

AGE STRONG COMMISSION'S VOLUNTEER PROGRAM MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Michelle Wu, Mayor of Boston | **Emily Shea**, Age Strong Commissioner
Joseph Goncalves, Director of Volunteer Programs

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Welcome to Age Strong's July Volunteer Newsletter!

Since there's so much volunteer activity going on at Boston's Age Strong Commission, we've decided to launch a monthly newsletter to keep you informed.



AmeriCorps Seniors Volunteer Sapher
Meyers with Client Gloria Printemps

Inside, you'll learn more about our AmeriCorps Seniors Senior Companion Program, our AmeriCorps Seniors Volunteer Maximiano Lopes, and our Volunteer site partner, Viet Aid.

Are you interested in creating meaningful memories and connections and helping other older neighbors stay independent for as long as possible? Join the AmeriCorps Seniors Senior Companion Program to uplift, inspire, and lend a hand in your community.

Thanks for reading,

Joseph Goncalves

Director of Volunteer Programs
Boston's Age Strong Commission

LEARN ABOUT OUR AMERICORPS SENIORS SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM ●●●●●●●●

Boston's Age Strong Commission runs a variety of volunteer programs where older adults aged 55+ can share their time and skills to help fellow Boston older adults in the community.

We currently seek volunteers for our AmeriCorps Seniors Senior Companion Program, which matches residents 55+ with other older adults (one-on-one) to provide friendship and assistance with daily living tasks such as shopping or opening and reading mail.



*AmeriCorps Seniors Volunteer
with her older adult client*

AmeriCorps Seniors Senior Companion Volunteers provide in-person companionship to older adults and those with disabilities and also provide the gift of respite to caregivers with hours ranging from 5 to 20 hours per week.

Why become an AmeriCorps Seniors Volunteer?

Volunteering keeps you active and engaged within your community and allows you to use your skills and interests to help support older residents of Boston.

In return, AmeriCorps Seniors Volunteers receive the training and support they need to make a difference.



Volunteers may receive reimbursement for some out-of-pocket expenses, a tax-free stipend for income-eligible volunteers, an invitation to our annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon, and connection to free City of Boston events.

Who is eligible? AmeriCorps Seniors Senior Companion Volunteers must be 55+, income qualify, pass a background check, and live in the City of Boston.

Interested? Reach out to Quanda Smith, Volunteer Program Coordinator, by calling 617-635-1794 or emailing SeniorCompanionProgram@boston.gov.



MEET AMERICORPS SENIORS VOLUNTEER MAXIMIANO LOPES



Maximiano Lopes, an 88-year-old resident of Dorchester has been an AmeriCorps Seniors Volunteer with Age Strong since 2008. Originally from São Nicolau, Cabo Verde, he moved to the United States in 2000. "I lived in Providence, Rhode Island for 5 years before moving to Boston in 2005," Maximiano shares.

Before arriving in the U.S., Maximiano worked in both Cabo Verde and Brazil.

“In Cabo Verde, I worked planting in the field. In Brazil, I worked in a factory.” He went to school in Cape Verde, through fourth grade.

As an AmeriCorps Seniors Volunteer, Maximiano serves at Viet Aid in Dorchester.

“I have 4 clients that I visit daily to check on and to support. I assist with shopping and I escort my clients to their medical appointments when needed.”

When asked what he enjoys about volunteering, he shares, “I like to see my clients because they have also become my friends. I enjoy helping them with things they need.”

When asked what advice he’d give to someone considering volunteering, he says, “if you have a few hours to give back, you should, because you feel accomplished and while also helping someone in need.”

In addition to volunteering, Maximiano likes to “exercise, specifically running and riding my bicycle, which helps me keep my strength up as I continue to age.”

LEARN ABOUT AGE STRONG’S VOLUNTEER PARTNER SITE: VIET AID



Dorchester’s Viet Aid has been an Age Strong volunteer site partner since 2018. Its mission is to build a strong Vietnamese-American community and a diverse, vibrant Fields Corner (Dorchester) neighborhood. Founded with a vision to lessen poverty and foster a strong community, VietAID continues that work today from its home in the Vietnamese American Community Center in Dorchester — serving community members of all backgrounds and ages.

VietAID was founded in 1994 by Vietnamese refugees and immigrants who believed a strong, organized community could transform their neighborhood. In 2024, VietAID celebrated 30 years as the nation's first and only community development corporation (CDC) founded and operated by Vietnamese refugees and immigrants.

VietAID offers a wide range of community programs and services including affordable housing development and homeownership counseling, early childhood education and quality childcare programs, after-school, summer camp, and youth leadership programs (VSPY & VALA), small business technical assistance and microenterprise support, civic engagement, leadership development, and community organizing, health and wellness activities, community events, and a community center.

Because VietAID is rooted in one of Boston's largest Vietnamese-American communities, many volunteers find it easy to connect — whether they share the same cultural background, speak the same language, or simply enjoy being among others of a similar generation.



Day-to-day, volunteers assist with light, accessible tasks such as setting up and breaking down events, serving and distributing meals, and supporting senior activity programs including board games, exercising, and social gatherings.

Beyond logistics, volunteers create a warm, welcoming environment for community members who may be navigating challenges with social integration, language barriers, or isolation. Many also assist with health and wellness activities — from supporting health screenings and wellness workshops to helping participants understand and access available community resources.

VietAID offers older adult volunteers something truly special: a sense of belonging. Volunteers consistently share that the large Vietnamese community at VietAID makes communication natural and comfortable — many participants are the same age and share similar life experiences, making it easy to form genuine friendships.

Beyond social connection, volunteering at VietAID gives older adults the opportunity to make a real difference — supporting neighbors who are struggling to integrate into the community,

and helping organize programs and activities that bring joy and health to seniors every week. Research shows that older volunteers experience decreased anxiety, depression, and loneliness, with 84% reporting stable or improving health after just one year of Service. At VietAID, volunteers don't just give their time — they gain a community.

To learn more about Viet Aid, visit vietaid.org.



AMERICORPS NEWS



We have exciting news! Age Strong has received confirmation of continued funding from AmeriCorps for both our AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP and AmeriCorps Seniors Senior Companion programs.

These AmeriCorps Seniors grants will allow Age Strong to tap the power of national service, recruit more volunteers over the age of 55, and bring new solutions to build a healthier, stronger community.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY CORNER



Age Strong seeks 2-3 volunteers for a new Congregate Meal Assistant volunteer opportunity with our AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP program.

Service Description: AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP Volunteers will conduct a variety of tasks including but not limited to setting tables, preparing and serving hot meals, cleaning up after meals, registering participants, and engaging in conversation to create a welcoming environment for participants.

These volunteers will support 2 sites in partnership with the Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center. Bilingual (Cantonese or Mandarin) preferred. Interested? Reach out to Jose Ramirez, Volunteer Program Coordinator, by calling 617-635-4374 or emailing jose.ramirez@boston.gov.



AGE STRONG SEEKS NEW VOLUNTEERS!

The Age Strong Commission offers four different volunteer programs to help older residents live their best lives, while aging in place.

AMERICORPS SENIORS RSVP PROGRAM

We match volunteers age 55+ with partner sites, including senior centers & food pantries, or train you to help residents learn English as a second language, prepare tax returns or facilitate opioid & scam prevention workshops.



BOSTON CITY HALL GREETERS

City Hall Greeters provide friendly assistance to residents visiting City Hall. Each volunteer has access to an iPad equipped with maps and other information to assist visitors.



PROPERTY TAX WORK-OFF PROGRAM

Boston homeowners age 60+ may "work off" up to \$2,000 from their property taxes by volunteering their skills & knowledge to one of the City's offices, community centers, or public schools.



AMERICORPS SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM

Senior Companion volunteers age 55+ help older adults with everyday tasks like getting to appointments & shopping, as well as providing respite care to care partners. Some volunteers may qualify for a tax-free stipend.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

CALL 617-635-4366 OR VISIT [BOSTON.GOV/AGE-STRONG](https://boston.gov/age-strong)