



Gloucester Department of Community Education

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Friday, February 12, 2016

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Volunteering is Good for Your Heart!

Did you know that February is American Heart Month? Helping others certainly can make one feel good, but according to a study by the Corporation for National and Community Service there is compelling scientific research that indicates that volunteers benefit from better health. *The Health Benefits of Volunteering: A Review of Recent Research* has found a significant connection between volunteering and good health. The report shows that volunteers have greater longevity, higher functional ability, lower rates of depression and less incidence of heart disease. The report documents major findings from more than 30 studies that reviewed the relationship between health and volunteering, with particular emphasis on studies that seek to determine the causal connection between the two factors. The studies found that volunteering leads to improved physical and mental health. Just two hours (2) of volunteering a week can bring meaningful benefits to a person's body and mind.

In Gloucester, there are numerous organizations just waiting to improve your heart and health. A few of the over 20 volunteer opportunities listed in the Volunteer Needs Directory include:

Arts on Main needs someone to adopt the Facebook page and keep it updated. (824-9464)

Bay Aging is looking for non-emergency medical transportation drivers. (758-8853)

Elementary schools need lunch buddies/mentors, tutors, classroom and special event volunteers. (693-5730)

Gloucester Housing Partnership seeks people skilled with hammers, small tools, plumbing and electrical. (693-2252)

Gloucester Visitor Center is in great need of people to serve just two 3-hour shifts per month. (693-0014)

To view the entire list of heart-healthy volunteer opportunities in your community, schools and local government, go online to www.gloucesterva.info and under top heading choose "E-Services", then select "Community Connection" and "Volunteer" (left column) or call Gloucester Community Education at 693-5730.

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