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Interfaith Community Services Awarded \$125,004 to Support Local Senior Volunteer Service *Funding will support recruitment of Senior Corps RSVP volunteers*

Interfaith Community Services (ICS), a volunteer-based nonprofit in Pima County that assists aging, disabled and impoverished residents, announced today that it has received a Senior Corps RSVP grant of \$125,004 each year for three years (pending annual appropriations) from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). The funds were awarded through a competitive Senior Corps grant competition to expand RSVP to new geographic areas and will support 100 RSVP volunteers serving in the Tucson area. ICS is the only nonprofit in Arizona to receive the federal grant. Funding will provide resources to support ICS's existing volunteer program as well as to expand and diversify its efforts to recruit, retain and recognize volunteers 55 and over, including more bilingual volunteers, to serve in its senior transportation and Care Partners program—non-medical assistance which helps adults transitioning from hospital to home avoid unnecessary re-admissions.

"ICS is a place where volunteers of diverse backgrounds come together to give back to their community and impact social issues such as homelessness, hunger and senior isolation," says Daniel Stoltzfus, ICS Chief Executive Officer. "Volunteers are the heart of ICS, and they put a personal, compassionate face on our work," he adds. "We are honored to receive these grant funds which will increase our capacity to bring help and hope to vulnerable people throughout Pima County."

"From my visits, I've seen that Interfaith Community Services does great work in our community mobilizing volunteers and helping some of our most vulnerable citizens," says Congresswoman Martha McSally. "These federal funds flowing into Pima County will encourage volunteers 55 and over to get even more involved in helping improve the quality of life for neighbors in need. I'm confident ICS will put these dollars to good use."

ICS currently has about 750 active volunteers who serve in all facets of its programming and operations. With the RSVP grant, ICS will be able to expand its presence and service reach in the Tucson metropolitan area. Specific efforts will be made to reach underserved communities by providing bilingual volunteers. RSVP activities will include: providing transportation for individuals to essential medical appointments and grocery shopping, as well as to basic social services; and providing companionship to help them avoid isolation while aging alone at home. At the end of the three-year grant, 85% of recipients will report having increased social ties and/or social support.

As an ICS volunteer for more than a decade, retiree Ed Jenkins can attest to the value of community service for older adults, both on a personal and societal level. "Volunteering not only changes the lives of those you serve, it also changes and adds meaning to your own life," he says. "It gives you insight into the community's needs and the impact that nonprofits such as ICS have. I find volunteering to be very rewarding. You get back what you give. Maybe more," he explains.

Those interested in signing up to volunteer at ICS should contact Tori Carlson, Volunteer Resources Manager, at 520-297-6049 x 217 or visit www.icstucson.org. Volunteers attend an orientation and training process and some positions require background checks.

(More)

Established in 1971, RSVP engages Americans age 55 and older in citizen service that addresses the nation's most pressing challenges—fighting the opioid epidemic, reducing crime and reviving cities, connecting veterans to jobs and benefits, preparing today's students for tomorrow's jobs, ensuring seniors age independently and with dignity, and helping Americans rebuild their lives following a disaster.

While serving, RSVP volunteers also improve their own lives, staying active and healthy through service. A growing body of research points to mental and physical health benefits associated with volunteering, including lower mortality rates, increased strength and energy, decreased rates of depression, and fewer physical limitations.

In 2016, more than 208,000 Senior Corps RSVP volunteers served in communities across the country. Through community and faith-based organizations, RSVP volunteers served more than 300,000 veterans, mentored more than 78,000 children, and provided independent living services to more than 797,000 older adults.

According to the annual [Volunteering and Civic Life in America](#) report by CNCS, more than 21 million Americans 55+ contributed more than 3.3 billion hours of service in their communities. Based on the Independent Sector's estimate of the average value of a volunteer hour, their collective service provides a yearly economic benefit valued at \$78 billion.

ICS is a testament to the value of volunteers. In fiscal year 2016-2017, volunteers gave 53,966 hours of time valued at \$1.2 million by Independent Sector and drove 135,876 miles to help others—the equivalent of five times around the earth. “Volunteers enable ICS to optimize our services, but also to conserve costs. The strength and volume of our volunteer corps allows ICS to devote 86 cents of each dollar raised to providing direct services to individuals in need,” says Stoltzfus.

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About Interfaith Community Services (ICS):

Interfaith Community Services helps those in financial crisis find self-sufficiency through the ICS Food Banks, emergency financial assistance, personalized case management and job search assistance programs and enables seniors and disabled adults to stay independent at home with transportation and mobile meals. ICS offers compassionate support by connecting more than 750 volunteers, 100 diverse faith community partners and caring donors with Pima County's most vulnerable residents. ICS has received Charity Navigator's highest rating of four stars for seven years in a row for its fiscal responsibility and transparency. For more information, go to www.icstucson.org or call 520-297-6049.

About Senior Corps:

Senior Corps is a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the federal agency for volunteering and service. CNCS engages millions of Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service each year through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, Social Innovation Fund, and Volunteer Generation Fund programs and leads volunteer and civic engagement initiatives for the nation. For more information, visit nationalservice.gov.