



Jim Thomas

Jim Thomas' lifelong love for Oklahoma City continues thanks to his thoughtful generosity.

For 11 years prior to his death, Mr. Thomas was an active RSVP volunteer, giving more than 1,500 hours of his time to the Oklahoma City Athletic Club to work with at-risk youth. A veteran of World War II, he also supported the organization through grants from his advised fund at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation.

A driving force behind Amateur Athletic Union sports for close to 30 years, Mr. Thomas organized and hosted 262 wrestling tournaments on the local and national levels, including two Olympic Trials, all while operating his family's successful construction company.

Although Mr. Thomas died in 2003, his fund continues to support organizations he cared deeply about such as RSVP.



RSVP Provide-A-Ride volunteers ensure senior citizens are able to get to and from medical appointments.

Providing rides and independence

Imagine being unable to make a doctor's appointment, receive a necessary medical treatment or attend an annual dentist check-up because you have no way to get there. Every day, many senior citizens in central Oklahoma miss important appointments because they can't afford public transportation and have no one to drive them.

"Many seniors who don't have rides to their medical appointments either don't go to the doctor regularly, putting their health in jeopardy, or they spend their allocated medication and grocery dollars on taxi fare, putting both their health and nutrition at risk," says Beth Patterson, executive director of RSVP of Central Oklahoma.

RSVP's Provide-A-Ride program addresses this problem with volunteers who use their vehicles to drive low-to-moderate income senior citizens to medical appointments. The volunteers are reimbursed for mileage.

Great Grants

Thanks to a recent Field of Interest grant from the Oklahoma City Community Foundation, the program is serving an additional 110 seniors in need of door-to-door transportation, increasing the average number of rides provided in a month from 450 to 732. As a result, 91 percent of participants surveyed go to medical appointments more regularly and 92 percent say they are able to live more independently.

"When I left the hospital they told me about the RSVP transportation program. I had no idea what a blessing it was going to be," says Nina K., an 83-year-old RSVP client. "The volunteer drivers are all such wonderful people, and this service gives me so much independence."

By creating a Field of Interest Fund, a donor can support a specific charitable interest such as assisting the elderly who rely upon the Provide-A-Ride program. If you are interested in learning more about Field of Interest Funds or other charitable fund options, contact us at 405/235-5603 or visit www.occf.org.




Helping Our Community Through a Great Grant.

Since 1973, RSVP of Central Oklahoma has been linking volunteers age 55 and older with essential community needs at more than 200 nonprofits and community organizations. In 2008, more than 1,200 individuals volunteered nearly 240,000 hours through RSVP and its programs such as Provide-A-Ride that transports senior citizens to medical appointments.

Thanks to a recent Field of Interest grant from the Oklahoma City Community Foundation, the program has been able to provide the service to more than 100 additional senior citizens. If you're interested in supporting a charitable area of interest through a Field of Interest Fund, please contact us at 405/235-5603 or visit www.occf.org.



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