

DMC Foundation Secures Funding to Assist Seniors

The DMC Foundation was awarded a three year grant from the Corporation for National Community Service to assist individuals 55 years of age or better. The funding will be used to create a volunteer pool of seniors who want to make a difference in our community. Two different service opportunities will be offered under the program titled RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program).

The first component of the RSVP program is peer counseling and support. The Foundation's Community on the Move Program Manager will match clients with trained volunteers according to abilities, service needs, language preference and location. Volunteers will complete a basic in-home safety and risk evaluation and will follow up with in-home visits between one and four times per month. Volunteer coordination will be a concerted effort.

The second opportunity is for volunteers to provide transportation to seniors who find it difficult using public transportation. Transportation will be provided to medical appointments, shopping trips and social gathering. Tom Truax, the CEO of DMC Foundation is quite familiar with the unmet transportation need of seniors and individuals with disabilities in Stanislaus County. As a member and former chairperson of the Stanislaus County Social Services Advisory Council, he helped champion a study that revealed there are over 5,800 individuals in Stanislaus County whose transportation needs are not being met. Truax said "for nearly four years, we have been attempting to quantify the need and develop solutions. The funding we received will allow us to provide mileage reimbursement. We are hoping that by providing this funding, we can encourage more seniors to volunteer who might not have been able to do so because of their own economic position."

Truax went on to say that "Stanislaus County is moving in the right direction when it comes to transportation. With the recent funding of a Consolidated Transportation Service Agency and the funding we received, the County will be able to offer transportation assistance to many seniors and individuals with disabilities who otherwise would go without."

Individuals interested in finding out more about this program should call DMC Foundation at 527-3412.