

**February 2025**



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## **Seniors Serve Durham**

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**The official newsletter of Durham's  
Retired Senior Volunteer Program**

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### **From the Desk of Amanda**

Thank you for bringing your compassion, expertise, and service to our community. I have begun visiting the RSVP stations and have met many volunteers already! I have enjoyed hearing your stories and learning more about why each of you serves the places that you do. **This month, we welcome Joy Newman from Emanuel Food Pantry for our Speaker's Series. It will be Wednesday, February 19 from 12:00 - 1:00pm at the Durham Center for Senior Life in the theater.** Please join me to listen to Joy Newman from Emanuel Food Pantry. Many thanks to Kendra Monden from the Durham VA Healthcare System who spoke last month!

**Due to the weather last month, we have rescheduled our group RSVP volunteer opportunity at Welcome Baby for Wednesday, February 5 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!](#)

I am an avid listener of podcasts! Recently I listened to one of my favorite podcaster, Simon Sinek, interview Dr. Vivek Murthy, US Surgeon General, about the cure for loneliness. The discussion centered around the expanding our view of what contributes to our health and well-being. Dr. Murthy discussed social health - where we find belonging and being of service to others. Volunteering helps us be of service to one another and it can bring us joy right now. [Click here if you're interested in listening to the interview.](#)

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](mailto:amanda@tnvlc.onmicrosoft.com) or by phone at (919) 321-6932. Amanda Stoen



## Featured RSVP Station

# Bull City Woodshop



The Bull City Woodshop is a non-profit youth-centered organization that guides individual development, fosters community connection, and cultivates creativity through woodworking. Andrea Bowens is the Founder and Executive Director of BCW. Andrea's passion for woodworking started as a young girl who learned woodworking skills in her local 4-H program. She took after her father who was a carpenter, and she continued to build with wood as a hobby into her adult years.

In 2021, Andrea decided to combine her passions of teaching, mentoring, education, and woodworking to create a program that would expose kids and teenagers to the world of carpentry. Through the teaching of a hands-on skill, it is Andrea's goal to develop meaningful relationships with the students in an effort to help see them through to a successful adult life.

BCW offers Beginning Woodshop to youth in grades 3-6 and Shop Class for youth in grades 7-12. Volunteers are needed to guide and supervise students working in the wood shop and provide assistance on their projects. Volunteers play an active role in the development of each student's social and woodworking skills, provide opportunities for the students to grow, and help maintain a safe and clean environment in the shop. If you are interested in teaching youth how to work with their hands through woodworking, then click on the volunteer link below.

BCW also offers Community Open Shop where you can bring your woodworking projects there. BCW is piloting a program where people from the community can come into the shop and use the tools and space for their personal projects. The volunteer's responsibility for this time would be to: Be present at their open shop hours shift, be available to address general safety/usability concerns for open shop members, report any incidents or tool maintenance needs, and ensure that members have cleaned up before leaving the shop. Click on the volunteer link below to learn more.

Are you interested in sharing the BCW story and representing them at community events? BCW is looking for volunteers to help set up/tear down and tend the BCW booth at local events. Click on the volunteer link below to learn more.

[Volunteer!](#)

Questions? Email Amanda at [amanda@tnvlc.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:amanda@tnvlc.onmicrosoft.com)



Since 1994, more than 27,000 North Carolina residents have served approximately 41 million hours and earned educational awards totaling more than \$103.5 million.

In 2023, more than 3,700 Americans of all ages and backgrounds united to meet local needs, strengthen communities, and expand opportunity through national service in North Carolina.

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

## Community Opportunities

# Slice 325



### Plant Seed Growers Needed

Do you have a knack for talking to plants, giving them names, or just want an excuse to start your mornings whispering, "*Grow, little one, grow*"? Well, you're exactly who Slice 325 is looking for!

Slice 325 is recruiting Plant Seed Growers. **Slice 325 provides the seeds, grow trays, and soil.**

**You provide the water, your time, and all the TLC (tender leaf care) these babies need to thrive.** It only takes **6 to 8 weeks** of love, hydration, and the occasional pep talk ("You've got this, Tomato! You're going places!") before they're ready to graduate and head to the garden.

Want to help Slice 325 grow our community garden *literally* from the ground up? Because behind every great plant is an even greater foster plant parent.

### Photographer and Editor

Slice 325 is looking for a passionate volunteer with experience using Insta360 cameras and editing software. This role will play a crucial part in capturing and producing engaging content to showcase the programs, events, and initiatives, helping them reach a broader audience.

**Volunteer!**

Questions? Email Amanda at [amanda@tnvlc.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:amanda@tnvlc.onmicrosoft.com)

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## Durham VA Healthcare System

The Durham VA Healthcare System has several volunteer opportunities. Visit [www.volunteer.va.gov](http://www.volunteer.va.gov) and click on Volunteer or Donate Now. Complete questionnaire as an individual selecting NC (Durham VA Health Care System 558). In additional information indicate you are a RSVP volunteer. If you cannot access the computer, please call the office at 919-286-0411 ext. 177810 to schedule processing.

### Volunteer Positions Available

*Red Coat Ambassador Greeter/Helper*

*Nursing Home (Community Living Center)*

*Nutrition and Food Service*

*Chaplain Service*

*Administrative*

*Logistics Distribution*

*Nursing UNIT Ambassador*

*Pharmacy*

*Raleigh Vet Center*

*Short Stay Unit Family Waiting Room Liaison*

*Short Stay/4B Greeter/Helper*

*Voluntary Service*

*Public Affairs (Reproduction or My Life My Story)*

**Volunteer!**

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## Featured RSVP Volunteer

# Barbara Smith



Dr. Barbara Smith started volunteering after retiring from a long career in education. She has a special interest in supporting people with disabilities. After moving to Durham, she attended a performance at DPAC – Reality Ministries annual show. She was so impressed with their show that she decided to volunteer with them. Then Covid hit.

Once Covid eased up, Barbara was ready to volunteer again, and she came across a volunteer opportunity with Reality Ministries. Today she volunteers on Tuesdays with them as part of the mingle group as well as their gospel choir. She met a participant on her first day and is still friends with them today. Barbara describes her experience at Reality Ministries as heartwarming.

She feels she is putting a stamp on their life, yet they have helped her through difficult moments as well. With her servant heart, “you look past the disabilities,” says Barbara. “Reality Ministries is a rock where you can go when you don’t have anywhere else to go.” Barbara invites everyone to spend one day with the people at Reality Ministries and it will change you. You will see life differently.

Barbara has also volunteered at Meals on Wheels Durham and the Durham Center for Senior Life. In fact, she is returning there in February to teach a class. The one thing Barbara says she would change about volunteering is that she would have started earlier. Thank you Barbara for sharing your time and your heart through volunteering!



## Aging Well Durham

Aging Well Durham promotes collaborative efforts to build a safe, affordable, accessible, connected and inclusive community for aging adults in Durham. Aging Well Durham is seeking applicants for a Livability Program Coordinator position. The job is full-time with benefits. The closing date to receive resumes and cover letters is Monday, February 17th.

Aging Well Durham is also seeking 10-15 dynamic individuals to join the Aging Plan's Community Advisory Council. The Council's main purpose is to provide input to Aging Well Durham and partnering organizations about proposed activities that support the 2025-2030 Durham Comprehensive Aging Plan, share feedback to Aging Well Durham about the organization's community engagement activities and serve as a space for Aging Well Durham and partnering organizations to learn about emerging priorities for aging adults.

They are seeking individuals to serve on the Council who represent the diverse perspectives and needs of aging adults in both Durham County and Durham City. To be a Council member, individuals must:

- Be at least 50 years old.
- And/or identify as an adult who has a disability.
- Live in Durham County or the City.

If you are interested in joining the Community Advisory Council, please click on this [link](#). For more information, please contact Shelisa Howard-Martinez at (919) 599-9642 or [shelisa@agingwelldurham.org](mailto:shelisa@agingwelldurham.org).

*Questions? Email Amanda at [amanda@tnvlc.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:amanda@tnvlc.onmicrosoft.com)*

### Article of Interest

## Americans Step Up in Volunteerism

by AmeriCorps Staff



In times of tragedy and triumph, Americans rally and unite to help our neighbors. We've seen this in action after the September 11 attacks, on every [Martin Luther King, Jr., National Day of Service](#), and recently after [devastating natural disasters like Hurricane Helene](#).

On November 19, 2024, AmeriCorps released findings from its latest [Volunteering and Civic Life in America research](#), a comprehensive look at how people make a difference in their communities and promote the common good. The research is based on a survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau in partnership with AmeriCorps that takes the pulse of the nation's civic health every two years. The latest data was collected in September 2023.

### **More Americans Served**

After the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted many Americans' lives and their opportunities to volunteer, Americans are still finding meaningful ways to give back. According to the latest Volunteering and Civic Life in America research, more than 54 percent of Americans, or 137.5 million people, informally helped their neighbors between September 2022 and 2023. This represents an increase of 3.4 percent over previous years, a jump that is both statistically significant and impactful in Americans' day-to-day lives. From watching kids to running errands or lending a helping hand, our community showed up for one another during a time of need.

The national volunteering rate also grew by more than 22 percent in just two years. More than 75.7 million Americans, or 28.3 percent, formally volunteered through an organization. These volunteers dedicated more than 4.99 billion hours of service, a contribution of \$167.2 billion in [economic value](#). Whether it was long-term service opportunities such as joining AmeriCorps, signing up to serve at food banks, or becoming a tutor, this is the fastest expansion of formal volunteering ever recorded. It

truly showcases that the spirit of volunteerism is rising in America.

The report also shared the top 10 states with the highest rates of formal volunteering and informal helping. Utah ranked first by both measures, with almost three million Utah residents engaging in at least one of these forms of service.

### **Join the Millions of Americans Making a Difference Across the Country**

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our schools and shelters, hospitals and hotlines, food banks, and civic, nonprofit, tribal, and faith-based organizations across the country. The new research demonstrates how volunteers are essential to the nation's well-being. Each year, more than 200,000 AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers prepare today's students for tomorrow's jobs, help communities and families impacted by COVID-19, connect veterans to services, fight the opioid epidemic, help seniors live independently, rebuild communities after disasters, and lead conservation and climate change efforts.

Through AmeriCorps, everyone has the opportunity to volunteer alongside the millions who empower our communities and its members. AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps Seniors connect Americans to organizations addressing the nation's most urgent needs and challenges. AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers transform lives in the community and their own, too. National service provides benefits like money for college and hands-on experience that supports career or retirement goals.

Whether you're fresh out of school, have a few years of work experience, or are retired, anyone can serve to make a difference. [Join us in uniting across divides and strengthening communities for a more united America through service.](#)

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**We want to hear from YOU!**

**The next time you volunteer, take a photo and send it to Amanda Stoen [amanda@tnvlc.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:amanda@tnvlc.onmicrosoft.com)**

**Thank you for all you do!**

**Please be sure to add [onmicrosoft.robly.com](mailto:onmicrosoft.robly.com) and [tnvlc.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:tnvlc.onmicrosoft.com) to your safe sender list to ensure that our emails won't get sent to spam!**

