

# Experience *in Action!*

King County RSVP's news for people 55 & older

Volume 40 | Issue 1 | Spring 2025



## Site Partner Spotlight: Full Life Care supports elders with friendship and community

by Gwen Campbell

"I'm taking a lot off her shoulders so she can do what she needs to do, and that feels good to me," says Eve, a dedicated Care Team volunteer for Full Life Care.

Companionship, socialization, and helping hands are human needs often satisfied by family and friends. However, older adults and people with chronic or terminal illnesses or disabilities, and their unpaid caregivers, may lack these vital connections. That's what Full Life Care provides – health and social services to enhance the quality of life for elders needing assistance

with daily living activities and people with chronic or terminal illnesses and disabilities.

Full Life Care has served the community since the mid-1970s, beginning with Adult Day Health Centers. Today, their network of life-changing services propels their vision of "a future where adults with serious illnesses or disabilities can be supported in the community rather than living in isolation or needing to resort to institutional care."

Full Life Care serves approximately 3,000 people annually in King and Snohomish



Full Life Care friends Suzanne and Barbara enjoy a fun Valentine's Day party together (photo thanks to Full Life Care).

counties, 97% of whom have low incomes, and 76% of whom live below the poverty line. Programs include case management, mental and behavioral health support, healthcare services coordination, and housing stabilization. Three programs – ElderFriends, Adult Day Health Centers, and Care Teams – welcome volunteers.

ElderFriends matches volunteers with elders living independently who feel lonely. Elders and their Friends enjoy regular visits and semiannual social gatherings. Companionship is a powerful tool to prevent or mitigate the health effects of loneliness and isolation, including dementia, stroke, depression, and anxiety.

When the pandemic prohibited ElderFriends' personal visits, volunteers sent heartfelt cards of encouragement reminding elders they were not forgotten. Elders so enjoyed receiving these handmade cards that Full Life Care expanded this outreach with a monthly mailing including enrichment activities and community resources.

ElderFriends volunteers commit to two or three monthly visits for at least one year. Schedules are flexible based on participant and volunteer availability. In matching volunteers with elders, Full Life Care looks for commonalities

and shared interests as well as location to reduce transportation barriers.

Adult Day Health Centers are a clublike environment in which participants socialize, engage in gross motor and cognitive skills activities, and receive needed health support, including occupational therapy and skilled nursing to treat special medical needs such as diabetes care and stroke rehabilitation.

"I come here [to Adult Day Health] because I enjoy it. I need to get stronger and hopefully will get my balance back so I can walk again," says one participant. Adult Day Health Center services empower people to live independently in their own homes or at a community residence. Participants typically attend an Adult Day Health Center for up to 20 hours a week, receiving services funded by Medicare, Medicaid, or long-term care insurance.

Volunteers assist staff – engaging participants in activities and socializing based on individuals' skills, hobbies, interests, and abilities – helping people feel connected and valued. These volunteers commit to a consistent weekly shift of two hours for at least three months.

Care Teams of two-to-four volunteers form Full Life Care's caregiver respite program,

*Continued on page 3*

**Solid Ground's King County RSVP  
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## *EiA* Inside This Issue...

### Giving Care

- ▶ A bittersweet farewell..... p. 2
- ▶ Volunteer appreciation..... p. 2
- ▶ Book Review: 'The Small and the Mighty'..... p. 4
- ▶ Our SHIBA volunteers care..... p. 6



## Speaking Directly

by Megan Wildhood, RSVP Coordinator

### A bittersweet farewell

This is our first *Experience in Action (EIA)* of 2025 – and it will be my last. In April, I'm getting married and moving across the country, so April 18 will be my last day. I'd like to take some time to reflect on the last five and a half years as RSVP Coordinator of King County, and the ways being part of a community that believes in the power of volunteers has shaped my professional and personal life.

This issue's theme is Giving Care, which many readers might think of as caregiving – an honorable and beautiful profession in its own right. But giving care can also mean contributing, in some way, to a cause or group of people that

matters to you, and that's exactly what volunteers do – they give from the heart!

Whatever their role, whatever their capacity, volunteers are in schools, at food banks, on the other ends of phone lines and Zoom screens – all over this county, serving youth, adults, and their fellow seniors.

I got to hear five and a half years of whys – why people want to volunteer, why they stay dedicated even in difficult times like the pandemic – and it's all about caring. Volunteers want to share their experiences, both from their personal and professional lives as well as their time, because ultimately, they want to give care.

As I listened to these stories over the years I've spent in this role, I've seen how sparks of inspiration can lead to volunteers' long-term commitments to serve their communities. It's made me pay attention to "little" moments in my life that grab my heart, whether it's hearing about day trips that volunteers take with seniors to give their family caregivers some respite, or meeting with a site partner to learn how volunteers brighten the days of their program participants.

Working with volunteers, and hearing what motivates and inspires them, has given me hope for humanity time and time again, something one can't ever get enough of, even in normal times! Volunteers are giving their care in our community and all over the county. This *EIA* issue highlights some of them and offers ideas for how you can get involved as a caregiver for your



Megan at a Marra Farm Giving Garden work party (photo by Liz Reed Hawk)

community, too! And that will inspire me for years to come.

It's been an honor to work alongside RSVP volunteers since June 2019. I'm more sensitive to inspiration and more aware of the positive impact volunteers have – indeed how much might not get done without you – in our community. Stay inspired, stay caring, and stay hopeful!

Thank you for a beautiful five and a half years. ●



## Happy Volunteer Appreciation Month!

Building pathways beyond poverty requires the support and dedication of volunteers from all walks of life. Every step forward, no matter how small, contributes to a larger, meaningful change. Thanks for joining us to create a more resilient community! We appreciate your collaboration and investment of time, talent, and passion for our work to end poverty. Last year, **1,265 volunteers** donated **37,610 hours of service**, valued at **\$1.51 million!** You help make it possible to meet basic needs, nurture success, and spread change in our community.

~ With much gratitude, Solid Ground & RSVP staff ~



## It Seems to Me...

by Peter Langmaid

# Caring for those who cared for you

There are two times in our lives when giving care is our essential responsibility: caring for the young and, when relevant, providing end-of-life care. Childcare is what we do for our children and end-of-life care is what we do for our parents.

Thirty-five years ago, my wife and I were gifted with twin girls. Despite all the reading, planning, advice, and coaching, we couldn't really imagine what it would be like until we got there. And it was beyond amazing, both emotionally and physically.

After my paternity leave ended and my therapist wife resumed her private practice, we were faced with finding childcare. On one hand, we didn't want to put our kids into an understaffed, for-profit childcare center, and on the other hand, we both needed to work to pay the bills.

So, the search began to find someone who would come to our home and care for the most important people in our lives. Our search led us to a woman who lived in our area. She was a wonderful caregiver, and our kids became firmly attached to her, as did she to them. Long after our need for her ended, we would visit her.

I learned three important lessons from this experience. One, caregiving is more of a calling and an art than simply

a job. Two, in-home caregiving is expensive to pay for, but not a lot to earn. And three, good childcare lasts a lifetime and, along with education, is the best thing a society can do for itself.

On the other end of the spectrum is end-of-life care.

If you're lucky, you'll die peacefully at home of something called 'old age' with your mind more or less intact and your body simply giving out. You'll be surrounded by loving family and close friends.

But that's if you're lucky.

We have a close friend whose father is 102 years old. (That's right, 102!) His mind is clear, his memory is fading, and he's bedridden in an upscale nursing home – 3,000 miles away! Though our friend talks with his dad three or four times a week, the calls are difficult because his bedridden dad can't do anything, so there's little to talk about.

Additionally, our friend feels obligated to visit his father frequently, a trip that takes over six hours each way, and the visits are characterized by the same lack of content as the phone calls. Even though this is difficult, my friend keeps calling and visiting.

My dad died over 30 years ago and was never in a nursing home, but I remember with shame my



impatience with him over the phone. I hope he didn't sense my annoyance. My advice is to continue all communication, no matter how difficult and frustrating, so you won't regret it later.

Despite end-of-life care that's skilled, compassionate, and responsible, it can't affect the inevitable outcome; it can merely soften the stress of the end of life on everyone.

My wife's mother died after a long descent into dementia. The decline was slow, and it was agonizing to watch the person who raised her disappear into oblivion. The cruelty of the disease and the agony of the decline filled my wife with overwhelming feelings of guilt and helplessness. When the inevitable finally arrived, she felt grief combined with relief.

Our children represent the future, our parents the past. As a society, we need to cultivate greater care in the beginning and at the end of life. ●

*Peter Langmaid is a semi-retired businessman, RSVP Ambassador, and longtime EIA contributor.*

## Full Life Care (continued from page 1)

offering social, emotional, and practical support. Care Team duties depend on each caregiver's needs and volunteers' abilities. Care Teams help reduce stress, prevent burnout, and improve the quality of life for both caregivers and care recipients.

Typical activities include assisting with light tasks such as gardening or grocery shopping or providing companionship to the care recipient so the caregiver can enjoy leisure activities, run errands, or just relax.

Care Team members visit during the day and don't provide any medical care. Volunteers commit to four hours per month of caregiver respite for one year. Care Team members may be friends or get matched by Full Life Care. They may visit participants together or separately.

Volunteers are drawn to Full Life Care for many reasons. Some miss caring for a loved one or desire a meaningful connection to their community upon

retirement. "I felt like I wasn't doing anything except playing," says Eve. "I wanted to meet new people, and working in a team seemed like a good idea."

If you're compassionate, kind, patient, and open-minded, you already have the skills to volunteer with Full Life. You'll support a highly vulnerable community in which the challenges participants face are complex. And you'll bring joy, friendship, and support to those who need it. ●

*Individual volunteers and groups are welcome! Contact RSVP at [rsvp@solid-ground.org](mailto:rsvp@solid-ground.org) if you're interested!*



# RSVP



## AmeriCorps Seniors

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is a nonprofit AmeriCorps Seniors program sponsored locally by Solid Ground. RSVP meets critical community needs by encouraging and supporting volunteerism in King County for people 55 and older.



At Solid Ground, we believe **poverty is solvable**. Our approach combines direct services with community-based advocacy. We support individuals while working to undo racism and other oppressions that create barriers – so everyone can achieve their full potential.

# EIA

*Experience in Action! (EIA)* is published by King County RSVP and distributed to 3,500 RSVP members, senior volunteers, and friends. The EIA is dedicated to providing news, information and opportunities about senior volunteerism. Articles express writers' opinions, which aren't necessarily the views of RSVP, Solid Ground, or EIA. We reserve the right to refuse any material deemed unsuitable. Articles may be edited to meet technical and editorial policy guidelines.

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# Sharon McMahon's 'The Small and the Mighty'

*A book review by Bill Pharr*

In *The Small and the Mighty: Twelve Unsung Americans Who Changed the Course of History, from the Founding to the Civil Rights Movement*, author Sharon McMahon proves that the most remarkable Americans are often ordinary people who didn't make it into the textbooks. Not the presidents, but the telephone operators. Not the aristocrats, but the schoolteachers.

Through meticulous research, she discovers history's unsung characters and brings their rich, riveting stories to light for the first time. In this time of massive upheaval in our society, the true stories in this book demonstrate that ordinary people can overcome major challenges to achieve their goals.

America's Government Teacher, as McMahon brands herself, turns out to be a reliable guide into lesser-known corners of history as well.

Her initial specimen is Gouverneur Morris, a friend of Alexander Hamilton and fellow signer of the Declaration of Independence, who's unjustly forgotten in our day despite the fact that he wrote the preamble to the Constitution ("We the people...").

Many more of McMahon's subjects were never known to history in the first place: the enslaved Clara Brown, for instance, who moved westward to the frontier of Colorado and built a tidy fortune that, alas, did not outlive her.

McMahon calls on the clothier Levi Strauss, who added rivets to jeans and then "marketed the heck out of them" as "the only kind made by white labor" (though enslaved people grew the cotton and indigo they were made from and dyed with).

The mid-19th-century president James Buchanan openly lived with his male partner who "helped found a city you may have heard of because of the Civil Rights movement: Selma, Alabama." Katharine Lee Bates, composer of America the Beautiful, also had a same-sex partner. As a couple, they "were obviously in love and 'together' together."

McMahon also tips her hat to Daniel Inouye, the Hawaiian senator who, in the era of Japanese American imprisonment during World War II, distinguished himself as a battlefield hero.

All the true stories are wonderful to read about, but my favorite is that of Julius Rosenwald, which differs from most of the others in the book in that he ended up being quite wealthy. In his lifetime, he became the largest shareholder of Sears Roebuck. His story is my favorite because one day he said to himself (in my words), "I have too much money and I need to give it away and help people, especially people of color." And he did just that!

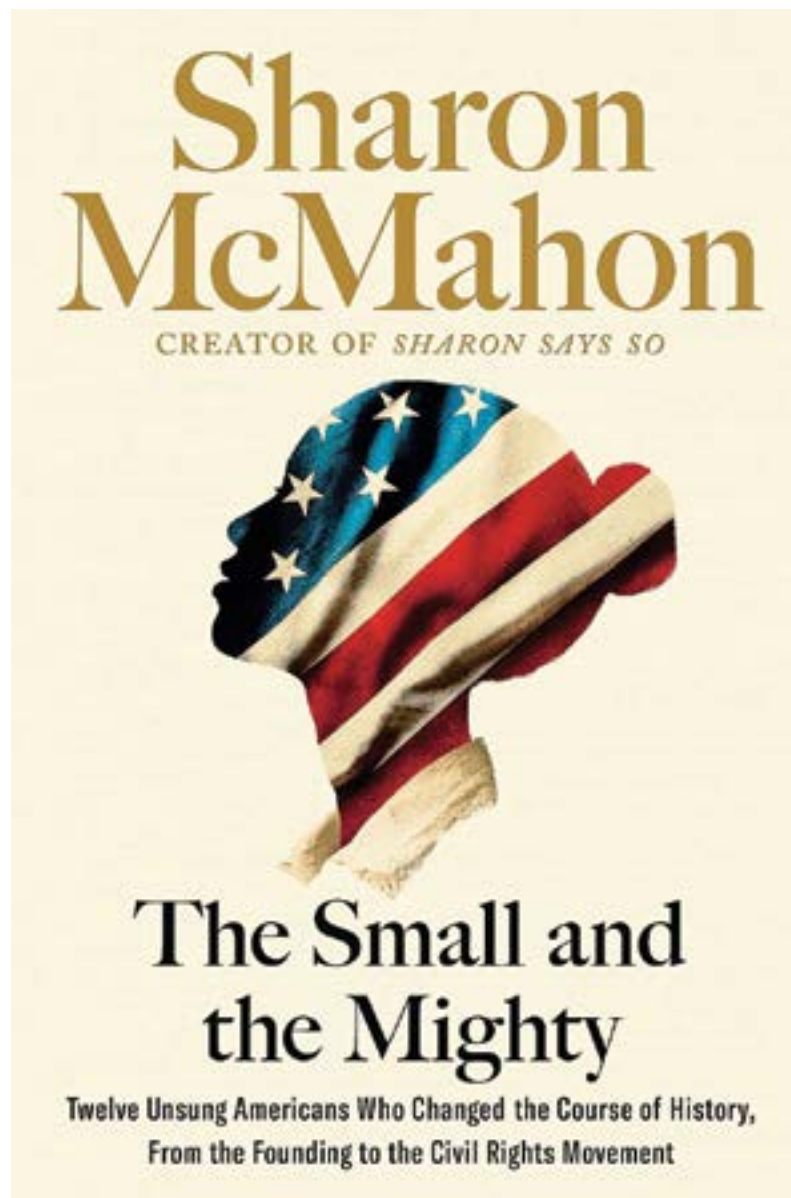
Rosenwald should be an inspiration to the billionaires and multimillionaires of today. I say this because there are trillions of dollars uselessly sitting in brokerage accounts across the country at a time when our society needs money for education, health care, infrastructure, and environmental protection, among other areas of need.

McMahon is generally nonsectarian, denounces the "moral panic" that is the enemy of progress, and defends critical race theory. Her carefully researched book is just plain fun to read, especially at moments such as her takedown of those who hold that the Civil War was about states' rights: "Calmly look them in the eye, and ask, politely and inquisitively, what exactly the states wanted the 'right' to do?"

The *Small and the Mighty* is an accessible, cheerful, and affectionate portrait of Americans who, though little known, made a difference.

This is a book about what really made America – and Americans – great. McMahon's cast of improbable champions will become familiar friends, lighting the path we journey in our quest to make the world more just, peaceful, good, and free. ●

*Bill Pharr is a retired business owner and financial advisor, RSVP Ambassador, and regular EIA contributor.*



## Calling Volunteer Enthusiasts 55 & Older!

*Passionate about making a difference?*

**We need YOU to share your experience and skills to help meet critical community needs!**

Solid Ground and RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) host several virtual info sessions a year to highlight current opportunities. We'll discuss...

- ▶ Critical needs of families, youth, and seniors in your community.
- ▶ What's being done to assist them.
- ▶ The impacts volunteers are making.
- ▶ How you can provide support, services, and encouragement.
- ▶ All current RSVP opportunities (virtual and in-person).

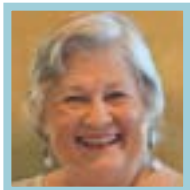
***All are welcome!***

### RSVP's 2025 Info Sessions for volunteers 55 & older

*Join a virtual session via Zoom to learn about critical needs in King County!*

- ▶ Thursday, May 8, 2025 | 10:30 - 11:45am
- ▶ Tuesday, October 7, 2025 | 1:15 - 2:30pm

**To view all events & register, visit:**  
[solid-ground.org/rsvp/#events](https://solid-ground.org/rsvp/#events)



## Aging with Wisdom

by Carol Scott-Kassner

# Giving care through deep listening

In the early 2000s, I entered a Master of Arts in Transforming Spirituality (MATS) program at Seattle University. I had left a tenured university position because I felt called to return to Seattle and to work spiritually in the world. I was in my late 50s. Seattle had been my home since the mid-'60s when I first came here as a beginning teacher. I moved away for work at a university in Florida but longed to return to the Seattle area.

When I entered the MATS program, I had no idea where it would lead. They promised students that we would figure that out by the time we were ready to graduate in three or four years. To help us discern what was next, we each did a three-quarter internship someplace in the community. I chose to work at an adult day center in Rainer Valley. It was a transformative experience for me and helped me discern that I wanted to work in the field of the spirituality of aging after graduation.

The concept of adult day centers is brilliant. They provide gathering places for people who may be isolated in their homes. They give relief to family members who need a break from caring for a loved one. They provide a sense of community, joy, and friendship, as well as a meal for those who visit.

Activities are diverse and include doing simple exercises, holding group discussions, listening to books or presentations, making music together, creating art, having a meal together, holding intimate conversations with another person, and receiving medical care, among other things.

One of the things people most loved when I did my internship was to tell their stories. Sometimes we did that with a small group in a "Story Circle." Sometimes we did that one on one. In each of these instances, the focus was on deep and respectful listening to whoever was speaking.

Our stories reflect our lives, and recalling them helps to bring back memories of times past and moments that had meaning to us. Cesare Pavese said, "We don't remember days, we remember moments." Providing a context for sharing moments can be a gift.

Often, Story Circles are also called "Wisdom Circles." People who participate must pledge to follow these rules: One person talks at a time while others listen. What is shared in the Wisdom Circle is private, and not to be shared with others. Participants only listen unless an individual asks for feedback or is willing to answer



questions. In a Wisdom Circle, the leader might start by asking people to describe what they have learned from making a mistake, taking a risk, or doing something they have never done before. It can be any open-ended question that might evoke a wise answer.

A Story Circle might include talking about an adventure someone had, an exciting time in their life, what their first job was, what their hardest job was, etc. In each of these instances, people are invited to tell how they felt about the experience(s) they were having. The feeling component is important.

I was blessed to have the opportunity to get to know two different African American women who had some amazing life adventures. I offered to meet with them individually and record their stories on paper. They were both grandchildren or great-grandchildren of slaves and had grown up in the rural south in poverty of things but richness of love and culture. One had ended up in the Midwest indentured to a family who took her out of school when she was in fourth grade and had her work as a servant.

So, she never learned to read. She did learn to sew and ultimately worked at Children's Orthopedic Hospital making gowns for the children. Since I used to teach children to read, I had her record her story on a tape recorder, and I typed it up in large print and gave it to her along with the tape. My hope was that she would gain some

confidence as a reader when she could read her own story. What was written on paper might make sense, as they were her own words.

Another woman who helped to facilitate the Story Circle got the idea of creating a book of some group members' favorite personal stories about their lives. One of them was a former professional photographer who brought his camera and took individual pictures of each "storyteller." We combined one story from each person with their picture and pulled all of them together to create a book printed

on glossy paper and bound together in a collection.

We had copies printed for each person to receive and one to stay at the day center. Each contributor invited a friend or family member to come to the book reveal party. Everyone dressed in their best clothes, and we had a presentation of this wonderful book of their stories. Excitement and celebration prevailed. It was a wondrous thing to be listened to by others and to feel important enough that their stories and pictures were in this book.

Listening to each other and being listened to by others, even just by one person, acknowledges the value of those being heard. It is a sacred and loving act.

May you find great joy getting to know the people you are with every day. May you find ways to listen, understand, and hold sacred the stories and lives of the people you meet. ●

*Carol Scott-Kassner is a spiritual director and member of Sage-ing International, an organization that supports the development of spiritual depth as we age. For more information, visit [sage-ing.org](http://sage-ing.org).*

## WHAT ARE RSVP AMBASSADORS?

**They're RSVP Volunteers willing to help us spread the word about the benefits of volunteering!**

Because of our small staff, we have a wonderful group of volunteers who help us share RSVP's mission with other seniors. If you're willing to represent RSVP at events around King County, we'd like to talk to you. You'll share your experiences and enthusiasm for volunteering, and encourage others to join RSVP. We provide a fun, interactive training!

## SEND US YOUR HOURS!

**Your RSVP volunteer hours are important!**

Hours are tied to federal funding with benefits provided to you, and they help our volunteer sites and RSVP reach volunteer hour goals. And importantly, they help us recognize you for your service and the contributions you make to meet community needs when you volunteer.



To sign up, send hours, or ask more questions, please contact us at: 206.694.6786 | [rsvp@solid-ground.org](mailto:rsvp@solid-ground.org)

# Our SHIBA volunteers care

by Sam Stones

Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) is a volunteer program that offers free, unbiased assistance navigating Medicare, funded through the Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). Local nonprofits and public partners work with the OIC to manage the program in their communities throughout the state. In King County, the SHIBA sponsors are Solid Ground and Chinese Information and Service Center (CISC).

SHIBA was started by a group of Skagit County volunteers in 1976. The program was the first of its kind in the nation and was so successful by 1990 that the federal government created the national State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), and SHIBA is the SHIP program for Washington state.

What's kept SHIBA so successful for the last 45 years is the compassionate volunteers who truly care about the people they serve and their desire to

help their communities. Medicare has only increased in complexity since SHIBA's start. It can be extremely overwhelming with its infinite number of rules and enrollment timelines. Many people come to us with complex Medicare issues that require quite a bit of research, which our SHIBA volunteers dive into headfirst.

Our volunteers strive to break down health insurance jargon into bite-sized pieces and focus on participants' main concerns and issues. A thank you card one volunteer, Claudia, received notes, "Trying to decipher the complex insurance health plans on my own became nearly impossible. Because of your research, the way forward is possible!"

Health insurance coverage is not only stressful but deeply personal, and the volunteers understand that. Many of the volunteers are on Medicare themselves and know how difficult it can be to navigate the Medicare "alphabet soup."



Even though their work is serious, Solid Ground's SHIBA volunteers and staff can have fun and be silly too! (photo by Carol-Ann Smith)

After a counseling session with a SHIBA volunteer named Karen, a participant commented, "Your kindness and thorough knowledge of the byzantine world of Medicare insurance is like a lighthouse for me who just sees mazes without beginning or end." It helps when people feel like they have an advocate in their corner, which they get when they talk to a SHIBA volunteer.

SHIBA is a unique volunteering experience as it requires extensive ongoing training. Volunteers continuously research and discuss Medicare rules and

regulations with each other and the OIC to make sure they find the right information to give to people they assist. It's an act of love and deep compassion for their community.

As one of our volunteers, Connie, puts it, "When I give some information to a client and then they come back and say, 'OK, I did this, now what happens next?' I feel really hot about that, because I think, OK, this is a person who is going with it, and they're going to be OK. And, you know, we deeply, deeply, deeply want people to be OK." ●

## Welcome to Medicare Workshops: Understand your options!



**Solid Ground SHIBA (Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors) volunteers teach monthly virtual workshops to help people navigate Medicare. In these workshops, we cover:**

- ▶ Medicare A, B, C, and D
- ▶ Enrollment
- ▶ Understanding your Medicare benefits and options
- ▶ Medigaps (supplemental) & Medicare Advantage plans
- ▶ Help paying for Medicare
- ▶ Medicare fraud

Visit [solid-ground.org/workshops/#medicare](https://solid-ground.org/workshops/#medicare) to view all upcoming Medicare workshops and webinars.

## What's new for Medicare in 2025?

**Medicare costs and coverage change each year. Here's an overview of important Medicare cost updates for 2025.**

### Part A & B Premium Changes

Part A is free for most people if you or your spouse worked at least 10 years and paid Medicare taxes. If you don't qualify for premium-free Part A, you can buy it. Each month, you'll pay a premium of either:

- ▶ \$285 if you paid Medicare taxes 30-39 work quarters
- ▶ \$518 if you paid Medicare taxes for 30 or fewer work quarters

The standard monthly Part B Premium for 2025 is \$185. It may be higher depending on your income.

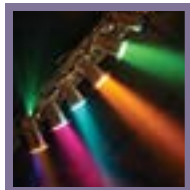
### Part D Prescription Drug Program Changes

- ▶ There's an annual cap of \$2,000 out-of-pocket maximum expenses on covered medications for people enrolled in the Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Program or a Medicare Advantage Plan.
- ▶ A new program called Medicare Prescription Payment Plan is available. This program doesn't lower costs but helps spread your out-of-pocket drug costs throughout the calendar year to help manage expenses. If interested, you can ask your local pharmacist how to enroll.

### Medicare Savings Programs

Medicare Savings Programs (MSPs) are a type of Medicaid available for Medicare beneficiaries. MSPs can help with premium costs, copayments, deductibles, and coinsurance. There are no asset tests for the MSPs; they're based on your income only. Want to see if you qualify? Our SHIBA volunteers are here to help!

Contact Solid Ground's SHIBA intake line at **206.753.4806** or [shiba@solid-ground.org](mailto:shiba@solid-ground.org) to get connected with a SHIBA volunteer for a phone consultation. Visit our website to see locations for in-person appointments: [solid-ground.org/medicare-info/#consultations](https://solid-ground.org/medicare-info/#consultations). ●



## Volunteer Spotlights

### Dino Delyani, Tutor *by Ann Pelayre*

Meet Dino, a dedicated tutor with Catholic Community Services' Youth Tutoring Program (YTP) at the Lake City Center. He's a remarkable volunteer who currently works with two student scholars, a first grader and a fourth grader. Dino volunteers for an hour with each student every week and helps them with reading and homework, provides math resources and, at times, uses his own resources to enhance their learning experience.

Before retiring in 2017, Dino spent 37 years in the tech industry. He also spent time as a high school track and field coach and substitute teacher. Dino's journey with YTP began four years ago when he moved from San Francisco to Seattle in 2020 to be closer to his daughter.

In early 2021, while looking for something meaningful to do, he stumbled across the opportunity to tutor and took a shot at it.

Initially, the tutoring sessions were remote due to the pandemic. Despite some of the challenges this posed, such as not always knowing the scholars or ensuring they had something to do while online, Dino enjoyed the flexibility of it.

Since his extensive tech background involved connecting with people all over the world, working virtually was a familiar concept to him. A year into his volunteering with YTP, they transitioned back to in-person tutoring sessions.

Moving to Seattle marked a new chapter in Dino's life, and tutoring became a significant part of it. Even though he had

no prior tutoring experience, he embraced the opportunity because it gave him the chance to do something educational and, ultimately, he found a lot of joy in it. Volunteering became an anchor in his retirement, connecting him to the outside world, reminiscent of his tech days and the people he partnered with globally.

Tutoring twice a week at 4:30pm gives Dino a sense of purpose, belonging, routine, and stability and helps him stay engaged with the community. For him, every tutoring session is memorable, whether it's reading a book that he enjoyed as a child to a scholar or sharing a laugh with them. Each day brings its own unique moments and a special sense of connection.

But one of Dino's most memorable moments was at a YTP fundraiser. He was tutoring a scholar at the time, and during the event, they were invited on stage and asked questions like "Where did you grow up?" and "What's important to you about tutoring? What do you want to be



Dino in his tutoring element (photo by Tom DeMint)

when you grow up?"

The scholar, a four-foot-tall first grader, wore a suit for the occasion and handled the spotlight with grace despite his initial nervousness – confidence certainly nurtured by regular tutoring sessions.

Dino's commitment, heart, and passion for tutoring make him an invaluable part of the YTP community. His story is a testament to the impact of volunteering and the joy it brings to both the tutors and YTP's scholars. ●

SAVE THE DATE FOR SOLID GROUND'S ANNUAL GALA...

***Building pathways beyond poverty***

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28, 2025 | 5:30 PM DOORS

LOCATION

**SUMMIT**  
@ 900 PINE STREET  
SEATTLE, WA 98101

*Avenue of the Seattle Convention Center*

MORE INFO



Ken & Eve get fresh air doing yardwork together (photo thanks to Full Life Care).

### Eve, Respite Caregiver *by Gwen Campbell*

Eve is one of four members of the longest-serving Full Life Care Team, providing caregiver respite to Ken and Pat since early 2022. Ken is experiencing cognitive decline, and Pat is his loving wife and unpaid caregiver.

Eve volunteers weekly, typically joining Ken for walks, gardening, or grocery shopping. Ken's favorite hobby is photography. He enjoys going to Green Lake and the Center

for Urban Horticulture to take photographs and visiting bookstores to peruse photography books. As his cognitive abilities decline, it's harder for Ken to retrieve words and follow a conversation, so Eve works to connect with him through his love of photography.

"I try to get out with him to do photography and talk with him about it. It is challenging and rewarding to observe and engage with Ken in ways that are satisfying to him."

Eve anticipated that Pat would use respite care to leave the house to do fun things while she spent time with Ken. Sometimes Pat does that,

but often she does the work needed to take care of the two of them while Eve takes care of Ken.

This Care Team began as four individuals in a group. Over time, they coalesced as a team, developing friendships and working in sync to support Ken and Pat. At first, it seemed that they needed little assistance, and Pat was reluctant to ask for help. Today, she needs more assistance and is more comfortable asking for it. "Now we're in a groove. We feel useful," says Eve.

Eve's previous volunteer experience was child-centered; she believes that caring for older people is an overlooked opportunity to make a real difference in people's lives. She's found that flexibility, creativity, and attentiveness are essential in connecting with elders whose cognitive abilities are declining. Flexibility and creativity to change course when an activity or conversation becomes confusing respects their abilities at that time. Acknowledging them when they find the word they're searching for, when they're overcoming their loss of cognitive ability, boosts their sense of self.

There's a deep emotional aspect to this volunteer work as these are very personal relationships, and Eve says it's not for everyone. For Eve, being part of a team itself is rewarding, and "Watching Ken and seeing where he opens up or feels comfortable ... seeing where he's more able to connect," is very satisfying. ●

## VOLUNTEER & COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH RSVP

The following are just a few of the opportunities RSVP has to offer. To talk to a real person about volunteer roles that are just right for you, contact us at **206.694.6786** – or visit our website at **[solid-ground.org/RSVP](http://solid-ground.org/RSVP)** for volunteer opportunity listings organized by region.

**American Red Cross:** Volunteers respond to disasters, speak to community groups and schools, help youth develop leadership skills, support local blood drives, provide care to service members, and much more. Volunteer opportunities are available 365 days a year to provide frontline services in your community. The training and support volunteers receive on a regular basis allows them to be successful in every Red Cross program. *~Countywide*

**Catholic Community Services (CCS):** Volunteer Services at CCS welcomes volunteers to enable elders living on low incomes and adults with disabilities to remain independent in their own homes. You may help the same person each time or be listed as “on call” depending on your schedule and interests. You’ll receive training, mileage reimbursement, and insurance. Volunteer opportunities include giving rides to medical appointments, doing yardwork, and being a phone buddy, as well as delivering groceries, medications, and/or meals. *~Countywide & via phone*

**Communities in Schools of Greater King County** believes in surrounding students with a community of support, as well as the tools for success, including basic needs such as food access and stability. We’re currently seeking volunteers to pick up weekend food bags each week in Newcastle, WA and deliver them to schools in both Renton and Tukwila to be distributed to students. *~South King County*

**Community Food Education (CFE)’s** Adult & Family Education program at Solid Ground teaches people how to prepare healthy and delicious meals on a limited budget. We need Class Assistants for 3- to 6-week series and one-time classes at rotating locations. Volunteer alongside staff to support fun, lively, and informative classes. Work with participants on educational activities and help them prepare a shared meal. Training is provided. *~Countywide*

**Franciscan Hospice & Palliative Care (FHPC):** Affirming every life, FHPC invites you to be part of a team of professionals and volunteers who meet the unique needs of hospice patients and their families. Volunteers provide both practical companionship and emotional support by making friendly phone calls to patients, enhancing FHPC’s compassionate care. *~Seattle & via phone*

**Full Life Care:** Our Care Teams program matches volunteer teams with an unpaid family caregiver in need of respite. Caregivers of seniors 55+ and veterans of any age qualify for Care Teams support. Volunteers help with light yardwork and household tasks, provide companionship for care recipients, run errands, or simply lend social or emotional support. *~South Seattle*

**Greenwood Senior Center** is an inclusive community that provides social, physical, and educational activities focused on the needs of older adults. We work to fight isolation, build camaraderie, and enrich each other’s lives. Volunteer opportunities include serving hot meals and assisting with special events and classes. We welcome all abilities and interests! *~North Seattle*

**Hopelink** needs your help to ensure all members of our community have access to food! Volunteer in Bellevue, Carnation, Kirkland, Redmond, or Shoreline. Opportunities take place Mondays through Fridays during regular business hours and include check-in (computer skills required), customer service (must be able to lift up to 15 pounds), and restocking (must be able to lift 35+ pounds). *~North & East King County*

**Lifelong:** Our volunteers – the heart and soul of the organization – have played a vital role helping provide quality care and services to people for more than 30 years. Lifelong’s food program, Chicken Soup Brigade, eases the lives of people living with or at risk of serious illnesses. Volunteer opportunities include repacking food donations, prepping food, packaging meals, delivering nutritious food, and assembling health care kits. *~Central & South Seattle*

**Mount Si Senior Center:** Over 1,200 seniors a year rely on Mt. Si Senior Center for fitness classes, social programs, arts and educational workshops, recreational activities, and lunches. Volunteers help ensure seniors can safely age in place. We seek lunch program help, afternoon front desk support, and workshop leaders. *~East King County*

**North Helpline Emergency Services & Food Bank** keeps food on the table and a roof overhead for our neighbors, helping meet basic needs to affirm human dignity. We’re seeking fitness class instructors as well as nutrition volunteers for our Community Dining program and Health and Wellness Center. Training and certification provided. *~North Seattle*

**Port of Seattle SEA Volunteers:** If you love being a part of the airport environment, join our volunteer team to help make every passenger’s journey a pleasant one. SEA Volunteers provide vital support at the airport, assisting passengers with navigation and ensuring a seamless travel experience. By guiding them through the terminals and offering knowledgeable assistance, you’ll enhance the efficiency and friendliness of the airport environment. *~South King County*

**Reading Partners** program and volunteers are proven to help students improve their reading skills. We offer a unique opportunity for volunteers to support and encourage students on their literacy learning journeys. We provide training, onsite support, and an easy-to-use curriculum to set volunteers up for success. *~Central & South Seattle, South King County*

**Sound Generations** is a nonprofit serving aging adults and their loved ones in King County since 1967. Our staff and over 2,100 volunteers are dedicated to ensuring older adults can live ample and fulfilled lives in a community that respects and affirms the aging journey. Requests include assisting with events, social media ambassadors, phone-a-friend connectors, and digital card making. *~Countywide*

**United Way of King County (UWKC) Tax Prep:** Tax season can be stressful, especially for folks who are new to the US tax code or just entering the workforce, and those with financial or technological barriers to filing. UWKC seeks volunteers to prepare taxes (we train you!) for the next January through April tax season, or to welcome people to our tax sites. Volunteer training starts in October. *~Countywide & online*

**Washington DECA** serves 13,000 high school students to prepare them to become innovative leaders and entrepreneurs who make a positive social and global impact. We’re currently looking for volunteer judges to evaluate both written and oral business competitions. Students value your feedback as they prepare for the International DECA competition. *~Eastside & online*

**Youth Tutoring Program (YTP)** volunteer tutors guide and inspire 6- to 18-year-old youth scholars who live in low-income and public housing. We seek afterschool tutors interested in helping guide youth on their educational journeys. We ask a minimum of one hour/week of in-person tutoring at one of our five centers. *~North & South Seattle*

Call to help me find a volunteer opportunity suited just for me.

Send information about RSVP.  Note my new address.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please mail this form to:** RSVP, 1501 North 45th Street, Seattle, WA 98103