



Thanking you Every Day!



In the 6 years I have been working at SAGE, you would think I'd be used to people volunteering their time week after week, year after year, and some, day after day.

I'm not.

Every day I come to work I am awed by the goodness and generosity of those who help us serve our mission. Whether it is one of our 300 volunteers or members of our Board of Trustees, each of these people give of themselves to make the lives of older adults better and more secure.

We celebrated our volunteers last week, but they should be celebrated and thanked every single day. Thank you, thank you!

-- Amy Stuart, Community Engagement & Volunteers Manager

Above photo from left: Volunteer Linda Delma of Summit, Meals on Wheels Manager, Robin Handwerger and Amy Stuart. Volunteers were given a SAGE umbrella as a thank you gift last week.

Meet SAGE Trustee Cheryl LaBelle



What initially inspired you to volunteer at SAGE?

The mission of SAGE resonated with me. I had recently retired and wanted to help make a difference. There are so many older adults living alone. Helping them be independent and remain a part of the community is very important to me.

Why do you think it is so important to help the older adult population?

Older adults have so much to give if people are willing to listen. We need to help older adults

understand that they remain an integral part of our community. I want to do whatever I can to ensure that older adults continue to live their best lives and are embraced by those around them.

What made you decide to join the Board of Trustees?

I truly believe in the mission of SAGE and the extraordinary staff that make it work every day. I hope by joining the Board I will help strengthen their incredible resolve to get things done.

What is it like working on the Board?

There are currently 15 members (including 5 members of the Executive Committee). We meet monthly. Board members act as ambassadors within the community. We determine the mission of SAGE as well as assist in its implementation. We consider staff our partners and coordinate fundraising efforts.

How has your experience as a Trustee been so far?

The entirety of my tenure has been during the forced shutdown of our facility due to the pandemic. I have learned that board members are passionate about SAGE and willing to do whatever is required to make it successful. I look forward to making a difference with my colleagues once we return to "business as usual." During these extraordinary times, however, we agreed to hire a new Executive Director, who brings an exciting perspective and much energy to the role.

Any advice for someone thinking about volunteering at SAGE?

You don't need any prior experience or specific skills to make a difference. All it takes is love, commitment and believing in SAGE's cause.

When you are not volunteering at SAGE, what do you like to do?

I volunteer for several organizations in and around Summit. I enjoy spending time with family and friends, and after this long pandemic, our home in Vermont.

What is on your bucket list when the pandemic is over?

This pandemic has taught me that the simple things are the best things and that we should

never forget their impact on our lives. All I really wish is to return to life the way it was 15 months ago - seeing friends, family and traveling without a second thought about possible consequences.

Above photo from left: SAGE Development Manager, Jean Finsen with Cheryl LaBelle.
Thank you to volunteer Randi Mazzella for this interview.

"Kicking it Off " With Older Adults



We are big fans of the [NJ/NY Gotham FC](#) women's soccer team. As part of their community outreach program, the team visited SAGE in April to deliver Meals on Wheels. To say they made our client's day is an understatement. Their energy and kindness was just amazing. We thank the team for all the happiness they brought to our clients. As our first group of visiting volunteers since COVID-19 began, they made the day wonderful and memorable!

Meet Workshop Volunteer Simon Rosenstein

What did you do before becoming a volunteer at the SAGE Furniture Restoration Workshop?

I was a physician. I retired in 2012.

Did you have woodworking experience before joining the Workshop team?

Yes, between high school and college, while I was deciding what I wanted to do with my life, I got a call from a temp agency asking if I could paint soffits. I asked, "What's a soffit?" The man who hired me for the job ended up keeping me on full time for the next four years and trained me in all areas of construction and woodworking.



How did you learn about the SAGE Workshop?

My wife ran a program at the Spend-A-Day program and learned there was a furniture workshop in the building. The day before Thanksgiving 2015 she sent me to bring in a chair for repair. I got off the elevator, looked around the Workshop and all the memories from the work I had done for those four years came back to me. I asked the manager, Al Kessler, "Who do I have to pay to work here?" The following Monday I started. I've been a volunteer for almost six years.

Any stand out stories?

Yes. Family heirlooms are a large part of our business. Many of the pieces brought in hold sentimental value to our customers. One day a gentleman came in with a chair to be repaired. It had belonged to his late father. When we told him the cost of the repair would be \$200 he didn't blink an eye and immediately said "Yes." The same day another customer came in with the exact same chair needing a repair. When he was told the cost would be \$200 he said, "Absolutely not, I picked this up for \$5 at a garage sale." Sentimental pieces represent a family's history, which to some people, makes them priceless.

60 Years Workshop Volunteering!

Between 600 - 700 pieces of furniture pass through the Furniture Restoration Workshop every year. Along with repairs, the shop is highly regarded for its fine caning and rushing work. Workshop proceeds support SAGE programming.

For more information, call 908-598-5531 or visit sageeldercare.org.

Pictured here are a group of Workshop volunteers. SAGE volunteers received a SAGE commemorative umbrella as a token of appreciation.

[Text Link](#)



May is Older American's Month



This month we take time to celebrate older adults (even more so than usual). The Administration for Community Living (ACL) sets a theme each May and this year's theme is *Communities of Strength*. "Older adults have built resilience and strength over their lives through successes, failures, joys, and difficulties. Their stories and contributions help to support and inspire others."- ACL

Be sure to reach out and check in on the older adults in your life, especially those feeling alone and isolated due to COVID-19.

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