

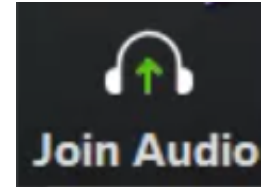
Developing Volunteer Opportunities to Help Older Adults Stay Engaged

January 27, 2022

Webinar Instructions

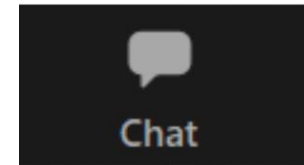
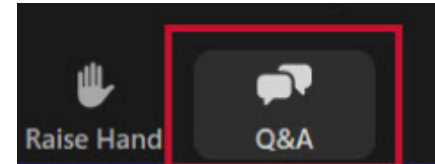
Audio Options

- Use your computer speakers, **OR** dial in using the phone number in your registration email.
- All participants are muted.



Questions and Answers (Q&A)

- You can submit questions for the panelists at any time during this presentation. On the Zoom module on the bottom of your screen, click the Q&A icon, type your question in the box and submit.



CLICK HERE TO START CHAT

Accessibility

- **Screen Reader Users: Reduce unwanted chatter**
 - Request speech on demand: Insert, Spacebar, “S”
- **To get our attention if you need tech assistance:**
 - Raise or Lower Hand: Alt + Y

engAGED

- National effort to increase social engagement among older adults, people with disabilities and their caregivers
- Administered by USAging
- 18 Project Advisory Committee members:
www.engagingolderadults.org/partnerships
- Funded by the U.S. Administration on Aging, which is part of the Administration for Community Living

Presenters



Atalaya Sergi
Director, AmeriCorps Seniors

Mary Lynn Kasunic
President & CEO, Area Agency on
Aging, Region One



Julie Ruzala
Fitness Trainer/ Media Specialist, Erie
County Senior Services

Volunteerism & Social Engagement

Older Adults Staying Engaged

Atalaya Sergi, Director of AmeriCorps Seniors



Experience

We are here
to help!

1-1 Everyday

The mission of AmeriCorps is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering.

AmeriCorps State & National

AmeriCorps VISTA

AmeriCorps NCCC



AmeriCorps Seniors Programs



**Senior
Companions**

RSVP

**Foster
Grandparents**

- **The Health Benefits of Volunteerism**
- **Volunteerism as a Form of Social Engagement**
- **AmeriCorps and Civic Engagement**



The Health Benefits of Volunteerism



Experience Corps Research

Washington University in St. Louis

THE SOURCE

Topics Schools Publications Q

NEWSROOM SECTIONS ▾

Researchers Find Sustained Improvement in Health in Experience Corps Tutors Over 55

Students are not the only ones who benefit from school-based tutoring

March 12, 2009

SHARE  

Tutors over 55 who help young students on a regular basis experience positive physical and mental health outcomes, according to studies released by researchers at Washington University in St. Louis and Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. The tutors studied were members of Experience Corps, an award-winning organization that trains thousands of people over 55 to tutor children in urban public schools across the country.

- Experience Corps members experienced a significant **decrease in both levels of depression and functional limitations**.
- Both the comparison group and the Experience Corps group reported a decline in health, but the **Experience Corps members reported significantly less decline**, suggesting that the program postpones age-related loss of health.
- After a year with Experience Corps, about two-thirds of the least active members reported being **more physically active and engaged in social and community events**.
- 84% of Experience Corps members report that **their circle of friends increased**.
- 86% of Experience Corps members said **their lives have improved because of their involvement with the program**.

AmeriCorps Seniors 2019 Longitudinal Study

AmeriCorps Seniors Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion programs



1,200 First-Time
AmeriCorps Seniors
Volunteers

AmeriCorps Seniors
Volunteers 84%
reported improved or
stable health

AmeriCorps Seniors
Volunteers 88%
reported a decrease
in feelings of isolation

University of
Michigan's - Health &
Retirement Study
Survey Questions

AmeriCorps Seniors
Volunteers 78%
reported they felt less
depressed

AmeriCorps Seniors
Volunteers 71%
reported improved
levels of
companionship

Volunteerism as a Form of Social Engagement





Volunteering during the Pandemic

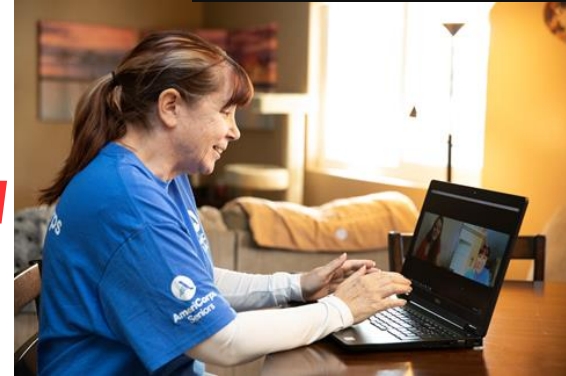
Safely



Virtually



Socially Distanced



Continuous

AmeriCorps & Civic Engagement



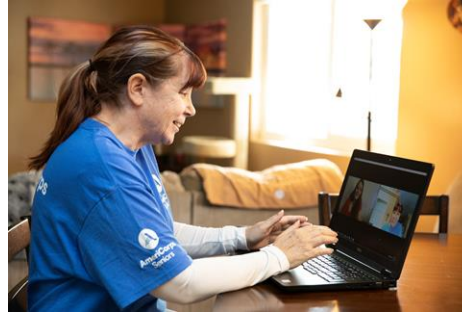
Civic Engagement

Formal & Informal Activities

AmeriCorps provides
Opportunities for all
Americans

Bringing People Together

Solving Community
Challenges



AmeriCorps' Model

www.AmeriCorps.gov



**Community Serving
Organizations**
(Grantees and Sponsors)



Members & Volunteers

For More Information & Funding Opportunities

Funding Opportunities:

<https://americorps.gov/partner/funding-opportunities>

General Questions - Notice of Funding (NOFOs):

AmeriCorpsGrants@cns.gov

Programs – Contact Regional Office:

<https://americorps.gov/contact/region-offices>

NCCC specific information- Regional Teams:

<https://americorps.gov/contact/americorps-nccc-regions>



Research

AmeriCorps Seniors Longitudinal Study

<https://americorps.gov/evidence-exchange/Longitudinal-Study-of-Foster-Grandparent-and-Senior-Companion-Programs%3A-Service-Delivery-Implications-and-Health-Benefits-to-the-Volunteers>

AmeriCorps Seniors Longitudinal Study - brief

https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/CNCS_Senior_Corps_Long_Study_FGP_SCP_Research_Brief_508_1.pdf

Researchers Find Sustained Improvement in Health in Experience Corps Tutors Over 55

<https://source.wustl.edu/2009/03/researchers-find-sustained-improvement-in-health-in-experience-corps-tutors-over-55/>

The Loneliness Epidemic

<https://www.hrsa.gov/enews/past-issues/2019/january-17/loneliness-epidemic>

Marketing Public Health Through Older Adult Volunteering: Experience Corps as a Social Marketing Intervention

<https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/full/10.2105/AJPH.2009.169151>



AREA AGENCY ON AGING
REGION ONE, INCORPORATED

*Responding to
Community Needs
for 47 Years*



**Private Non-Profit Organization, 501(c)(3)
Serving over 100,000 Maricopa County Residents Annually**

AmeriCorps Focus

Aligns with many of Area Agency's priorities

- Health
- Safer communities
- Meeting challenges to improve lives



Seniors Serving Seniors Model



- Our first program was in 2010
- Created in response to long waiting lists and unmet community needs
- Encore program for Members 55 and older
- Serve 10-20 hours per week
- Older adults like being served by someone from their same age cohort

Member Benefits



- Older adults are looking for meaningful ways to give back to their communities
 - Receive a monthly living stipend (about \$528 per month) which can supplement many low to moderate income older adults
 - Education award which can be gifted to a child or grandchild
-
- Builds social network by serving with other older adults they wouldn't otherwise meet
 - Training and skill building through affiliation with Area Agency on Aging

Our Current Program



- Caring Circles
- 25 Half-Time AmeriCorps Members work in 6 geographic groups throughout Maricopa County
- Provide friendly visiting, telephone reassurance, transportation, grocery shopping
- Added goal this year to help older adults and Members connect and access resources through technology
- In program year 2020-2021, served 1,098 homebound older adults

Days of Service



- AmeriCorps has two required days of service
 - September 11th
 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Different than normal AmeriCorps activities, any population, involve the community
- Examples of projects
 - Did service projects such as cleaning out a storage unit and helping a client donate books
 - Helped pack meals at Feed My Starving Children which provides nutritious meals to children worldwide
 - Delivered 260 first aid kits to senior housing sites

Pandemic Response

- Caring Circles Members were key to our pandemic response
- Have helped deliver over 8,000 food boxes, some coming every day in the early days of the pandemic
- Assisted in providing telephone reassurance to 2500 clients

OPERATION
H  **PE**
Helping Older People Eat



Budget

- Our current budget is \$353,055
 - \$172,428 AmeriCorps funds
 - \$180, 627 Match
- Funds from the federal program only cover Member stipends and some insurances
- Minimum match required is 24%, increases each year up to 50% after 10 years
- Matching expenses include personnel and employee related expenses, training costs, travel, background check costs, materials and supplies
- Matching funds can be a challenge; have applied successfully for other local foundation funding, especially to support mileage reimbursement costs

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- Broadens organizational impact through meaningful service
- Must be prepared to provide adequate training and supervision
- High level coordinator or program director is needed
- Retention is the key to success
- Should not be treated like an employee (free labor); their experience is most important
- Volunteers must be recruited to serve with the Members
- Background check requirements



CLUB 99



CLUB 99 OVERVIEW

Club 99 was created over 24 years ago by Richard Derwald (Mr. Fitness). Richard recognized the lack of options for seniors to exercise that was free of charge. This prompted him to start a resistance band class which runs for 35-45 minutes one or two days per week. Richard slowly rolled out the class, one senior center at a time. Once he was able to get the program up and running he would train a volunteer to lead the class, this enabled him to start the class at another senior center. Typically the volunteer who leads the class is a participant who frequently attends class. Richard approaches them and asks them if they would like to volunteer. He trains them and supports them until they are ready to lead on their own.

When Club 99 was at its healthiest over a 1000 participants per week were attending class at over 30 senior centers across Erie County. Participation has scaled back due to the virus, however everyday more and more participants are returning back to the centers to move their bodies and get back to normal life.

Participants who register for the class receive a Club 99 tee shirt, resistance band, and ball. The classes are held at various times, it depends on the volunteer and centers availability.

CLUB 99 GOES VIRTUAL

When the senior centers shut down during Covid we had to make a plan to keep our seniors moving. We decided to start a virtual version of Club 99. Classes are held Monday- Friday from 9-10am. The class consists of cardiovascular and resistance bands exercises. We use the web ex to broadcast the classes. If someone is interested in the class we email them a link send them a Club 99 tee shirt resistance band and exercise ball. They are welcome to join the class whenever they would like. We record each class and send it to them upon request. We average between 5-15 participants per class. The format is ideal for seniors who do not have transportation as well as if the weather is unfavorable. They requested that the program continue after the senior centers re opened after the pandemic .



RESULTS

Many participants like to share the progress that they have made since starting the class. Some of the comments that I have heard are :

Since starting Club 99 I came off two medications one for my heart and one for diabetes
Maria C.

When I started class I would hold onto my walker but now I feel confident enough to perform the exercises without holding onto it

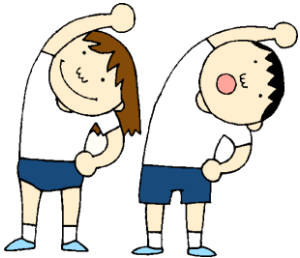
Maria C.

I have lost 20 pounds since I started coming class a year ago .

Mary Lou E.

My fibromyalgia has not affected my life as much as it used to. Moving my body has really helped me mentally and physically.

Grace P.



engAGED Resources

- Innovations Hub
- Toolkits and template materials
- Videos
- Consumer brochures
- Newsletter and blog
- Resources and research links
- Information on upcoming events

Connect With Us!

- www.engagingolderadults.org
- Facebook: @engAGEDCenter
- Twitter: @engAGEDCenter
- info@engagingolderadults.org

Commit to Connect

- ACL campaign working to combat social isolation through:
 - Network of champions
 - Connection to resources
 - Establishment of partnerships
 - Sharing of successful initiatives



COMMIT TO
Connect

acl.gov/CommitToConnect

Questions and Discussion

Please submit your questions or comments
through the Q&A.

Thank You!

- Please complete the survey which will be displayed in your browser after Zoom closes.
- The recording will be available on www.engagingolderadults.org.
- Thank you for attending today's webinar!