

INTERFAITH Caregivers GREATER MERCER COUNTY

A Volunteer's Perspective

The importance Interfaith services for our friends and neighbors in need.

Gaeta Iseicz, one of our dedicated Group Leaders from St. Gregory the Great parish, began her journey with Interfaith Caregivers of Greater Mercer County in November 1995 and has been helping to grow our volunteer family for the past 22 years. She was inspired by Interfaith Caregivers' mission to help our elderly and disabled neighbors after an illness in 1989, when her husband was able to support her by providing much needed care. She wondered, "What do people do that don't have anyone to help them?"

ICGMC provided a way to care for others: "Interfaith Caregivers would supply us with the names of people who needed help. We could just help them." As a group leader, Gaeta worked on recruiting volunteers to serve the needs of more of our elderly and disabled neighbors for many years. Currently, Gaeta maintains an advisory position with St.



(Pictured above) Gaeta Iseicz

Gregory the Great Helping Hands ministry and recruits and trains new group leaders.

During her devoted tenure as Coordinator, Group Leader, and Advisor

with ICGMC, Gaeta has stepped into the role of a care receiver temporarily and received support from her Interfaith family. Recently, an accident caused Gaeta to fall and break two bones in her ankle. Her trusted colleagues, Lee Buente, Mary Ellen and Bill Champion, Marge Damiani, Cathy Dey, Celeste Gibilisco, Gina Hopkins, and Gail Petrone assisted her in providing meals, going grocery shopping, and helping out with chores around the house. Gaeta is also grateful for the devoted help she received from family and friends.

Now recovering smoothly, Gaeta has discovered a renewed empathy for ICGMC's care receivers. Following her experience receiving assistance in personal tasks during her convalescence, she has an appreciation for the difficulty that asking for help poses, and the joy that helping neighbors from the ICGMC family provides.



(Pictured above, left to right) Sam Frisby, Richard O'Grady, Andrea New, Frank Kowalski, Lisa Schlosser, Ann Cannon, Linda Gyimoty, Rosemary Durkin, Melissa Allen, Deacon Frank Golazeski

Recognition Day for National Service

On April 3, 2018 we celebrated our wonderful RSVP volunteers in honor of National Service Recognition Day. At ICGMC, RSVP volunteers contribute to our Neighbors Helping Neighbors program.

Special comments were delivered by Advisory Board member Richard Grady, who spoke about evolution of protective services provided to older adults and the significance of volunteerism. His uplifting message reflected a lifetime of service.

We were delighted to have Mercer County Board of Chosen of Freeholders member Ann Cannon, and an ICGMC Advisory Board member in attendance to share in the celebration. She was joined by Samuel Frisby, also a Mercer County Freeholder, and together they recognized the efforts of our senior volunteers in Mercer County.

Our mission is to promote the independence, dignity, and wellness of homebound elderly and people with disabilities by matching them with supportive and caring volunteers who assist with the tasks of everyday life.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

As I ease into my second year here at Interfaith Caregivers I think it might be the perfect time to share some of my thoughts and observations about our work. First, I must confess that I have completely fallen in love with our mission! I have had the chance to witness the personification of grace, kindness, and love in the faces and voices of our volunteers and our care receivers. It has been beautiful and humbling to meet so many seniors who demonstrate the passion and pride that comes from embracing a full and vibrant life.

I am also grateful for the warm welcome I have received from this amazing ICGMC family and for the time and patience to find my place here. I have had such inspiring conversations with so many of you as you offered ideas and suggestions about how we can do more and be more for our neighbors in need. It is so comforting to know that you all are with us on this loving journey.

Every day we receive new requests for help, or hear from our current care receivers wishing that we could do just a little bit more. Even with the hundreds of care receivers we served and the tens of thousands of hours

of support that we provided last year, we know that so many of our elderly and disabled folks struggling still.

Over the years, we answered these calls – we grew our network, expanded our teams and sought out new friends to help. But now our nation is poised to experience an unprecedented growth in our senior population. The aging of our baby boomers, coupled with longer life spans, will create many more seniors who are striving to age at home independently surrounded by their loved ones and their memories. How will we be ready for them when they call?

As we completed our new strategic plan this year, our conversations have been challenging. How can we double our impact? Who can we partner with to bring in the increased resources that we will need? What other services will our elderly and disabled residents require?

We have a moral imperative to increase our services for our homebound elderly neighbors.

We have not uncovered the answers to all of these complex questions, but our Board and staff have been finalizing an action plan for the next five years that is fierce and determined. We want to rise to the challenge and I hope that each of you, our dearest friends, volunteers, donors, partners, and neighbors will join us on this climb.

You remain the best possible ambassador for our work! With your assistance, we can continue to find dedicated new friends and volunteers. Please share with your neighbors, friends, and family about your work with us. Let's help more folks learn about how easy and rewarding it is to make a difference.

And please, keep your ideas coming. Email me, text me, call me. Together we will craft new stronger, bolder ICGMC solutions.

With profound admiration and warmest regards,

Linda Gyimoty
Executive Director

By 2034, Mercer County's residents age 60 and over will increase by **42.6%** and our seniors age 75 and over will grow **over 70%**

New Jersey Department of Human Services, Community Report 2017

VOLUNTEER UPDATES

NEW VOLUNTEERS

We are delighted to welcome the following individuals to our dedicated corps of volunteers

Stephanie Biko	James MacFarland
Vivian Cacace	Samantha Mayer
Urmila Cutinha	Angelo Milioto
John J. DiBase	Clare Milioto
Frank Dischinger	William Monks
Mary Kaye Dobyns	Nancy Opalski
Sandra Eidinger	Mary Ellen Parrotta
Francesca Ezeokonkwo	Anne Paul
Cecilia A. Freeman	Larry Quinn
Wayne G. Freeman	Julia Ruch
Francis "Frank" G. Golazeski	Brunilda Santiago
Melda L. Grant	Thomas A. Scorsolini
Richard Hedden	Patricia Thomas
Katrina Howard-Pemberton	Donna Thomas
Calogero "Charlie" Iucolino	Janice "Jessie" Vaccaro
Joanne Jackman	Edwin L. Walters
Jean S. Kelley	Frances Walters
Patricia M. Langon	Candace Williams
Shirline Lynch	Jean V. Yepes

STAY IN TOUCH

We are continuing to use electronic communication channels more and more to keep you informed about events and activities. These avenues are more cost-effective and timely than regular mail. Here are some simple steps you can take to make sure we stay in touch.

EMAIL

- Notify ICGMC of changes to your email address
- Make sure email messages from ICGMC are not going to your spam box
- Open and read email messages from ICGMC

Learn more: icgmc.org/volunteer



"Without some help from your organization I could not live by myself. Thank you for being here"

- INTERFAITH CARE RECEIVER



VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Please consider registering for one of our volunteer training sessions, which take place biweekly from 10 am - 12 pm at the ICGMC office.

TUESDAYS

July 10
August 14
September 11
October 16
November 13
December 11

SATURDAYS

July 14
August 18
September 15
October 20
November 17
December 15



"It would be impossible to find a more wonderful, caring volunteer"

- INTERFAITH CARE RECEIVER



FACEBOOK

We post up-to-date information on our events and useful information on our Facebook page. We invite you to follow these updates on Facebook, and to serve as an ambassador for our mission by responding to our posts and sharing them.



- Follow [facebook.com/icgmc](https://www.facebook.com/icgmc)
- *Like, Comment* on and *Share* our posts, photos, and events
- Indicate that you are *Interested* in our events

SPECIAL THANKS

To our incredible and generous friends at **Petal Pushers Florist** in Hamilton, NJ who have helped to make so many of our events special with donations of flowers, bouquets, and centerpieces. We would like to extend our gratitude to owner Karen Vernon-Stewart and our own Lee Buentel for these beautiful gifts.

www.mypetalpushersflowers.com

A Time of Thanks

Honoring those who serve homebound seniors and adults with disabilities.

Volunteer Recognition Dinner

This year, as part of our celebration for National Volunteer Month in April, Interfaith Caregivers of Greater Mercer County showed our appreciation for our caring caregivers, group leaders, volunteers, and faith partners. We honored their dedication to promoting the independence, dignity and wellness of homebound elderly and people with disabilities in support of our mission with our annual Volunteer Recognition Dinner on April 10, 2018.



(Pictured above) Rosemary Durkin

Executive Director Linda Gyimoty began the event by acknowledging the representatives of the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner's Inspirational Sponsors in attendance: Kathy LoBue of Glen Eagle Advisors, as well as Robert Morris and Rosemary Durkin from Stark and Stark. We were so grateful to hear from Kathy LoBue, who is beginning her tenure as Advisory board

member after years of dedication as Chair of the Board of Directors, as she acknowledged special moments from past ICGMC events. Maureen Cozzi, Parish Business Manager at St. Gregory the Great Church, is departing from her role as Treasurer on our Board of Directors to our Advisory Board.

(Pictured below) Maureen Cozzi and Kathy LoBue



As some loved ones leave, others return. Rosemary Durkin, who is rejoining the Board as returning Chair, addressed the guests and volunteers to share her commitment to her work with ICGMC and her thanks. We are so grateful to our many

supporters' dedication and leadership in serving our elderly and disabled neighbors. The evening's invocation was delivered by Father Morris, the pastor at Incarnation St. James, one of our supportive faith partners.



Deanna Sass, the Director of the Department of Pastoral Care for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Trenton delivered a moving speech. In her keynote remarks, she noted: "Volunteering to help our brothers and sisters bring authenticity to our claim that we are people of faith, and it blesses the world and all who live in it." Her message celebrated service to others as a means of creating common purposes across different faiths, which echoes our mission at ICGMC. We are so grateful to Deanna for her words of inspiration.

Appreciation Luncheon

We were pleased to be able to spend time with some of our dedicated Interfaith Caregivers office volunteers for a



luncheon on January 29, 2018 in celebration of the work they do on behalf of our mission. These volunteers who assist us with administrative work and program tasks are a tremendous help to our ICGMC staff.



(Pictured above) ICGMC office staff and volunteers enjoy the appreciation luncheon in our Hamilton, NJ office

Group Leader Luncheon and Senior Scams Workshop



(Pictured above) ED Linda Gyimoty and Group Leaders Diane Goettler and Susan Cosma at the Group Leader Luncheon

On May 24, 2018 volunteer group leaders and ICGMC staff gathered in the Auditorium of St. Vincent de Paul Church in Yardville, NJ for a luncheon meeting. ED Linda Gyimoty opened the event by thanking the group leaders, and in particular, Joanne Garafalo of St. Vincent de Paul Parish who generously hosted our event in the Church's auditorium and provided refreshments. Our group leaders work as liaisons, usually within a faith community, to supplement our team in recruiting volunteers, matching them with care-receivers to broaden access points for people in need.

We are so grateful for the continued support of our faith partners, including Reverend Stan Krzyston of St. Vincent de Paul Parish, and our group leaders who are generous with their time and energy that help support Interfaith Caregivers of Greater Mercer County.

After the group leader luncheon, Investigator Joseph Armano of the Mercer County Sheriff's Office presented a valuable workshop to group leaders, volunteers,



(Pictured above) Investigator Joseph Armano facilitates a Q&A session on scams and fraud

and friends who gathered to learn about scams commonly affecting seniors in the area. Seniors can begin to avoid being victims of fraud over the phone (recently by individuals presenting false identities of an IRS representative or a grandchild) by double checking information. We would like to urge our seniors to not only be aware of, but to report incidents of these scams to the Federal Trade Commission by calling (877)-FTC-HELP.

Following a question and answer session, Investigator Armano distributed free personal alarms to aid personal safety while out in the community to participants and demonstrated their uses. Thank you to the Mercer County Sheriff's Department for this timely and important presentation.

Mind, Body, and Spirit Retreat



(Pictured above, below) Group Leaders and Caregiving Volunteers attend ICGMC's retreat

Interfaith Caregivers of Greater Mercer County hosted a day-long retreat for our dedicated force of Group Leaders and caregiving volunteers. On Friday, February 9, 2018 participants gathered at Our Lady of Sorrows St. Anthony's Church for a day of reflection, renewal and resilience for our ICGMC family. We are so grateful for the services they provide on behalf of our mission to help our elderly and disabled neighbors, and recognize the effort that goes into their generosity.



PROGRAM UPDATES

NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

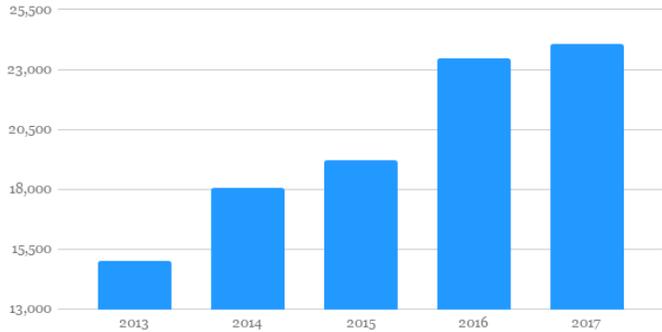
In May 2018, Interfaith Caregivers of Greater Mercer County volunteers logged 2,213 hours, a new record in our history during the month of May! We would like to extend our sincerest thanks to all of our caring and hardworking volunteers.

Our generous volunteer caregivers offer companionship and compassion to our homebound neighbors while assisting them with everyday tasks. Elderly and disabled neighbors are matched with trained volunteer caregivers who provide regular social contact through phone and home visits, transportation to medical appointments, and assistance obtaining groceries and prescriptions.

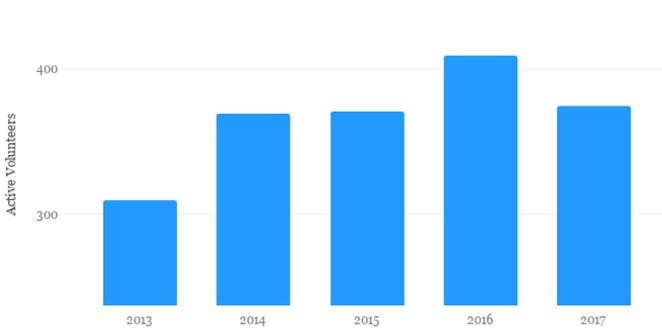
From **2013 to 2017**, the number of volunteer hours we have provided **increased 60%**

374 caregivers
24,068 hours of service
481 care-receivers
The year of 2017

Total Volunteer Hours 2013 - 2017



Active Volunteers 2013-2017



PROJECT HEALTHY BONES



Interfaith Caregivers offers an exciting no cost exercise program for older adults with or at risk for osteoporosis. The program is called Project Healthy Bones.

Project Healthy Bones is:

- A 24-week exercise program that targets the body's larger muscle groups to improve posture, strength, balance, and flexibility.
- An education program that covers the importance of exercise, nutrition, safety, drug therapy, and lifestyle factors that relate to osteoporosis.
- An opportunity to hear presentations by health care professionals on topics related to bone and overall health.

WITH GRATITUDE

We gratefully acknowledge the following gifts and grants of \$500 or more, received since November 2016, which enable Interfaith Caregivers of Greater Mercer County to provide services to our care-receivers.

AARP
Anonymous
Leonard Berzinski
Patricia Bisogno
Bristol-Myers Squibb Company
Elizabeth Carmalt
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St. Francis Medical Center
St. Gregory the Great Church
Shiloh Baptist Church
Betsy & Patrick Solan
Stark & Stark RD
City of Trenton (CDBG)
Christine Fares Walley
Wells Fargo Bank
Margaret Zimnes


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what you get;
you make a life by
what you give"*


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