

Agency: Central Iowa RSVP (Retired & Senior Volunteer Program)

November 2018

Liaisons: Dave Morris & Lisa McCoy

Need for Program:

RSVP provides individuals 55 plus the opportunity to apply their interests, skills and life experiences to meet community needs by supporting a number of Story County agencies by providing capable volunteers to assist them in carrying out their missions. RSVP volunteers are placed in public non-profit and health care agencies. RSVP also has a Volunteer Driver Transportation Program that provides older adults with safe and reliable transportation to and from medical appointments and other essential services and Volunteer Management for Emergencies.

Program Strengths:

Active since 1973, RSVP has developed partnerships with over 70 public, non-profit, and health care agencies to provide them with skilled and committed volunteers. The Executive Director, Kalen Peterson has been with RSVP for close to 30 years and served as Director for a majority of those years. So many positive aspects of this agency that benefits volunteers age 55 and over by enhancing their quality of life and offering opportunities to stay active and engaged in community. Story County Volunteer Transportation Program has expanded its program by offering rides to the Des Moines area for medical appointments only. A total of 755 RSVP volunteers were placed or continued in RSVP assignment. The Volunteer Management was called into action during the 2018 tornado in Marshalltown.

Program Weakness:

The agency receives federal grants and is unable to solicit donations from clients who utilize the transportation program. The agency is currently working on alternative ways to raise funds for this service. As well as funding the scheduling of the transportation program is very time consuming for the Agency. RSVP would like to continue to embrace social networking to attract retirees through use of Facebook and website which requires approx. 15 hours a week.

Financial Outlook:

RSVP is financially stable but is dependent on ASSET funding as well as federal and state funding. Fundraising and grant writing is also an important to the agency. One concern is ensuring adequate funding to support our Volunteer Management for Emergencies budget. To address this, in July 2018, RSVP began contracting with Story County Emergency Management to assume responsibility for the coordination of the Story County Coalition for Disaster Recovery. This contractual agreement provides financial support for RSVPs VME budget.

Internal Management Practices:

The Director and Office Coordinator are located in Story City with office space in the Senior Citizens Center. The Board of Directors is Story County Senior Citizens and there is a very active Advisory Council that assists in developing and carrying out the goals of the program. A comprehensive database helps process volunteer information.