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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## Celebrating 30 Years of Experience Corps in Washington, D.C.

From June 24–26, the AARP Foundation hosted its annual Experience Corps meeting in Washington, D.C., with participants joining both in person and virtually. This year’s gathering marked a special milestone: the 30th anniversary of the Experience Corps program, which connects older adult volunteers with elementary students to help build reading skills and confidence.

Charlotte Petrie, program manager for Experience Corps at Greater Cleveland Volunteers (GCV), attended the event in person, representing one of the network’s longest-standing partners. Fun fact: GCV joined the second-stage pilot of the original Experience Corps program nearly three decades ago, making it one of the most tenured programs in the nation.



The conference brought together staff and partners from across the country to reflect on the program’s legacy, share best practices, and chart a course for the future. It was a meaningful celebration of service, impact, and the power of intergenerational connection.

If you are 50+ and want to help young students with their reading, Experience Corps may be right for you! Visit our website to learn more and apply online.

## GCV Meets with Elected Officials in D.C.

Kevin Gross, executive director of Greater Cleveland Volunteers, traveled to the nation’s capital in June to meet with several representatives and senators. The effort was to help raise awareness of the importance of AmeriCorps funding and community service in general. Kevin also delivered a signed partner letter to key members of committees that appropriate funds and have oversight over AmeriCorps and national service programs. As the federal budget process moves forward, it’s important that our elected officials understand the impact that RSVP, and volunteering, has in the Cleveland area, and across the nation. Kevin had meetings with the offices of Senator Husted (R-OH), Senator Moreno (R-OH), Senator Cassidy (R-LA, Chair Senate HELP Committee), Rep. Brown (D-OH 11, pictured at right), Rep. Miller (R-OH 7), and Rep. Joyce (R-OH 14).



# Cleveland PICKLE FEST®

Brought to you by  
**Greater Cleveland Volunteers**  
Presenting Sponsor  
**Mr. Crisp Pickle Co.**



Saturday, September 20, 11 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.  
Mall C, Downtown Cleveland

*Pickle-eating contests, pet costume contest,  
live music, food, drinks, & pickles!*

**BUY YOUR TICKETS TODAY!**  
[www.clevelandpicklefest.com](http://www.clevelandpicklefest.com)

## VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION EVENT DRAWS OVER 100



On June 5, Greater Cleveland Volunteers honored its amazing volunteers at its annual recognition event. Over 100 volunteers, partner agency representatives, board members, and staff turned out for this inspiring and uplifting get-together. The “Tides of Thanks” celebration was a beach-themed party, with eleven individuals being honored with the “Spirit of Giving” award. Held at the Benjamin Rose Conference Center in Cleveland, the generosity and caring of the volunteers was on full display. Thank you to all who attended and to *all* our volunteers.

## GCV MARCHES WITH PRIDE



The weather was perfect on Saturday, June 7 as a large contingency of volunteers and staff from Greater Cleveland Volunteers joined in the Pride in the CLE march, its 10th year. The event attracted thousands of people, as part of the festival put on by The LGBT Community Center of Greater Cleveland. Thank you to everyone who turned out, and we'll see you next year!



## EDUCATION & YOUTH ENRICHMENT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Educational attainment is a struggle in the area. More than half of adults in Cuyahoga County are less than proficient in literacy (The Literacy Cooperative), with 66% of Cleveland residents being functionally illiterate (Seeds of Literacy). Research shows that students who are not reading at grade level by the end of 3rd grade are less likely to catch up to their peers, graduate from high school on time, or become functionally literate. In the Cleveland schools, almost 68% of students are not on track to reach grade level benchmarks by the end of 3rd grade.

The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified the literacy challenge, with reading scores dropping by 13% for high-poverty urban districts while dropping 3% for suburban districts (National Center for Education Statistics). For these reasons, volunteers are a vital part to the long-term educational attainment goals for the cities of Cleveland and the surrounding area.

Our AARP Foundation Experience Corps program makes a real impact in Cleveland and Euclid schools, pairing volunteers, aged 50+ with students in grades 1-3. They receive full training and work side-by-side with the kids throughout the school year, helping them reach—and exceed—their potential.



**EXAMPLES OF EDUCATION AND YOUTH ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES**  
Experience Corps Volunteers, Tutors for Grades K-12, Homework Helpers, Mentors for Elementary–College Students, GED Tutors for Adults, Classroom Assistants, Engaging Students with STEM, Court-Appointed Special Advocates, Love Box Volunteers for Foster Youth, Speakers to High School Students About Your Career  
Many opportunities start in the fall, so apply today: [tinyurl.com/GCVEducVol](https://tinyurl.com/GCVEducVol)

Visit [greaterclevo.org/volunteer](https://greaterclevo.org/volunteer) for volunteer opportunities, or scan the QR code.  
Contact Nancy Dzurnak at [contact@greaterclevelandvolunteers.org](mailto:contact@greaterclevelandvolunteers.org) or 216-391-9500 x2123 for more information.

## UPCOMING EVENT OPPORTUNITIES

**Cleveland Pickle Fest:** Come Celebrate Cleveland, Pickles and Volunteerism while offering a helping hand at the Cleveland Pickle Fest® on Saturday, September 20th to benefit Greater Cleveland Volunteers! Join the team on Mall C assisting with admissions, at beverage ticket sales or festival tents, and the pickle eating contest. Shifts are available between 10:30am-6:30pm. Visit <https://clevelandpicklefest.com/volunteer/>

**Joel's FEST- A Family Friendly Taylor Swift Themed Dance Party:** Join the squad of big-hearted helpers for a Taylor Swift themed dance party that supports grieving children and their families on Sunday, August 24th from 9:30am-3:30pm (3 sign-up windows before, during and after) in the Flats. Assist with Set Up/Break Down, Check In, Photobooth and Fun Activities.

Visit [tinyurl.com/GCVEventVols](https://tinyurl.com/GCVEventVols) to see these and other opportunities to help make our community stronger and more just. Contact Nancy Dzurnak at [ndzurnak@greaterclevelandvolunteers.org](mailto:ndzurnak@greaterclevelandvolunteers.org) or 216-391-9500 x2123 for more information.