



# Greater Hartford & Central CT RSVP

## RSVP Focus:

- Education K-12 Success: Public School Tutoring
- Healthy Futures: Aging in Place: Transportation & Companionship
- Economic Opportunity: Financial Literacy
- Serving Veterans & Military Families
- Adult Literacy
- Other Community Priorities

## Volunteer Programs:

- READS Tutor
- Medical Transportation Driver
- Bradley Ambassador
- Homebound Meal Delivery
- Foodshare Volunteer
- Adult Literacy Tutor
- Vernon Public Schools Mentor
- Hartford Marathon Foundation Volunteer
- Hartford Hospital Volunteer

## RSVP Welcomes New Volunteers

### Introduction

RSVP is America's largest senior volunteer network. Today, the Greater Hartford & Central CT RSVP continues to provide seniors 55+ with quality, well organized, meaningful volunteer opportunities that match their skills and interests. We are now proudly serving five new towns in Central Connecticut namely, Berlin, Meriden, New Britain, Southington and Wallingford, where both a Read-

ing Tutor Program and a Medical Transportation program were introduced earlier in 2016. Volunteers have the gratifying opportunity to serve the children and seniors in their respective communities.

We want to thank all those who are newly registered with the Greater Hartford & Central CT RSVP and of course we welcome new volunteers to join us. We truly appreciate the opportunity to pro-

vide you with meaningful volunteer opportunities to keep you actively engaged. Let's warmly welcome:

Anita Bains	Steve McCarty
Eileen Camp	Lucia Murkette
Gail Carlson	Phil Newton
Ken Drapaeu	Caroline Tassistro
Mary Duane	Nanci Scully
Janet Freiere	Eufemio Vazquez
Catherine Glavas	Al Urso
Lynn Karwoski	Sheila Ward
Ralph Lombardi	Matthew Wynne
John Loughran	Karoll Wiater
Abby Lupacchino	Mike Wiater



## From the Director

It's hard to believe that another year has gone by for us at RSVP; but we are excited to be bringing additional volunteer engagement opportunities to our members, including our RSVP READS program expansion into Berlin and New Britain. In addition,

we are happy to report that are Volunteer Medical Transportation Program is operating beyond expectations and we are now able to augment transportation services for seniors, disabled, and veterans in Southington, New Britain, and Berlin thanks to our

volunteers in this program.

We look forward to having a great year in 2016-17 and sincerely thank all of our volunteers for their time, dedication, and support as we strive to continue to help the communities we serve.

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## Greater Hartford & Central CT RSVP

### New Volunteer Opportunities: RSVP READs Tutors



**“A book is a device to ignite the imagination.” Alan Bennett**

According to the US Department of Education, “the more students read for fun on their own time, the higher their reading scores”. However, to encourage students to read for fun, a reading habit must be developed by reading with them ([www.raisesmarkids.com](http://www.raisesmarkids.com)). Do you want to help students in your community become more proficient learners by developing their love for reading?

The RSVP READs Program is operated as a school-based program where volunteers partner with students in local elementary

schools settings, providing reading guidance, while listening to students read and also reading to them for 1 hour per week from October-May of each school year.

RSVP READs tutors make reading interesting, fun and also act as positive role models, inspiring their students to read as they indirectly express to them the benefits of reading.

Presently READs Tutors volunteer in the school districts of Manchester, Vernon & Portland. However in the fall of 2016, we are expanding the program and anticipate needing

a minimum of 130 volunteers age 55+ to tutor students in the Berlin & New Britain school districts. Just tell us what days of the week you’re available to donate a minimum of 1 hour and what school district you are willing to serve in; and we will place you accordingly. You can also choose to serve as a substitute only, if that works better for your schedule. As a READs RSVP Tutor, we can promise you will truly make a difference in the lives of the students you touch. So, why not choose to volunteer today and share your love of reading with the children in your community?



### Vernon Public School Mentors

RSVP and Vernon Board of Education believe in nurturing students’ emotional, social, and behavioral health by helping to meet their individual needs, supporting families and the community. RSVP volunteers have the privilege of being a part of this movement through a unique new program to our project – The “RSVP Vernon Mentoring Program”. Each volunteer is paired with a student identified by school staff and par-

ticipates in enrichment activities for 1-2 hours per week at a particular Vernon elementary school. These activities will be aimed at developing their mentees creativity, problem solving and communication skills.

Presently RSVP Mentors are placed at Lake Street School in Vernon. However the program is expected to expand to Maple, Northeast and/or Skinner Road schools for 2016-17.

### Adult Literacy Tutors

Low literacy levels and a growing ethnic diversity in communities create challenges for many adults. To help struggling adults face these challenges and improve their quality of life, volunteers can facilitate free literacy classes in one-on-one or small group settings. RSVP volunteers can assist students in New Britain by volunteering with the Siena Learning Center or The Literacy Volunteers of Central CT. Volunteers can also assist in Meriden and Wallingford with the Literacy Volunteers of Greater New Haven, Meriden & The Valley.

### Register as an RSVP Volunteer Today!

To volunteer with the Greater Hartford & Central CT RSVP-Program, you must do the following:

- Contact us at RSVP 860-760-3088 OR 860-760-3077 or email Theresa at [strongt@crtct.org](mailto:strongt@crtct.org) and arrange to complete RSVP registration forms and other supporting documents,

such as background check forms, if required. (RSVP Staff will meet one-on-one with you and explain the program in detail).

- Attend training sessions with RSVP staff and other resource persons when necessary.
- Provide supporting docu-

mentation related to your service if necessary.

Nothing will be more rewarding than that welcoming smile, or expression of appreciation from the people that you serve. The feeling that you get because you touched their lives, in such a valuable and special way is priceless.



## Other Volunteer Opportunities

### Medical Transportation Drivers

There is a transportation gap facing seniors who experience challenges getting to non-emergency medical appointments in their hometowns or nearby. Presently RSVP volunteer drivers help meet the transportation needs of seniors, the disabled and veterans in the communities of Berlin, New Britain & Southington.

Medical transportation volunteers provide non-emergency medical transportation using your own vehicle within their community

and communities nearby. This free service augments the local transportation services provided in the afore-mentioned towns.

### Bradley Ambassadors

The Bradley Ambassadors Program originally started 25 years ago as a volunteer program facilitated by RSVP, the Community Renewal Team Inc., and by the Connecticut State DOT & Bradley International Airport. In 2011, the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA) was established to develop, improve and operate the state's five aviation airports and

Bradley International Airport (BDL). Thus in an effort to continue to ensure a positive experience for passengers and visitors, the moment they enter the airport perimeter and to assist in offering pleasant facilities through service and friendly staff, the CAA and BDL took over sponsoring the RSVP Bradley Ambassadors Program.

Bradley Ambassador are knowledgeable of the State of Connecticut, have their own transportation, a flexible time frame to volunteer, possess the ability to speak clearly and enjoy meeting and interacting

with a variety of people. The CAA/BDL Marketing Department facilitates a training session, after which new volunteers are expected to shadow a "seasoned" Ambassador for a one month period. Ambassadors from then provide assistance to travelers and visitors at the airport by answering inquiries on a myriad of subjects. Volunteers are always needed.



## Other Volunteer Opportunities

### Homebound Meal Delivery

Through CRT's Meals On Wheels program, volunteers can assist with the delivery of meals to homebound seniors 60+ who live in Vernon and Enfield areas. Hot lunches and cold dinners which cater to special diets are delivered the next day by Meals on Wheels volunteers. Weekend meals are delivered by volunteers on Fridays. Volunteers also provide

social interaction through their daily contact with those homebound senior recipients who are referred to CRT by doctors, hospitals, VNA's, town social service departments, relatives and other concerned persons or agencies. Volunteers are expected to have a valid drivers license, consent to screenings and background checks, be friendly and show genuine concern for their clients.

### Foodshare

RSVP volunteers who wish to assist with the Food Share volunteer program now have more opportunities to do so. They can assist with our **Mobile Food Distribution** on Marshall Street in Hartford twice a month serving food recipients, coordinating lines and ensuring that food recipients move to the different food tables in the correct order. Volunteers can also serve in the

following roles as:

#### Reclamation Volunteers:

Inspecting, sorting, packaging and boxing food received by Food Share from its donors.

#### Foodshare Truck Riders:

The Foodshare truck Volunteer Rider assists with getting food stored in the truck onto distribution tables and assisting with organizing/replenishing food on tables.

## Other Volunteer Opportunities

### Hartford Marathon Foundation

At HMF, RSVP volunteers have the opportunity to assist the foundation with organizing for and coordinating healthy lifestyle events state-wide. Volunteers can assist with bib mailing, athlete shirt distribution, race course monitoring or at athlete food/water stations. Volunteers serve before OR on event days for 1-3 hours and although there are no physical fitness requirements, they are expected to

stand for at least an hour while performing tasks. The best part is you can pick whichever events during the year to help with that work with your own schedule.

### Hartford Hospital Volunteers

At Hartford Hospital, RSVP volunteers can be very instrumental in ensuring that patients and their families receive quality care and service. Volunteers support core

hospital staff and can serve just a few hours per week as Patient Meal Mates, Surgical Family Lounge Liaisons, 'Read to Grow' advocates, or as Information & Hospitality assistants. This is a great opportunity to give back to your community and assist individuals in their time of need.

### Food for thought:

*"Volunteering is a great opportunity to make a difference in someone's life, be a part of a team, share your experience, learn new skills and develop lasting friendships. We'll provide ongoing training and support in your new role. That's the RSVP promise!"*

## The Greater Hartford & Central CT RSVP

Address:  
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Hartford, CT  
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E-mail: [strongt@crtct.org](mailto:strongt@crtct.org)  
[wisdomd@crtct.org](mailto:wisdomd@crtct.org)



### PRESS RELEASE

The Community Renewal Team's Retired Senior Volunteer Program of Greater Hartford and Central Connecticut, is now seeking volunteers age 55+ to serve in our signature READs Tutor Program for the 2016-17 school year. The RSVP READs Program is school-based and volunteers are partnered with students at local elementary schools, providing reading guidance for 1 hour per week from October-May of the school year. RSVP READs Tutors share their love of reading making it interesting and fun, while being positive role models and inspiring their students.

This coming school year (2016-2017), the RSVP READs Program is expected to be operating in 3 Berlin elementary school and up to 10 elementary schools in New Britain. We therefore anticipate needing a minimum of 130 volunteers to serve these towns. Volunteers, simply tell us which weekdays you are available to serve a minimum of 1 hour per week and we will place you accordingly. You can also choose to serve on a substitute basis only.

### Call RSVP today at:

(860)-760-3088 or 860-760-3077

### Survey says...

Here's what our community partners and volunteers are saying about their experience with the Greater Hartford & Central CT RSVP's **READs Tutor Program**:

*"I feel it was a great program. The students and tutors enjoyed it and look forward to meeting every week."*

*"Thank you for bringing this wonderful program to our school. The teachers like having their students meet with tutors. Likewise, students enjoyed the special attention and reading with their tutor."*

*"The program is terrific. I think the students, teachers and volunteers feel it was beneficial and enjoyable."*

*"The program is as beneficial to the tutor as to the student. It's a win-win for both. Having Dr. Tyler on site every week made the program run very smoothly. I'm looking forward to another year."*

*"I enjoy participating in Vernon READs. I think the children enjoy the one-one-one attention that allows them to read aloud, make mistakes and ask questions in a supportive environment that ultimately improves their reading skills."*

*"The volunteer training luncheon was lovely and informative. I am impressed with the organization of RSVP READs. The Christmas treats were great...I definitely felt appreciated."*



**Community Renewal Team**  
Changing lives... Creating opportunity!

## Meet the Greater Hartford & Central CT RSVP Staff



### RSVP Staff:

Theresa Strong

*RSVP Program Manager (right)*

Delores Wisdom

*RSVP Program Coordinator (left)*

Theresa Strong, RSVP Manager has been in her role for almost three (3) years now; with 25+ years municipal government experience (specifically Senior Center and Human Services operations).

Theresa currently serves as President of the CT Senior Corp Association and as a Board Member on the National Senior Corp Association.

Theresa lives in Newington with her husband and two sons and enjoys her parents visiting as 'snowbirds' in the summer as well..

Delores Wisdom has been the RSVP Program Coordinator for the past three years. Her professional background is in Educational Administration, with 15 years of teaching experience.

Presently, Delores serves as a member of the CT Senior Corp Association and also as a board member of the Seniors Job Bank in West Hartford CT.

Delores resides in the town of Bloomfield with her husband, daughter and two sons. She enjoys cooking, writing, the outdoors and travelling, especially to the tropical islands.

Visit us online at  
[www.crtct.org/seniorservices/rsvp](http://www.crtct.org/seniorservices/rsvp)