Annual Summary of Impact and Accomplishments 2025-2026

AmeriCorps Seniors | CENTRAL IOWA RSVP Connecting People To Purpose

Serving Story, Marshall, Hamilton, and Webster Counties



Engaging Volunteers Age 55+

Our Mission: Enhance the lives of adults age 55+ by connecting them with rewarding volunteer experiences that meet community needs.

786 Volunteers aged 55+

Served 22,845 hours

Valued at $706,367

Highlight For the Year

BASE Program Expands into Story County



One of our most successful initiatives at Central Iowa RSVP is the BASE Senior Fitness program—a free exercise class focusing on Balance, Agility, Strength, and Endurance. While BASE has run strong for 12 years in Hamilton and Webster Counties, expanding it into Story County required the perfect catalyst. That catalyst arrived last year with Susan Hayes.

Susan, a volunteer who had recently relocated to Story County from out of state, had prior experience leading senior exercise classes. She was looking for a way to stay active and give back to her new community. While the city of Ames offers numerous fitness options, many of the smaller, rural towns in Story County lack accessible fitness centers or classes. Because Susan was settling in Nevada—which already had senior fitness programming—we looked to nearby rural communities that lacked these resources. We set our sights on Colo.

In late November 2025, we held an informational meeting at the Colo Community Center, hoping to recruit at least five interested seniors. We were thrilled when over 20 people walked through the door. Since officially launching in mid-December, the program's growth has been staggering: over 40 local seniors have registered, and an average of 20 participants attend the twice-weekly classes held at the Colo United Methodist Church.

Beyond the physical benefits, the social impact on the community has been incredible. The participants have formed a tight-knit, supportive community. Susan keeps the atmosphere lively and engaging; recently, one creative participant even made matching shirts for the entire group, and Susan handed out attendance awards to celebrate everyone's commitment.

We are so incredibly thankful for Susan's interest in the program and her deep commitment to leading this group. Her dedication has shown just how vital these programs are to our rural neighbors, and we hope to expand BASE to other rural communities in Story County in the near future.

Signature Program Accomplishments

Educational Services

Helping youth succeed academically.



Volunteers helped students improve their academic performance by learning important letter writing skills (pen pals) and helping students improve reading skills (reading tutors).



- **401 volunteers served** in education-based assignments.
- **4,377 hours were served** being matched one-on-one or in small groups with **533 elementary/middle school students** as pen pals or reading tutors.
- **95%** of students demonstrated improved academic engagement or social-emotional skills.



Partners: Community Christian, Fort Dodge Elementary, Nevada Elementary, Marshalltown Elementary, Northeast Hamilton Elementary, Roland-Story Elementary & Middle, South-Hamilton Elementary, Southeast Valley Middle, St. Thomas Aquinas, Stratford Elementary, Webster City Middle, West-Marshall Elementary, and Raising Readers in Story County

"It was very fun writing back and forth with him, and just forming a relationship with him was very helpful to me."
"I really enjoy writing to my pen pal. She is very cheerful and knows how to make writing fun."
"I liked having a pen pal. It helped me with reading more. Thank you so much!" - Pen Pal Students

Disaster Services and Public Safety

Keeping our communities safe and prepared.



RSVP Volunteer Management for Disasters/Emergencies

Partners: Story County Emergency Management, Story County Sheriff's Office, and Iowa Department of Insurance & Financial Services

Emergency Preparation & Response

Tip Hotline:

- Trained by the Story County Sheriff's Office Communications Commander, volunteers answer a tip hotline, taking calls that will come in when there is a missing/abducted child or person.

Volunteer Reception Center:

- Partnering with Story County Emergency Management, volunteers staff a Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) to intake, register, and credential spontaneous community volunteers. Volunteers also operate non-emergency phone banks during crises to provide verified situational updates, community resources, and referral services, preventing non-emergency call overload on 911 dispatchers.
  - **25 volunteers** trained **105 hours** to be prepared to respond in these roles (both Tip Hotline and VRC).
  - Toward the end of the fiscal year, a regular schedule of trainings for volunteers was established. All disaster and emergency volunteer roles will have quarterly training to ensure volunteers are ready to act when called upon.

Fraud Fighters

The Iowa Department of Insurance & Financial Services partners with RSVP to inform the public about fraud and scams, training RSVP volunteers to present fraud prevention information to groups in the community.

- **14 RSVP volunteers served 94 hours conducting 12 Fraud Fighter presentations** in Story, Marshall, Hamilton, and Webster counties to community groups and organizations.
- **172 retirees were provided fraud prevention** - 99% surveyed reported an increased understanding of how to protect their personal finances from fraud and scams.

Health, Wellness, and Independent Living

Helping citizens stay healthy and maintain control of their well-being.

RSVP Transportation Program





Primary purpose: Providing Story County's older adults with safe and reliable transportation to and from medical appointments and other essential services.

- **46 volunteers served 2,027 hours** providing **2,004 rides for 77 clients.**
- **24,299 miles were driven**, taking Story County residents to needed services.
- 100% of surveyed riders reported an increased capacity to maintain their independence and overall well-being.

"This service, my drivers, and RSVP staff have all been wonderful. My anxiety has lessened and I can't think of enough great words for this program!" - Noel, Transportation Program Rider

BASE Senior Fitness



Free senior fitness program helping improve **B**alance, **A**gility, **S**trength, and **E**ndurance.

- **30 volunteers served 1,788 hours** leading classes for **401 participants** in 19 locations throughout Hamilton, Webster, and Story Counties.
- 98% of surveyed participants reported improved overall health as a result of BASE classes.
- This fiscal year, BASE marked a milestone, surpassing 1,000 total participants since launching.
- BASE expanded into Story County in December 2025, starting in Colo, with a Maxwell class launched shortly after the fiscal year ended *(not included in this data).*

Food Security Assignments



- **199 grocery deliveries** made to homebound individuals.
- **22 volunteers served 244 hours and drove 3,375 miles** delivering groceries.

Other Food Security Assignments:

- **49 volunteers** served **1,849 hours** serving hot meals, helping at food pantries, stocking mini pantries, and assisting with food rescue programs.
- **54 volunteers** served **1,646 hours** delivering meals and commodity food boxes to individuals and families.

Capacity Building

Providing volunteer recruitment and placement support that supplements or enhances the services of public, nonprofit, and healthcare agencies *(not reflected in other areas of this report).*

Environmental Stewardship

- **20 RSVP Volunteers served 223 hours** at conservation centers, garden spaces, and Reiman Gardens.

Other Education



- **44 RSVP Volunteers served 1,209 hours** at libraries, museums, ISU Extension, community programs, school-based activities, and adult literacy programs.

Housing / Financial Stability

- **45 RSVP Volunteers served 909 hours** as representative payees/bill payers, and at agencies meeting housing, shelter, and financial security needs.

Medical and Support Services

- **42 RSVP Volunteers served 2,649 hours** at local medical/senior care facilities, substance abuse prevention and support programs, hospice, agencies serving the disability community, and serving Military Veterans.

Other Public, Nonprofit Support

- **226 RSVP Volunteers served 5,725 hours** at thrift stores, special events/projects, historical societies, senior service agencies, government and other offices (clerical support), etc.

Funding/Budget Information

2025-2026 Funding Sources / General Operating Budget



- **Federal Grant (AmeriCorps Seniors)**
- **State of Iowa**
- **Story County**
- **City of Ames**
- **City of Story City**
- **United Way of Story County**
- **Marshalltown Area United Way**
- **Story County Emergency Management:** *Emergency/Disaster Volunteer Management*
- **Story City Senior Citizens:** *Building & Rental Management*
- **Self-Generated:** *Donations, Special Grants, United Way Designations, Newsletter Sponsors, Fudraising Revenues, etc.*

2025-2026 Special Grants and Support

- **Aging Resources of Central Iowa - $5,620** *Transportation grant*
- **ITN America - $1,370** *"Rides in Sight" grant - transportation to support rides to vision appointments*
- **Transportation Program Donations - $4,437** *Donations from riders*
- **Iowa Department of Insurance & Financial Services - $1,300** *Stipend from Fraud Fighters Presentations*
- **Story City Friends Endowment - $1,500** *Updated marketing photos for volunteer recruitment*
- **Other general donations - $3,140**

Central Iowa RSVP Endowment

(Part of the Story County Community Foundation)

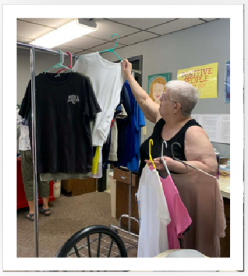
- **FY 25-26 contributions - $2,768.75**
- **Total Balance - $50,727.32** as of June 30, 2026

For a staff directory, contact information, and office locations, visit our website at:

www.RSVPvolunteer.org








"Obviously, I am in better health after participating in this program. My body is more flexible, my balance is surer, my endurance has improved, and my aches and pains are diminished. The exercises cover your whole body from your neck to your ankles. None of the movements are overly strenuous, and every person does only what their body is capable of doing. No one is watching you, no one is pushing you to do more—there is no shame. You are the person in charge of improving your health." - Pat Jorgensen, BASE Participant

"Volunteering in the community has long been my best opportunity to connect with my community, meet new friends, and continue to make a positive impact during retirement. RSVP facilitates these opportunities. I would not be where I am today were it not for RSVP." - Susan Hayes, Volunteer

"RSVP makes our part of the world a better place to live and makes healthier and happier people by social connections and feeling helpful." - Joleen Hibbing, Volunteer

"I like the opportunity to help on a short-term basis; project by project, instead of a long-term commitment. It permits me to volunteer with other organizations as well." - Anonymous Volunteer

AmeriCorps Seniors · volunteer IOWA · United Way Story County · Marshalltown Area United Way