

# National Service for Seniors in Ohio

RSVP, Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions



# Susan Rogers

- ▶ Director, COAD/RSVP of the Ohio Valley
  - Have served in this position for 16 years
  - ▶ Past President, 2 terms, Ohio RSVP Directors' Association
  - ▶ Past Member, 9 years, and Board Chair, 4 years, for ServeOhio, Ohio's Commission on Service & Volunteerism
  - ▶ Ohio Benefit Bank Counselor & Tax Counselor
  - ▶ Former Supervisor, America Reads Statewide VISTA project managing 28 VISTA members, serving all over Ohio



- ▶ Presented the first ServeOhio Award to the Ohio Association of Foodbanks at the Ohio Conference on Volunteerism and Service in 2011



# What is Senior Corps?

- ▶ One of the national service programs administered by the Corporation for National & Community Service
- ▶ Consists of three programs
  - RSVP (Originally known as Retired & Senior Volunteer Program)
  - Foster Grandparents
  - Senior Companions



# What is Senior Corps

- ▶ National service programs for seniors were initially proposed by JFK, and were ultimately created as a follow-up to LBJ's "War on Poverty" which created VISTA and the Peace Corps



- ▶ Many seniors wanted to find a way to serve but were not able to travel overseas for the Peace Corps or to manage the lifestyles of early VISTAs, when members were placed in communities where they had to seek out sources for their own housing and support services

# Early Senior Corps Programs

- ▶ The first demonstration project for Senior Corps was developed in 1965 to show the impact that low-income seniors can have on the early academic development of children by placing them in schools and Headstarts where they help children with reading skills, later known as Foster Grandparents
- ▶ The Community Service Society of Staten Island, New York piloted a project using senior volunteers to conduct service projects and was the precursor to RSVP



# Early Senior Corps Programs

- ▶ In 1970, VISTA, the Peace Corps, and the national senior service programs were merged under one organization known as **ACTION**




# Early Senior Corps Programs





# Early Senior Corps Programs

- ▶ Early Senior Corps programs focused on traditional activities geared more for aging “Housewives” whose areas of expertise were caring for children and the elderly
  - ▶ Early RSVP programs were geared toward providing transportation (since many older women of that time did not drive) to nursing homes, VA facilities, hospitals, nursing homes, and other areas of traditional volunteerism for women
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# Transition to Senior Corps

- ▶ In 1994, President Bill Clinton signed legislation creating AmeriCorps and the Corporation for National & Community Service, which replaced ACTION




- ▶ It also brought the three senior programs together under one umbrella called the National Senior Service Corps, more commonly known as Senior Corps


# Senior Corps Administration

- ▶ Senior Corps programs are administered by the Director of the National Senior Service Corps, a division of CNCS
  - ▶ Senior Corps programs are organized by regional clusters, under a regional manager; and further organized by state or multi-state program offices, depending on how many projects are operating in the state
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# Senior Corps Sponsorship

- ▶ Each Senior Corps projects operates under a local “sponsor”, a larger 501c3 which has the capacity to oversee the financial and programmatic aspects of each project
  - ▶ Prior to 2012, sponsors were able to maintain projects until they chose to relinquish them, unless there were egregious violations which would cause state program offices to request CNCS to remove them as sponsors
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# Senior Corps Sponsorship

- ▶ The ServeAmerica Act of 2010 requires recompetition of all RSVP projects
  - ▶ In October the first round of competition took place with about 40% of current projects; notifications of which agencies are awarded these projects will be announced in late winter or early spring
  - ▶ Current sponsors are eligible to recompete for projects they have managed in the past
  - ▶ At this time, only RSVP projects are subject to recompetition; it does not impact FGP or SCP
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# Senior Corps Program Trio

## ▶ RSVP

- Places seniors 55 and over in a variety of non-profit sites within the community which address areas of critical need
- No income guidelines, no stipend, no federal minimum number of hours served


## ▶ Senior Companions

- Places low-income seniors with frail elderly who need assistance with simple, non-medical, activities of daily living
- Stipended program with minimum required hours


## ▶ Foster Grandparents

- Places low-income seniors at sites where they serve children with early academic needs
- Stipended program with minimum required hours

# RSVP: An Invitation to Serve

- ▶ A number of focus groups conducted by CNCS indicated the preference for dropping the longer name (Retired & Senior Volunteer Program) in favor of simply using RSVP
  - ▶ The longer name is misleading in that people think one has to be retired to serve, and there are different definitions of what constitutes a “senior” (age is a relative term!)—many people do not consider 55 years old a “senior”!
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# Edward M Kennedy ServeAmerica Act

- ▶ The Edward M Kennedy ServeAmerica Act brought big changes to RSVP
  - ▶ In addition to the requirements for recompetition of sponsorships, legislation puts more “teeth” into the requirements that program activities meet identified, well-documented, “critical” community needs
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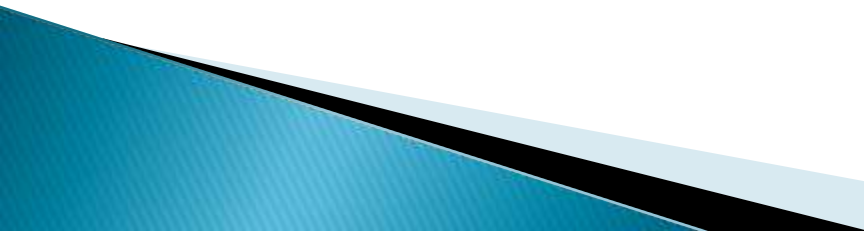
# RSVP Priority Focus Areas

- ▶ RSVP initiatives align with the priority focus areas of the strategic plan of CNCS:


- Education
- Healthy Futures
- Disaster Services
- Economic Opportunity
- Environmental Stewardship
- Service to Veterans and Military Families




# RSVP Volunteer Stations

- ▶ RSVP places volunteers in community-based non-profit organizations where they serve in various job roles which address areas of critical community need
  - ▶ New guidelines under ServeAmerica require that at least 30% of volunteers will serve in one of the high-priority focus areas identified by CNCS
  - ▶ No more than 30% of volunteers may serve in lower-impact, community based service roles
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# Additional RSVP Service Activities

- ▶ RSVPs can also manage volunteer programs within the scope of their sponsor, for example various national Days of Service programs, Ohio Benefit Bank activities, community-based feeding programs for children and seniors, and other appropriate activities may be “self managed” by RSVP projects
  - ▶ There are limitations on the amount of administrative services a volunteer can provide for a sponsor
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# How does OBB fit with RSVP?


- ▶ Healthy Futures and Economic Development are both priority focus areas for RSVP under the new guidelines
  - ▶ Providing OBB services to help citizens access assistance, such as the SNAP card or Medicaid, provides opportunities for improved health, wellness, and finance under these categories
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# How does OBB fit with RSVP?

- ▶ RSVP volunteers can be trained to serve as OBB Counselors
  - ▶ RSVP can partner with other organizations which offer OBB Counseling services to provide outreach activities, tax assistance, host clinics, etc.
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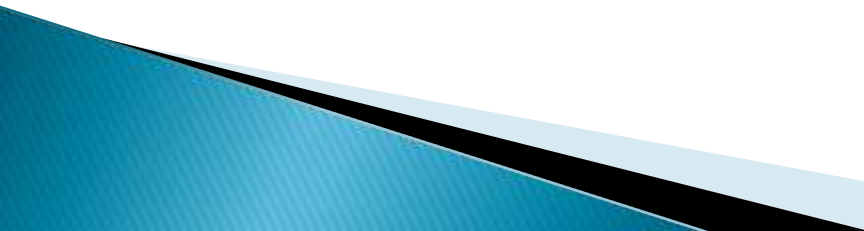



# RSVP in Ohio


- ▶ RSVP's Ohio portfolio currently contains 19 projects serving 58 counties
  - ▶ 12,539 volunteers served in 2011
  - ▶ The number of lives touched by these volunteers is no doubt in the hundreds of thousands
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- ▶ COAD RSVP (Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Devp)
    - RSVP of the Ohio Valley serving Jackson, Gallia, Lawrence, Scioto, Pike, and Ross
    - RSVP of the Hocking Valley serving Athens, Hocking, Vinton, and Meigs
  
  - ▶ Cincinnati RSVP Program (Catholic Charities)
    - Hamilton County
  
  - ▶ Greater Cleveland RSVP (Greater Cleveland Volunteers)
    - Cuyahoga County
  
  - ▶ RSVP of Summit & Medina Counties (Mature Services)
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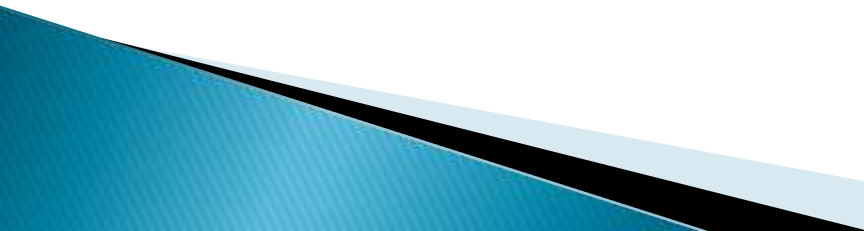


- ▶ Lorain County RSVP (Lorain County Office on Aging)
  - ▶ Warren County RSVP (Warren County Community Services Agency)
  - ▶ RSVP of Mid Ohio (Area Agency on Aging, Dist 5)
    - Ashland, Crawford, Huron, Marion, Morrow, Richland, Seneca, Wyandot)
  - ▶ Washington County Ohio RSVP (Washington County Commissioners)
  - ▶ Kno-Ho-Co- RSVP (KnoHoCo Community Action)
    - Knox, Holmes, Coshocton, Ashland
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- ▶ Harcatus RSVP (Harcatus Community Action)
    - Harrison, Carroll, Tuscarawas
  
  - ▶ RSVP of Darke, Logan, Miami And Shelby Counties
    - (Council on Rural Service Programs Inc)
  
  - ▶ RSVP Portage/Astabula/Columbia/Stark/Jefferson
    - (Family & Community Services of Portage County)
  
  - ▶ RSVP of Clark and Madison Counties (Elderly United)
  
  - ▶ RSVP of Belmont County (Belmont County Community Action Agency)
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- ▶ RSVP of Northwestern Ohio (Area Agency District 4)
    - Defiance, Erie, Fulton, Henry, Lucas, Ottawa, Paulding, Sandusky, Williams and Wood
  - ▶ RSVP Franklin & Delaware Counties (HandsOn of Central Ohio)
  - ▶ Perry County RSVP (Perry County Commissioners)
  - ▶ Lake County RSVP (Willoughby Eastlake School District)
  - ▶ RSVP of Mahoning and Trumbull Counties (Hands On of the Mahoning Valley)
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# Partnerships with OAFB/OBB

- ▶ It is a natural fit for RSVP to partner with Ohio Association of Food Banks & Benefit Bank
  - ▶ In our program, VISTAs for the Ohio Association of Food Banks are developing weekend backpack projects and summer lunch feeding projects for children which will then be managed long-term by RSVP
  - ▶ We also partner with VISTA members to train volunteers to do QuickChecks
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# Partnerships with OBB

- ▶ We have used OBB Counselors as part of our Make A Difference Day project, an annual community-wide FamilyFest which brings together social and human service organizations to provide a day of fun while giving vital information on services to families
  - ▶ OBB Counselors have provided Quick-Checks for our Summer Lunch and Back to School Projects
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# Next steps....

- ▶ RSVPs in your region may be interested in developing partnerships with YOU
  - ▶ For more information on any specific project, you can visit the [cns.gov](http://cns.gov) website and look up state information, or contact me at [rsvpoftheohiovalley@gmail.com](mailto:rsvpoftheohiovalley@gmail.com) and I can provide you with contact information for any RSVP in the State
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# THANK YOU!

- ▶ As a Benefit Bank Counselor, YOU are making a difference in the lives of so many people across our state and nation! THANK YOU for what you do!

