



News for Immediate Release

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Secretaries of Aging and Agriculture Join Older Adults, Harrisburg Elementary Students to Plant a "Garden of Youth"

Harrisburg – Secretary of Aging Brian Duke and Agriculture Secretary George Greig today joined local volunteers for the kick-off planting of the "Garden of Youth" at Downey School in Harrisburg.

The event is in honor of Older Pennsylvanians Month.

The garden is a collaboration involving older adult volunteers, local organizations, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Boys and Girls Club of Harrisburg, and Downey School. The event was arranged by the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of the Capital Region, Inc.

"We extend our sincerest thanks to all older volunteers in Pennsylvania who give their time and efforts to help make their communities places to age and live well," Duke said. "The RSVP volunteers and students showcase how different generations working together lead to mentorship opportunities, skill development and personal growth."

The garden will grow tomatoes and peppers and will be tended by members of the Boys and Girls Club of Harrisburg who are students of Downey School. The produce will be donated to the Channels Food Rescue, a charitable non-profit organization that works to fight hunger.

"This project is helping reconnect our youth to the land and our heritage," Greig said. "Older adult volunteers are showing our youth the importance of fresh, local food and sharing agriculture's bounty with those who are less fortunate. These are the lessons that are keeping Pennsylvania growing."

RSVP volunteers serve in a diverse range of nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and faith-based groups. They mentor at-risk youth, organize neighborhood watch programs, test drinking water for contaminants, teach English to immigrants, and lend their business skills to community groups that provide critical social services. RSVP is open to people age 55 and over.

The Department of Aging works with older volunteers in a diverse variety of projects and programs.

To find out more about the department's volunteer opportunities, visit www.aging.state.pa.us or call 717-783-1550.

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