

VOLUNTEERS wanted

Volunteering As Grandparents

(NAPSA)—Sometimes older really is better. As more and more baby boomers reach retirement age, many are joining the ranks of America's volunteers.

Already, Volunteers of America reports about one-third of its roughly 60,000 volunteers are seniors.

Those seniors help with a wide variety of Volunteers of America's human service programs in more than 40 states.

"Seniors are a wonderful resource," said Charles Gould, president of Volunteers of America. "Especially in our work with children, senior volunteers bring with them an invaluable store of experience, wisdom, and compassion."

Some seniors have volunteered for a job that older people are particularly good at—being grandparents. Under Volunteers of America's Foster Grandparents Program in Colorado, 169 low-income seniors mentor, support, and tutor 4,200 at-risk children.

The foster grandparents give one-on-one attention to children struggling with math, reading, and self-esteem. According to the Corporation for National and Community Service, the Foster Grandparents Program has about 30,000 senior volunteers nationwide.

Senior volunteers in the Foster Grandparents Program must be at least 60 years old, live on a limited income, and be able to volunteer 20 hours a week. They receive a modest stipend of \$200 a month in tax-free income in the Colorado program for their work at 73 "volunteer stations" that include schools, child-care centers, and



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hospitals.

One of those senior volunteers, Neva Nogrady, 68, works with preschoolers at a Head Start program in Lakewood, Colo.

So absorbed was Nogrady in her volunteer work that she enrolled in two child development courses at Red Rock Community College.

"I wanted to know why the teachers did what they did with the children," she said.

Another volunteer, Bob Martinez, worked with physically and developmentally delayed children at an elementary school for 18 years, until he recently retired from the Foster Grandparent Program at the age of 83.

Volunteers of America is a national, nonprofit, spiritually based organization providing local human service programs and opportunities for individual and community involvement.

For more information about senior volunteer programs, call Volunteers of America at 800-899-0089 or visit the Web site, www.VolunteersofAmerica.org.