

# THE POWER OF VOLUNTEERING

Service anchors a city, and in a place as large and complex as New York, it is what connects us across generations, strengthens neighborhoods, and gives daily life a sense of purpose. Volunteers embody that spirit every day, giving their time, sharing their knowledge, and building meaningful relationships with older adults.

My introduction to the aging sector began at age 13, when I volunteered at an older adult center. I remember the conversations, the joy, and what a simple act of presence could mean to someone. I learned early on that connection is its own form of care. That lesson stayed with me. It still shapes how I understand aging and guides the work I do today.

At NYC Aging, volunteers play an essential role in many of our programs. I want to share three opportunities that reflect the importance and impact of volunteers across our programs.

Through our Health Insurance Information and Counseling Assistance Program (HIICAP), volunteers provide over-the-phone and in-person counseling to eligible Medicare beneficiaries. Counselors walk them through their Medicare options, helping them make informed decisions about their health coverage. These conversations bring understanding and assurance. They make



complex systems easier to navigate and ensure no one has to face those decisions alone.

Loneliness and social isolation are two of the most serious challenges facing homebound older adults, and our Friendly Visiting Program was designed to address it. Volunteers visit week after week with consistency and care. Every phone call becomes something to look forward to. Each visit creates a sense of routine and familiarity. Over time, these encounters build trust and create the kind of social engagement that keeps older adults thriving. For many older adults, that relationship becomes a vital part of their lives.

The Foster Grandparent Program rests on the belief that older adults have the experience and

wisdom to make a difference in the lives of young people. Older New Yorkers step into classrooms to support children who benefit from additional attention and encouragement. When an older adult is a steady, trustworthy presence in a child's life, the effect on that child's growth and development can be profound. For volunteers, it is a chance to stay active, present, and invest in future generations.

Our volunteer opportunities embody our commitment to older

New Yorkers, providing the support they need while building pathways for those who want to give back. This work makes our communities stronger while helping older New Yorkers age-in-place in the city they helped build.

New York moves forward when people show up for one another. I invite you to be part of that work. Visit our portal to explore these and many other volunteer opportunities, or call Aging Connect at 212-AGING-NYC (212-244-6469) to learn more about services available to older adults in your community.



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