

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Support National Employ Older Workers Week September 18-24, 2016 – Hire a Skilled and Dependable Older Worker

When it Comes to Jobs, Older Workers Have What Counts

Akron, Ohio – September 22, 2016. During the last week of September, the U.S. Department of Labor celebrates National Employ Older Workers Week. This special week honors older workers and showcases the Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP).

The goal of the event is to publicize the positive impact of older workers on the job and the barriers that prevent employment. Many seniors work after retirement for economic reasons, reliable income, social connections, health insurance, having a purpose, having work goals, mental stimulation, or because they enjoy their job. Experts predict that at the end of 2016, a quarter of the U.S. labor force will be workers over 55.

- In Ohio, the unemployment rate for older workers is 4.8%.
- In 2014, older workers represented 8.9% of the unemployed in the U.S. Of these, 198,000 did not look for work based on the belief no jobs were available for them.
- In 2014, 44.6% of older workers in the U.S. were unemployed 27 weeks longer than younger workers.

Barriers to employment include stereotypes about older workers. They are too old, lack training, resist new technology, have trouble with young supervisors, cannot multitask, and rate low in production. While these barriers exist, AARP studies demonstrate these are often myths as older workers excel in these categories while offering organizations the perspectives and talent through a lifetime of experience.

Based in Akron, Mature Services provides community services to train, motivate, and empower mature job-seekers. Serving 40 Ohio counties, the organization administers eight regional Employment & Training Solutions Centers, where the SCSEP program is offered. Funded by the Department of Labor, the program provides on the job training for low-income, unemployed seniors. Participants work an average of 20 hours per week at non-profit businesses and public facilities, earning the current minimum wage.

According to Paul Magnus, Vice President for Workforce Development at Mature Services, “SCSEP helps mature workers re-establish themselves and become viable candidates for today’s job market.”

Lynn Ragland, from Mature Services SCSEP in Portsmouth, demonstrates the participants' exceptional skills. She works as the Information and Referral person at the Jackson County Board on Aging, where she was named March Employee of the Month. A volunteer in the community for many years, Ragland says that she is "greatly honored to be recognized by the Board. SCSEP has helped me pay my bills, and I plan on working at a part-time job as long as possible."

Participants at Mature Services in Youngstown praise the program not only for the stipend that helps pay bills. According to Michaeline Federico, "I have only been in Geneva for three years, and it has gotten me into the community. I have met some great people and I like helping the seniors. The extra money really comes in handy. I am learning patience and understanding with the seniors, and also how the Center is run."

Phyllis Shimko is grateful for the opportunity to make many new friends at the senior center where she works. "I've gained abundant knowledge, which I had not expected. My host agency bosses are a joy to work with and they continually allow me to learn new skills with the tasks assigned to me. I've been completely satisfied with what the program has allowed me to achieve."

Terry started in the SCSEP Program in August of 2015. He is a veteran with some service related issues. He stutters quite a bit and comes across as very nervous and not sure of himself. He was able to gain a great deal of confidence at his Host Agency. He attended classes to improve upon his job search skills and worked hard at finding unsubsidized employment. He was hired by FedEx and is working 25 hours per week making \$10.25/hour. He is very happy with his new position!

Support older workers this week and every day. Recognize their contribution, especially if you are an employer and seeking job candidates. Seniors fill an important position in our economy and benefit America's leadership in the world marketplace.

For more information about Mature Services, Inc. and our SCSEP program, visit our website at www.matureservices.org or call our main office at 800-554-5335.

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