



United Way of Johnson &
Washington Counties
1150 5th St, Suite 290
Coralville, IA 52241

319-338-7823
55plusRSVP@unitedwayjwc.org
unitedwayjwc.org/55-rsvp-initiative



55+ RSVP Newsletter

Engaging Volunteers 55+ in Johnson County, IA

November 2020

Director's Note

The colder months have arrived, which means that it's time for me to put on my monster hat. Besides being warm, it's also an easy costume for Halloween or Day of the Dead. Any other time of winter, the hat has a tendency to make people of all ages smile, which is my small act of kindness in an often stressful world.

On October 23rd I wore my hat at the ribbon cutting event for the South District Neighborhood mural. This beautiful mural is located in Iowa City on Broadway St. & Cross Park Ave. I highly recommend a walk by or drive by viewing, if you are able. If you aren't able to go, let me know and I can send you photos. I met many wonderful people at this event which has resulted in potential



55+ RSVP Director, Erin Balvanz at the mural created by South District Neighborhood Center

new RSVP station partnerships. I do believe that we are all inherently Stronger Together!

Stay Safe, Healthy & Warm,

Erin Balvanz

55+ RSVP Director

PREPARE: Fraud Fighters - Future volunteer opportunity!



Learning how to detect and report fraud helps protect you and your loved ones.

Save the Date -December 9, 11am-noon

Iowa Fraud Fighters Presentation by-
Iowa Insurance Division & Johnson Co. 55+RSVP
Virtual Presentation host— Iowa City Senior Center
Zoom link to come...

REFLECT: Virtual Volunteering with U of IA School of Nursing

RSVP volunteer Matt Johnson met with me over zoom to chat about his experience this year as a virtual volunteer patient with the U of Iowa's School of Nursing Elder Care Program.

Q. What did you enjoy about this opportunity?

A. Our daughter is a nurse and so I feel a certain affinity for those pursuing that profession and I just really like volunteering. That's not to say I'm ga-ga over every opportunity, but the ones that I have selected have been quite fulfilling.

Q. What impact do you hope you made?

A. I would hope that the students gain some level of confidence in interacting with people who they have never met. [I hope that it] helps them project strength to, ultimately, their patients, which [in turn] serves as a source of comfort for the patient. I also hope that it establishes some sort of link to the broader Iowa City community for the student.

Q. What kind of questions were asked during the interview?

A. The questions were both medically oriented and experience oriented. We discussed the meds I was taking and why, we discussed medical history, but we also talked about life experiences and lessons learned over the course of the 65 years I have been roaming around! She even asked about what one piece of advice I would convey to someone in her age group, based on my experiences. Imagine that! . . . An oracle I am not! I told her that I thought it was important to frame the decisions we make today against what the long-term impact of those decisions will be, even as difficult as that is sometimes.

Q. Would you recommend others to volunteer for this opportunity?

A. Anyone who enjoys meeting people would enjoy this opportunity. I probably asked as many questions as Addie [the student nurse] did and learned from that exchange. It was very positive and served as quite a nice tonic for these days when we don't get a lot of great news on a daily basis, you know?

I do know, Matt, I do. And, I believe we all hold a bit of oracle magic. I'm delighted you enjoyed this volunteer experience!



ENGAGE: At Home



The world is full of kind people... If you can't find one, be one.

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS FOUNDATION

November 5 [International Volunteer Managers Day](#)

Although not everyone has the title of [Volunteer Manager](#), RSVP engages with many people that perform these roles. **Thank you RSVP Station Coordinators as well as their organizations and staff that support valuable missions!**

November 13 [World Kindness Day](#)

November 15-22 [Hunger & Homelessness Awareness week](#)
Shelter House—"MORE THAN A ROOF AND A BED." Although we can't currently volunteer with this RSVP Station, we can read more about their mission [here](#).

November 21 [National Family Volunteer Day](#)

ENGAGE: Volunteer Opportunities

- **New!** RSVP Fraud Fighters Presenter
-Train to present as a Fraud Fighter. Presentations will be virtual until safe.
- RSVP Medical Transportation Program
Volunteer Driver
- Visiting Nurse Association
Flu Clinic Volunteer
[Collette Hartley & Joelle Dickerson](#)
- U of IA—College of Nursing (FULL)
[Shalome Tonelli](#)
- Table to Table—*Route Volunteer*
[Jared Long & Zach Vig](#)
- Jo Co Historical Society
Barn Restoration Volunteer
[Richard Tyler & Alexandra McKendree](#)
- Horizons Meals on Wheels
Volunteer Driver
[Doreen Nott](#)
- Crowded Closet
Retail or Workroom Volunteer
[Christine Maust Beachy](#)
- Coralville Community Food Pantry
Food Pantry or Delivery Volunteer
[PJ Guayara](#)
- CommUnity— *Food Pantry Volunteer*
[Krystal Kabela](#)

Stations Suspended due to COVID-19

- U of IA - College of Medicine- [Billie Runden](#)
- Shelter House—[T'Shailyn Harrington & Anthony Forchetti](#)
- Ronald McDonald House Charities of Eastern IA & Western IL—[Shannon Greene](#)
- Mediation Services of Eastern Iowa
—[Annie Tucker & David Ulrick](#)
- Iowa City VA Health Care System
—[Britney Roman](#)
- Iowa City Community School District & United Way of Johnson & Washington Counties -(Reading Buddies/Pen Pals) -
[Ann Thomas, Dorian Aragon & Patti Fields](#)
- Iowa City Police Department—[Derek Frank](#)
- Iowa City Animal Care—[Lisa Bragg](#)
- Bur Oak Land Trust— [Jason Taylor](#)
- ALS Association—[Sarah Lettow](#)

For interest in volunteering
contact: RSVP Director Erin Balvanz
erin.balvanz@unitedwayjwc.org
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CELEBRATE

Stations: 18

Volunteers: 140

Hours: 695

*July 1 - September 30, 2020

Volunteer Insights



Every year, since 2012, RSVP Volunteer Sue Aitchison and her family have created Ugly Pumpkins. Before March of this year, Sue was an avid driver with the RSVP Medical Transportation Program. When COVID-19 hit in March, Sue transitioned from driving to sewing masks. **Sue has sewn 2800 masks for her community!!!** In the photo, above right, Sue and her ugly pumpkin are sporting a couple homemade masks from Sue's Halloween collection.

55+ RSVP is sponsored by



United Way of Johnson
& Washington Counties

Are you a 55+ RSVP Volunteer with something to share?

We want to hear from you! Send your poems, stories, photos, etc. to

55+ RSVP Director: erin.balvanz@unitedwayjwc.org