

# SERVIN' IT UP

A SERVING OF  
QUARTERLY NEWS  
FROM SENIORSERV



## Message from the CEO

*Holly Hagler*

### We Are Love in Action!

Countless studies have demonstrated a positive correlation between well-being and socialization. People need people to feel happy. A lack of socialization impairs our quality of life and often leads to depression. Unfortunately, as we age, our network of social contacts tends to decrease. Circumstances such as retirement, the passing of loved ones, declining health, and the loss of mobility all diminish opportunity for socialization.

Fortunately, we can do something about that—and we do! By design, SeniorServ's programs are packed with opportunities for direct and consistent human contact. Smiles and friendship bring warmth and love into the lives of SeniorServ participants.

Actions really do speak louder than words: People need to be *shown* that they are loved through kind acts, not just told. And love needs to be shown consistently, not just on holidays or special occasions.

Included in the pages that follow is a sampling of stories from at-risk clients who began receiving services from SeniorServ following serious and unexpected health-related setbacks. We're happy to report that nutritious meals and frequent social interaction from loving and compassionate hearts are

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**Bridget still has a twinkle in her eye – no matter how well she sees!**

## Meals on Wheels Brings Comfort to Family

Bridget had poor vision in both her eyes. When she became blind in her left eye and no longer felt safe to drive, her three adult children became very concerned about her. In her mid-80's at the time, Bridget lived alone and had limited mobility. With the closest market five miles away, shopping was impossible. She felt housebound and lonely. Since each of her three children lived out of state, it was difficult for them to stop in for wellness checks or help provide balanced meals for her.

SeniorServ's Meals on Wheels offered the perfect solution: Not only did we satisfy Bridget's nutritional needs, there was the additional benefit of cheerful chit chat and a "check-in" from volunteers with each meal delivery. Bridget really enjoys the company.

It's been three years now since Bridget first began receiving SeniorServ's Meals on Wheels, and she and her family couldn't be happier with the results. "It's God's Blessing," Bridget said. "We're all happy now!"

## Archstone Foundation Funds Family Caregiver Support Project

SeniorServ's Adult Day Services program helps keep families together by providing much-needed daytime relief for caregivers in need of respite. And now, thanks to a generous grant from Archstone Foundation, SeniorServ is receiving funding to help these families even more through our *Family Caregiver Support Project*.



Caregivers, their loved ones and staff bond at the Santa Ana Adult Day Health Care.

The Family Caregiver Support Project is an innovative effort for SeniorServ's adult day center participants and their caregivers to receive evidence-based and expert-developed education as well as in-home coaching sessions to better enable their families to remain living together.

Participants and families attending SeniorServ's adult day service centers in Santa Ana, Anaheim, and Buena Park have already started benefiting from the program. One caregiver told us, "I learned tools to respond to my mom's difficult behavior. It also taught me that I count too. Before the classes, I focused on my mom all the time. Now I know I need to focus on me." Another said, "I really like the goal setting process. I have never learned how to set goals. I learned to accept what you can't change and focus on what you can change."

SeniorServ wishes to thank Archstone Foundation for their tremendous support in making this project possible.

## Meals are a Lifeline

Meals on Wheels is crucial for Deanna's well-being. The 73-year-old suffers from a health condition that has been responsible for numerous falls resulting in serious injuries. But Deanna's physical pain pales in comparison to the heartache she feels from the loss of both her adult children. Financial challenges compound her stress: After the rent is paid, Deanna's social security provision barely covers her medications and basic toiletries. Luckily, SeniorServ is here to help provide not only meals, but companionship too. Deanna humbly stated, "I'm so grateful for SeniorServ. I would starve without them."



# Nourish Our Community

## LEADERSHIP PROFILE: Dr. Debbie Rose



SeniorServ's family is privileged to have Dr. Debbie Rose, esteemed professor and Director of the Center for Successful Aging at Cal State Fullerton, serving as Co-Chair of SeniorServ's Coordinated Care Council. Utilizing our programs, the Council works to reduce hospital readmissions and keep seniors living safely at home. Debbie shares her skill set by addressing health-related programming and interacting with the program directors of SeniorServ's Adult Day Health Care centers.

Debbie is looking forward to a long partnership with SeniorServ. She said, "I love this forward thinking, innovative organization. SeniorServ goes beyond providing meals – meals serve as a catalyst for other ways to nourish older adults and their families. Their outstanding, visionary and strategic team adds to the strength of the organization. It is an honor to serve here!"

## Marylou Lovingly Inspires ADHC Peers

SeniorServ's Adult Day Health Care (ADHC) supports both the medical and social needs of individuals who are living at home but need daytime assistance for their health and safety. Many participants like Marylou form strong bonds with their peers and feel so connected socially that they lovingly refer to the ADHC as their "second family."

45 years ago, when Marylou was a senior in high school, she was the victim of a tragic car accident that left her permanently disabled. Despite her injuries, Marylou showed remarkable fortitude and determination as she persisted beyond all odds to graduate with the rest of her class.

Marylou's courageous spirit is an inspiration to her friends and family. Ever since she began attending the ADHC 12 years ago, she's also inspired her fellow participants and the staff. The group setting provides an excellent way to socialize and an opportunity to get peer-to-peer support. "My motto is to keep trying, no matter



what your disability is," says the 62 year-old as she lovingly encourages her peers.

Thank you, Marylou, for being such a great role model and for inspiring us at SeniorServ's ADHC — you are love in action!

## Kona Brewing

A group of employees from Kona Brewing Company held a large holiday gift packing party for SeniorServ's clients. About 15 employees participated (including our own Board Member, Corey Saenz), packing 123 Holiday bags for our seniors.

Thank you, Kona Brewing!



## Living With Gratitude

In his younger years, 68-year-old Ron lived in three foster homes, where he taught himself to play baseball by practicing with a stick and rocks. He tells of how he hid a radio under his pillow at night so he could listen to Dodger games while praying that someday he would play professional ball.

Then, miraculously, Ron was drafted out of high school by the Minnesota Twins. He's grateful for the 12 years he spent "living his dream," playing first and third base in the minors, including the Angels, and in the Mexican league. Tragically, in later years Ron developed neuropathy, a condition that affects sensation in his extremities and intermittently makes it difficult to feel his hands and feet.

Ron is single, without children. "I don't know what I would do without the meals," Ron said. "Not being mobile, it would be like I was living on a deserted island, waiting for a coconut to fall on me," he chuckled.

Although his condition is painful and severely limits his ability to grip objects and even walk at times, Ron is filled with gratitude. "Living on a fixed income makes it tough. With no way to get around, SeniorServ makes a really big difference in my life."



Proudly wearing a jersey of one of the last teams he played for, Ron remembers living his dream.

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keeping them in the homes and communities they love.

- Read about Ron, who "lived his dream" as a team player a major league baseball team, but now finds himself unable to count on his ability to walk without falling. SeniorServ's Meals on Wheels and their team of volunteers fills him with an attitude of gratitude.
- Meet 88-year-old Bridget, whose out-of-state children once feared for her safety when her limited vision made it unsafe to drive or cook. Now they are comforted knowing SeniorServ's meals are delivered to their mother along with a cheerful check-in.
- Read how Marylou's courageous spirit lovingly inspires her peers in the friendly neighborhood setting found at SeniorServ's Adult Day Health Care. And speaking of our adult day services, don't miss reading how a generous grant from Archstone Foundation is already benefiting participants of our Family Caregiver Support Project.

SeniorServ thanks our caring family of supporters for putting their love for older adults into action by faithfully providing thousands of seniors with nutrition, companionship, practical help and, for some, their only source of human contact all week long. Your care and compassion is truly changing lives.

## Holding On

Naomi had a very active life. Before her husband passed away, Naomi traveled around the state with him in their Dixieland band called The Sidewalk Strutters. Unfortunately, over time, she developed a medical condition that caused numbness in her hands, and she had to give up many things, including playing her bass saxophone. So she took up playing the washboard when her hands would cooperate.

Now, even attempting simple tasks like holding a phone to her ear is problematic. But cooking, as Naomi learned, is *dangerous*. "I cannot hold things for very long," Naomi explained. The 90-year-old discovered the seriousness of this condition after dropping a pot of hot water and badly burning herself. After the doctor told Naomi that her cooking days were over, volunteers from SeniorServ's Meals on Wheels program began delivering nutritious meals. "I enjoy the meals so much," said Naomi. "I just pop them in the microwave and have a nice hot meal. Without these meals, I don't know what I would do!"



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## Winter Volunteer Opportunities

- **Adult Day Health Care Centers (ADHC):** Volunteer assistance is needed at both our Anaheim and Santa Ana ADHC centers to help coordinate and lead fun activities (such as arts & crafts, music, exercise, etc.). We are looking for friendly and patient volunteers who enjoy working with older people and people with disabilities. Bilingual in Spanish is a plus, but not required. Opportunities are available M-F, 9:00 AM-3:00 PM.
- **Meals on Wheels:** Volunteer drivers are needed at various locations in north and central Orange County. Opportunities are available M-F, 9:30 AM-11:30 AM.
- **Friendly Visitor:** Volunteers are needed to provide companionship to lonely and isolated seniors living in north and central Orange County. Scheduling of one hour visits is flexible (evenings and weekends available).



For more information, contact Tracy Hall, Director of Volunteer Services, at [thall@seniorserv.org](mailto:thall@seniorserv.org), or call 714-229-3349.



1200 N. Knollwood Circle  
Anaheim, CA 92801

**General Information:**  
714-220-0224

**Meals on Wheels & Senior Lunch:**  
714-823-3294

**Adult Day Services:**  
Anaheim 714-220-2114  
Santa Ana 714-558-1216  
Buena Park 714-826-3163

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