the next calendar year. Community Tax Centers offers free tax preparation and much more to Central Texans with low to moderate incomes, helping them avoid hundreds of dollars in tax preparation fees. Training will be provided,

Volunteer Opportunities, cont'd

but volunteers should have experience in classroom instruction (professional teaching not required), the ability to clearly explain tax law issues, and have a knowledge of basic knowledge of how to use a computer and tax software packages. You must also be available to attend their 3-hour training session in November and be able to commit to at least one 3-hour shift per week from January to April or a total of 36 hours over a 12-week season. Contact us to find out how to get started with this wonderful program!

The next few months are the busiest time of the year for The **Salvation Army's** Austin data processing department. Volunteers are needed to assist in entering data relative to donations. Volunteers will be trained and work in a supervised setting to ensure accuracy of data entry. You should be computer literate, be able to type 35 words per minute, and have good telephone skills. Volunteers are needed to assist during the weekdays, preferably for 3 hours each day but scheduling is flexible. Enjoy giving back this holiday season, call today to find out how.

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.

Hands & Hearts, cont'd from Page 1

participants had never quilted before they began. All of the group's quilts are completed by hand, they do not use (or have) quilting machines. Over the years, they have donated several of their quilts to various organizations to use for fundraising efforts. They have even created a special Texas quilt which they hope to have displayed in the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum in the coming months.

The group recently completed three quilts which are going to be donated to the Texas Women's Veteran's Program. In addition to being a part of the Las Colcheras group, members volunteer at many other organizations in the community including Girl Scouts, AISD schools, local churches and many more.

Pictured with these special quilts (Page 1, right) from left to right are: unknown, Cora Hernandez, Caroline Zuniga, Dorothy Portillo, Dora Anguiano, Mary Mendez, Margarine Beaman, Inex Mendoza, Rosie Cortez, Ana Villalobos, and Maya Bortello.

Consider how much you can get back from volunteering in a group setting. You can establish new friendships, learn new skills, and keep yourself physically and mentally healthy. Plus, you can give back to people who really need you at the same time! If you would like to be part of one of these groups or others in our network, call RSVP today and we'll help you get started.



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.



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If you are on facebook, send us an email and we'll gladly add you as a fan of RSVP.

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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!

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