Established in 1971 and now one of the largest senior volunteer organizations in the nation, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) engages Americans age 55 and older in a diverse range of volunteer activities. Volunteers tutor and mentor children, teach English to immigrants, assist victims of natural disasters, provide independent living services, recruit and manage other volunteers, serve at congregate meal sites and food pantries, deliver meals to the homebound and serve their communities in many other ways. RSVP volunteers choose how, where, and how often they want to serve, with commitments ranging from a few hours to 40 hours per
week. Volunteers do not receive monetary incentives, but RSVP programs often provide mileage reimbursement and supplemental personal accident and liability insurance while volunteering.

In 1973, Rockland Community College became the first community college in the nation to sponsor an RSVP program. Currently, RSVP of Rockland County is funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service, the New York State Office for the Aging, the Rockland County Office for the Aging, the Rockland County Legislature and several Towns. We also receive many “in-kind” services from our Sponsor, Rockland Community College.

The mission of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Rockland County is to help address community needs by recruiting volunteers 55 and older to lend their time and expertise in community service to non-profit agencies and proprietary health care facilities and, in so doing, provide them with meaningful ongoing volunteer opportunities.

At the present time, we have 425 registered members who are actively assisting 97 local nonprofit and County government agencies. During 2016, 60,500 hours were served, which is calculated to have a value of $1,669,195!! I estimate that 25 of our volunteers are retirees of the SUNY system or are retired Rockland County employees.

The following is a list of agencies and their volunteer assignments that have the largest number of RSVP volunteers serving there: Childcare Resources of Rockland (Tales for Tots-Reader and Literacy Project Coordinator), Helen Hayes Hospital (Gift Shop Salesperson, Patient Assistant and Group Leader), Helping Hands Interfaith Coalition (Congregate Meal Preparer and Volunteer Coordinator), Literacy Solutions NY, Inc. (Reading Tutor), Meals on Wheels of Rockland (Bookkeeper, Food Deliverer), NAMI-FAMILYA of Rockland County, Inc. (Fundraiser, Bookkeeper, Family Support Counselor), Nyack Hospital (Thrift Shop Salesperson, Special Projects Assistant, Patient Advocate, Receptionist, Pharmacy Assistant, Pastoral Care Assistant, Clerical Assistant and Patient Liaison), People to People (Food Collection Assistant, Bookkeeper and Client Services Support Counselor), Rockland County Office for the Aging (Mailings, Clerical and HICAP Advisor), Rockland Community College (Administrative Assistant, Career Center Assistant, Evening Ambassador, Fundraiser, Receptionist, Resource Navigator, Survey Proctor and Tutor), RSVP Clowns R Us (Friendly Visitor), RSVP Independence Project (Shopper and Medical Transportation Driver), Summit Park Elementary School (Program Administrator, Fundraiser, Technical Support Assistant, Tutor - STEM and Club Coach), and United Hospice of Rockland (Pianist, Outreach Assistant and Direct Care Volunteer).
Campus Retiree Program Profile, continued from page 15

It takes just a few easy steps to join our RSVP family:

- Contact our Volunteer Coordinator at (845) 304-8770 to make an appointment for a one-on-one “get to know you” meeting where you will learn about mileage reimbursement, supplemental accident and liability insurance, free door-to-door transportation to your volunteer “job,” quarterly newsletter, as well as workshops and our volunteer recognition events.

- Tell us about your former career, current likes, dislikes and any special interests you may have so that we can help you find a fulfilling and interesting volunteer opportunity and how much time you have available to volunteer (daily, weekly, monthly or several times a year).

- Let us match you with one of our almost 100 community partners.

- Keep in touch with us and let us know how things are going with your placement.

If you would like additional information, just visit our website at www.sunyrockland.edu/community-and-business/seniors/rsvp where you can click on our links and get connected quickly.

If you are reading this and you don’t live in Rockland County, it’s very easy to find an RSVP program in an area near you. All you have to do is Google “RSVP” and add the county you are interested in (for example search “RSVP of Herkimer County”). If there isn’t a program in your county, then it’s very likely that there is one nearby. If you prefer, you could search www.nationalservice.gov and click on your state and then you can follow the links to search out numerous volunteer opportunities in your area.