

January 2025



Seniors Serve Durham



The official newsletter of Durham's
Retired Senior Volunteer Program



Welcome to 2025!

From the Desk of Amanda

We are officially a quarter of the way through the 21st century! How time flies! RSVP is starting the new year off with several volunteer and social opportunities. **Our Speaker Series begins this month on Wednesday, January 15 from 12:00 - 1:00pm at the Durham Center for Senior Life in the theater.** Please join me to listen to Kendra Monden from the Durham VA Healthcare System.

Also this month, we are offering a group RSVP volunteer opportunity at Welcome Baby on January 22 from 10 am - 12 pm! We will help sort and bundle children's clothes. No heavy lifting and tasks may be completed sitting or standing. We need up to 8 volunteers to sign up for this assignment. Come and meet fellow RSVP volunteers while volunteering in our community. [Sign up here!](#)

Monday, January 20 is Martin Luther King, Jr Day and there are many service events and other activities happening around the Triangle. [Click here](#) for a list of events

happening over the next couple of weeks to honor Dr. King.

If you have not connected with one of our 40+ stations and would like to learn more about volunteering with one of them, please reach out to me or visit [HandsOn Triangle](#). There are many volunteer opportunities out there and I would be happy to help you find a good place to serve!

Reach me by email at amanda@tnvlc.onmicrosoft.com or by phone at (919) 321-6932. Amanda Stoen



Featured RSVP Station

Swim for Charlie





Swim for Charlie provides water safety/swimming skills lessons to North Carolina second graders. The program is named for Charlie van der Horst, who was a social activist, caring clinician, medical researcher, Public Health crusader, and philanthropist. In keeping with Charlie's values, his love for swimming, and interest with youth, Charlie's fellow swimmers and friends, inspired by his actions, formed a charitable nonprofit organization in his name to make children safer in and around the water.

Their mission is to equip children with life-saving water safety skills by providing a high-quality water safety program to second grade North Carolina students. In the Fall of 2024, Swim for Charlie taught 747 children from 11 schools in Durham and Orange County schools. The vast majority of instructors are volunteers and do not need to be lifeguard certified. Swim for Charlie provides a training course and a detailed handbook.

Volunteer opportunities begin in January at indoor pools in Durham. Instructors will teach 2nd grade Durham School students basic water safety and swimming skills. Each 2nd grade student has 8 lessons over a 2-week period. Instructors are given a detailed handbook and go through a training session. Laminated teaching aids are available poolside during the lessons.

Instructor requirements are the ability to do a front to back float, a basic (elementary) backstroke, front crawl (freestyle) stroke, and tread water. Instructors should have a desire to teach elementary school children, be patient and kind. Instructors will need to complete a free online Durham Public Schools background check. This is a very rewarding experience for both the 2nd grade students and the instructors.

[Volunteer at Edison Johnson](#)

[Volunteer at Duke Brodie Aquatic Center](#)

[Volunteer at NCCU Aquatic Center](#)



Questions? Email Amanda at amanda@tnvlc.onmicrosoft.com



Celebrate the incredible accomplishments of AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers with AmeriCorps Seniors 2024 Wrapped. Across the nation, our dedicated volunteers have brought compassion, expertise, and service to communities in need. From mentoring youth, supporting older adults, providing disaster relief, and fostering civic engagement, your impact has been profound. This wrap-up highlights the hours served, lives touched, and transformative projects completed, showcasing the power of service to create stronger communities. Thank you to our volunteers for making 2024 a year of extraordinary impact.

More than 142,000 AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers helped 220,000 people across a total of 30 million hours.

AmeriCorps Seniors was mentioned in the media nearly 14,000 times, resulting in 22 million impressions. That is the equivalent of \$8.5 million in free advertisement.

AmeriCorps Seniors training provided 28 virtual trainings to more than 3,500 attendees.

The Durham RSVP program engages 140 volunteers and 45 nonprofit stations!

Community Opportunities

Welcome Baby



Giving Closet Helpers Needed!

How cute are baby and kids clothes? Soooooo cute! Do we have the volunteer opportunity for you! Come in to sort and bundle, children's clothing and accessories for our weekly Giving Closet. These items are distributed free of charge to families. Schedule is flexible, usually Monday through Thursday, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

RSVP GROUP VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Join fellow RSVP volunteers on Wednesday, January 22 from 10:00-12:00 to volunteer together at Welcome Baby. Meet other RSVP volunteers and visit a new station! We will help sort and bundle children's clothes. No heavy lifting and tasks may be completed sitting or standing. We need up to 8 volunteers to sign up for this assignment.

Welcome Baby serves about 70 families each week distributing clothing, diapers and equipment. They offer a comprehensive range of resources and programs that are designed to strengthen families and promote healthy child development. Services include [positive parenting workshops](#), breastfeeding support, [car seat safety](#), literacy-based workshops and a free clothing program that provides clothing up to size 5/6.

Volunteer!

Questions? Email Amanda at amanda@tnvlc.onmicrosoft.com



The Scrap Exchange

The Scrap Exchange is a reuse arts shop where customers can find all sorts of fabric, sewing and craft supplies, paper and office items, hardware, toys, jewelry supplies, metal and wood scraps. Volunteer opportunities include these areas:

Books + Media Processing

Cleaning the Stores + Tidying The Yard

Clothes + Accessories Processing

Frames + Housewares Processing

Craft + Art Processing

Fabric + Upholstery

Paper + Office Processing

Scrap + Barrel Item Processing (Saturdays only)

Tile, Wood, + Hardware Processing

Toy + Game Processing

Yarn + Notions Processing

To learn more about all of these volunteer needs, please click the link below.

Volunteer!

Questions? Email Amanda at amanda@tnvlc.onmicrosoft.com

National Emergency Child Care Network



The National Emergency Child Care Network's goal is to ensure every family has equal opportunity to access and utilize free emergency child care during a crisis. Skilled and trained volunteers are deployed after the family completes an online form for emergency child care services. Volunteer child care providers will meet families at their home, at a disaster shelter, or where the crisis has occurred to ensure the safety and well-being of the children.

Learn more about volunteering at one of their virtual information sessions below. Contact Silke Knebel, founder and CEO, for the Zoom link if you would like to attend, silke.knebel@emergencychildcare.org.

Mon Jan 13 @ 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM ET

Wed Jan 15 @ 7:30 PM to 9:00 PM ET

Featured RSVP Volunteer

Kris Fahje



Kris Fahje moved to Durham in late 2023 and began volunteering with the Museum of Life and Science (MLS) the following spring. She moved to Durham to be closer to family and has spent a lot of time at MLS with her grandchildren over the years. She had such a great experience visiting the museum and wanted to give back through volunteering. Kris also heard Miguel and Margaret Rubiera from Emanuel Food Pantry speak at her church about volunteering at the food pantry. Supporting organizations that address food insecurity is a passion for Kris.

Kris has found that since retiring, she needs a commitment to and with others that support the community. Volunteering at both the Museum of Life and Science and the Emanuel Food Pantry has provided two different types of volunteer experiences. While at the museum, she is front and center with people and has more interaction with visitors. She interacts with young children and their families in various areas of the museum. Volunteering at Emanuel allows her to work behind the scenes packing food boxes and directing traffic. There is a spirit of unity to work together to provide food for those who need it.

Both stations require training before starting to volunteer. The museum provides specific training before volunteers get started in any area. The food pantry has a specific way to pack the boxes and to direct the cars through the car line. Kris said that every nonprofit has their own type of training and volunteers may want something more directed or may prefer to figure out a system that works for them.

Kris said that both stations have been very welcoming and inclusive. She has received personal support within the volunteer community. Kris noted that coming together to volunteer provides a common purpose and commitment to an important mission. Thank you, Kris, for making a difference in our community!

Remembering Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

by AmeriCorps Staff



August 2023 marked the 60th anniversary of the March on Washington and Dr. King's historic "I Have a Dream" speech. His words still resonate today as a powerful symbol of his unwavering dedication to a fair and just society, urging all Americans to unite in pursuit of a shared vision of freedom and justice. Six decades later, we continue to honor and be inspired by Dr. King's legacy on MLK Day and every day, like our AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer Florence.

Learning Peace from Dr. King

AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer Florence marched alongside Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., during the civil rights movement. Florence was living in Phoenix, Ariz., with her airman husband. Like her experience growing up in Illinois, Florence faced discrimination in Phoenix, which motivated her to join the movement. More than 50 years later, Florence continues to remember and honor Dr. King by serving her community as a Foster Grandparent in Illinois.

“Martin had a powerful voice. He was a short, dark-skinned Black man, but he had a voice that would project anywhere. When I first met Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., I was ready to fight. But the first thing he said when we got there to march from Selma to Montgomery, Ala., was, ‘If you want to fight, go home because we’re not fighting. This is going to be a peaceful demonstration.’ And he talked us into being peaceful, which I carry with me today.

“You just don’t understand how it is when you’re in a situation like that. I was discriminated against, but never to that extent in Alabama. That was a horrible feeling to be discriminated against with dogs turned on you to bite you and police there with guns saying, ‘You can’t do this, you can’t do that.’ I never had that much power against me. We marched for as long as we could and spent nights out in the area, encountering planes flying overhead and bombs. There were a lot of times we were ready to give up, but Martin kept us going until that fateful day at the motel.

“We weren’t supposed to stay at that motel in Memphis, Tennessee. We went down to help bring the sanitation workers union into effect. We were scheduled to stay at the hotel, but when we got there, they said we couldn’t stay. We had to stay at the motel. They told Martin not to go out on the balcony, but he had to speak to his constituents. He had been out there about five minutes when he was shot. I was in another room at the motel and came running to see if we could do anything, but there wasn’t. Everybody wanted to fight at that moment, but we couldn’t. We needed to go by Martin’s wishes– be peaceful.”

Committing to a Life of Service

Grandma Flo has since dedicated her time to service. She joined ABC AmeriCorps at Sauk Valley Community College, serving in local schools, and then she continued to work in her community. She faced challenges again but found solace through service. They’re talkative in second grade, but they’re great to work with and willing to learn, and that’s the best part about it.

“My husband left me; I was alone, just sitting at home, thinking of something I needed to do. I saw an opportunity to serve again as an older adult at ABC AmeriCorps, so I joined again to serve my community. Joining AmeriCorps Seniors is the best thing I have ever done because working with children gives me the incentive to keep going. The incentive to get up in the morning, come to school, and work with them. It’s very rewarding, and you can learn from children. Children can teach you some things that maybe you’ve forgotten.

“I don’t tell my students or others that I marched with Martin Luther King, Jr., unless someone asks because people don’t remember. But MLK Day of Service means everything. They celebrate the day, and it’s a national holiday, but many people have forgotten Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Day of Service is an opportunity to honor him. More people should know what it was all about and how it affected everybody’s lives. They should never forget that.”

Commit to Building the Beloved Community

Like Grandma Flo, many AmeriCorps members, AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers, and alums have found their purpose through remembering Dr. King. Whether it’s to relive the memory of marching alongside Dr. King or honor his legacy, AmeriCorps has been committed to joining together in service to unify Americans of different backgrounds and experiences to transform unjust systems.

Commit to serve and create ripples that make a world of difference. [Join the thousands of Americans](#) from all walks of life who will participate in service projects to honor Dr. King's legacy. Through service, together, we are one step closer to the Beloved Community of Dr. King's dream.

We want to hear from YOU!

The next time you volunteer, take a photo and send it to Amanda Stoen amanda@tnvlc.onmicrosoft.com

Thank you for all you do!

Please be sure to add onmicrosoft.robly.com and tnvlc.onmicrosoft.com to your safe sender list to ensure that our emails won't get sent to spam!

