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VMC SEEKS MORE “FRIENDLY” VOLUNTEERS TO REACH OUT TO SHUT-INS

MORRISTOWN, NJ (September, 2008) – For nearly two decades, VMC, the Volunteer Management Centers, has successfully managed two community outreach programs called Telephone Reassurance and Friendly Visitor. Trained volunteers improve the lives of homebound seniors and disabled persons by providing companionship, socialization opportunities and important information through regularly scheduled phone calls and/or visits.

Volunteers address issues of loneliness, isolation and depression in this specific population, one of the fastest growing in northern New Jersey. By providing regular wellness checks, these selfless volunteers serve first-hand in preventative health care. Simply put, the Telephone Reassurance and Friendly Visitor programs empower seniors to stay in their homes longer than they otherwise would, adding immeasurably to their quality of life.

Except for the recent high gas prices that have kept many close to home, Americans still enjoy a mobile lifestyle with the ability to drive or walk to places they need to go. Cell phones and the Internet are vital links; yet VMC's house-bound clients have limited abilities to travel outside their homes for their daily needs. Being unfamiliar with new technology and having few people to call for a chat, VMC's programs are often their only link day-to-day with the outside world.

In 2009, VMC plans to launch the Intergenerational Internet program, a new component designed to engage youth in teaching the elderly how to navigate the Internet and thus broaden their opportunities for personal connections. This new feature will also help foster lifelong volunteerism among youth who could benefit from seniors who would offer guidance and mentoring.

VMC is dedicated to advancing effective volunteerism and offers a one-stop shop for finding just the right volunteer opportunity. Through personal assistance and by utilizing its powerful on-line volunteer placement tool available via www.vmcnj.org , VMC facilitates nearly 100,000 volunteer referrals to hundreds of charitable organizations each year. Offering several programs designed to maximize and mobilize human resources to meet community needs, VMC has earned a reputation in the North Jersey region for being a strong advocate for developing meaningful volunteerism.

At this time, the Outreach programs need more dedicated volunteers willing to spare the time to make a call and/or a friendly visit to bring a sense of comfort to the homebound. To volunteer for one of these Outreach programs or explore other opportunities, please visit www.vmcnj.org or call 973-538-7200.

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