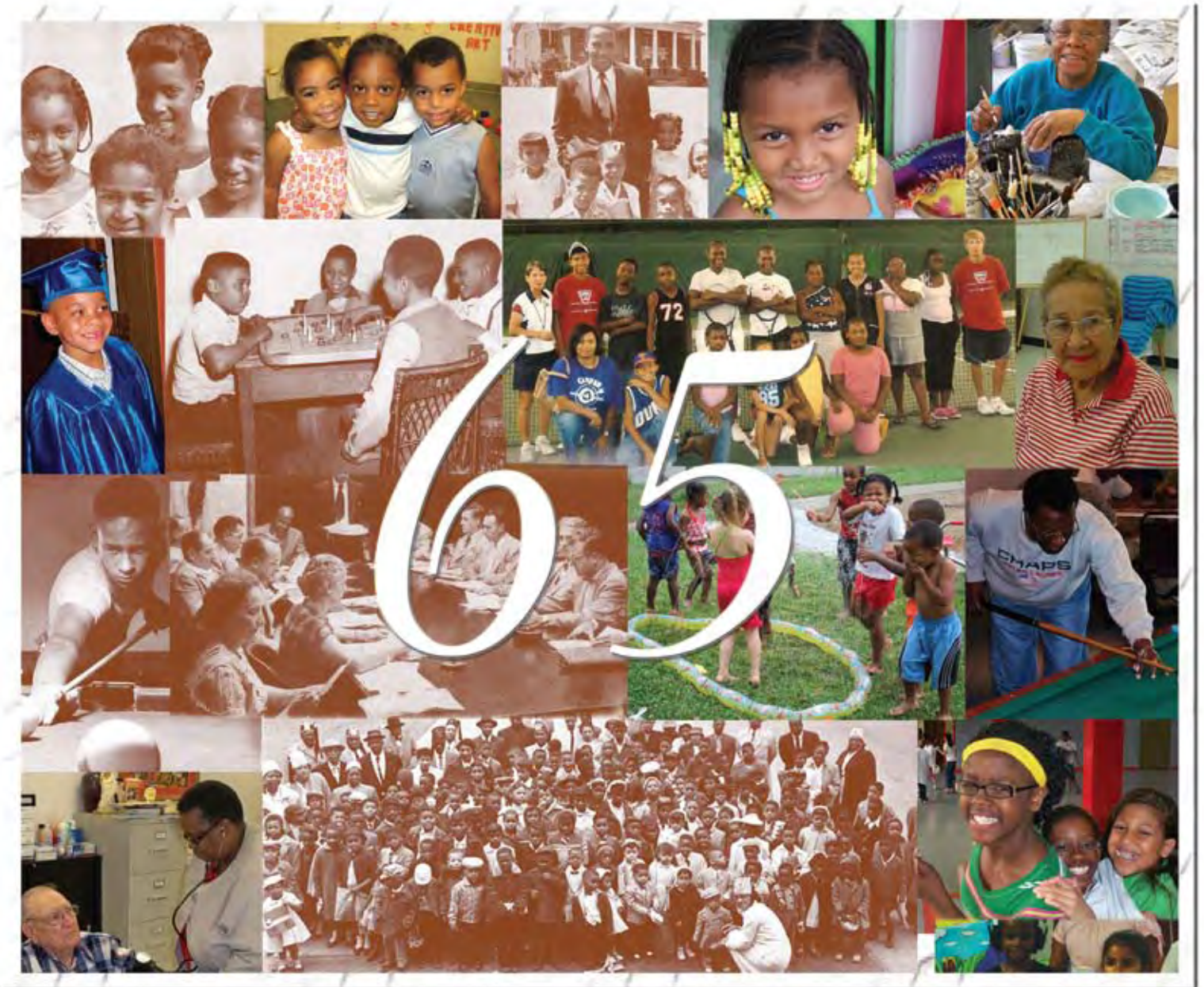




# THE CARVER ADVOCATE

CARVER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

SPRING 2009



A Celebration of Generations...  
Restoring Joy in the Lives of People

Our mission is to provide unique programs and services within a safe environment that teaches respect for self, others, and the community.



## A MESSAGE FROM...DAVID WAGNER

Dear Carver Friends:

Reaching a milestone like 65 years of continuous service provides the perfect opportunity to reflect. I can't consciously remember a time when Carver Community Organization was not a part of my life. As well, in reviewing Carver's history it reflects that the total family service delivery model has been present since the early 1950's. This comprehensive approach offers total support to eliminate root causes of family instabilities. Carver has continued our rich history by building local, regional, state, and now national partnerships that enhance our opportunity for a very bright future. We applaud our dedicated board of directors, talented staff, and committed supporters for creating the nimble culture of this responsive organization that it is today!

On June 12, 2009 the agency will host its 65th Anniversary Celebration. The day's activities include our annual meeting at 11 AM. The luncheon speaker will be Deloris Johnson Price, Ph.D, a former Carver kid and currently the Curriculum,

Teaching & Educational Leadership Department Chair at Alabama A&M University. The celebration will continue that evening with a gala at 7 PM. So save the date and plan to join us in celebrating 65 years of restoring joy in the lives of people through childcare, youth and family support services, senior care, and volunteerism.

We appreciate you! It is your generous support that allows us to continue the work of strengthening families, thank you.

Sincerely,



David Wagner  
Executive Director

## NEW PROGRAMS IN 2009... ENRICHING LIVES, MEETING NEEDS.

On January 14, 2009, Carver Community Organization became the new sponsor for the **Retired Senior Volunteer Program**, better known as RSVP. The RSVP is a free, members-only national service association for people 55 years and better. The dual purpose of the program is to engage persons 55 and older in volunteer service to meet critical community needs; and to provide a high quality experience that will enrich the lives of volunteers.

While a variety of volunteer opportunities are available, our primary goal is to respond to clearly defined local needs. Based on the United Way community needs assessment, we have chosen the following focus areas for 2009-2010:

- Public Safety
- Education
- Disaster Preparedness
- Community & Economic Development
- Human Needs/Housing

Evansville-Vanderburgh RSVP is funded and supported by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

No one talent, experience or education is required - just a willingness to participate. Volunteers can commit to serving in one or more ongoing assignments. The number of hours served is flexible. Through the RSVP you can make new friends, share your hobbies and interests and use your skills, talents and wisdom for the betterment of the community.

To join RSVP, call us at 812.402.3170. Membership is free, and all that's required is that you be age 55 or better, complete a registration form, and volunteer at a qualified nonprofit organization in Evansville-Vanderburgh County.

Carver is also please to announce a recent seed grant from the Brookdale Foundation to initiate a local **Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP)**. The Brookdale Foundation Group has worked to advance the fields of geriatrics and gerontology and to improve the live of senior citizens -- in New York City, across the country, and even around the world.

Through this RAPP initiative our agency will:

- Provide accessible support groups and other supportive services to relative caregivers and the children in their care;
- Establish collaboration with community organizations and other service systems such as family services, child care, aging, education, legal, health care, mental health and extension services;
- Ensure the development, expansion and future continuity of local services.

For more information, to establish a partnership, or to refer a family please, contact Serita Cabell, Adult & Family Services Coordinator at 812.435.6065.

**NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR CHILDCARE PROGRAM...CALL 423.2612**

## STUDIES SHOW THAT STUDENTS AREN'T THE ONLY ONES WHO BENEFIT FROM SCHOOL-BASED TUTORING

Tutors over 55 who help young students on a regular basis experience positive physical and mental health outcomes, according to studies released by researchers at Washington University in St. Louis and Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. The tutors studied were members of Experience Corps, an award-winning organization that trains thousands of people over 55 to tutor children in urban public schools across the country.

Researchers at Washington University's Center for Social Development assessed the impact of the Experience Corps program on the lives of its members and found that, compared with adults of similar age, demographics and volunteer history, Experience Corps tutors reported improvements in mental health and physical functioning (including mobility, stamina and flexibility) and maintained overall health longer. In addition, Experience Corps members reported more physical activity, larger social networks and higher self-esteem as a result of their participation.

Other key findings:

- After a year with Experience Corps, about two-thirds of the least active members reported that they became significantly more physically active and more engaged in social and community events.
- 84% of Experience Corps members report that their circle of friends - a key measure of social well-being, particularly for aging adults - increased as a result of their involvement in the program.
- 86% of Experience Corps members say their lives have improved because of their involvement with the program.

A separate study released in the March issue of the Journal of Gerontology by researchers at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine also found lasting, positive health impacts from participation in the program. The findings built on previous studies by the Hopkins researchers that have shown older adults who were physically inactive when they joined Experience Corps nearly doubled their activity level after just four

to eight months of volunteering. The new Hopkins study found that for Experience Corps tutors in Baltimore - primarily African-American women over 60 - the women continued their increased level of activity for at least three years.

An earlier study, published by Johns Hopkins researchers in the Journal of Gerontology in January 2008, also found improvements in memory and executive function among Experience Corps tutors.

Lester Strong, CEO of Experience Corps, says the new research underscores the value of doing meaningful work in the second half of life. "Our members know that they are making a difference in the lives of students who desperately need academic help and encouragement. That keeps them going - and healthy."

Experience Corps members are diverse in many ways.

- Age: The average age of Experience Corps members is 65, but the age range of members in this study extends from 50 to 87.
- Race: About half (53%) of Experience Corps members are African American; 39% are white.
- Background: One-third of Experience Corps members have some higher education, and one in five is a retired educator (teacher, professor, administrator or classroom assistant).
- Income: 20% of Experience Corps members earn less than \$15,000 per year, while 15% earn more than \$75,000 per year.

Washington University researchers also studied the impact of Experience Corps tutoring on students' reading ability. The results, which demonstrate significant, positive gains in student learning, will be

made available in April.

### ABOUT EXPERIENCE CORPS

Experience Corps, an award-winning program, engages people over 55 in meeting their communities' greatest challenges. Today, in 23 cities across the country, 2,000 Experience Corps members tutor and mentor elementary school students struggling to learn to read. Independent research shows that Experience Corps boosts student academic performance, helps schools and youth-serving organizations become more successful, and enhances the well-being of the older adults in the process.

Experience Corps is supported by public and private funders, including The Atlantic Philanthropies, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Corporation for National and Community Service (AmeriCorps), and the Deerbrook Charitable Foundation. Locally the program is funded by Welborn Baptist Foundation and the Vanderburgh Community Foundation and is currently serving 100 4th and 5th grade students.

**"Our teachers really appreciate the extra support the Experience Corps tutors have provided to their students. Our students have quickly warmed up to the tutors, who have been able to easily develop a positive rapport with the kids they support.**

**I would recommend Experience Corps to any teacher or principal who has that feeling of "not enough time in the day." Classroom teachers are stretched so thin, especially due to the demand of designing learning experiences for the multiple levels of students in each classroom. It is nice for someone with experience and training to come in and provide that extra support students need."**

**Carrie Hillyard, principal of Culver Elementary School**

**19 CURRENT EXPERIENCE CORPS MEMBERS BUT STILL ROOM FOR YOU TO HELP A CHILD LEARN-LOVE TO READ!**

**MAKE A CONTRIBUTION ONLINE AT [WWW.CARVERORG.ORG](http://WWW.CARVERORG.ORG).**



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