

ASC Needs Additional Volunteer Benefits Counselors

AACOG's Alamo Service Connection (ASC) is recruiting volunteer benefits counselors for the newly opened District 5 Multi-service Senior Center, located at 2701 S. Presa Street in San Antonio.

Volunteers should have basic computer skills and be able to attend a one-hour training session each week for 25 weeks. ASC also requires a one year commitment, during which the Benefits Counselor 1 Certification must be completed.

Volunteers are asked to contribute 4 to 8 hours per week, either during one day, or split into two days. Volunteers may be assigned to the new senior community center, or work at the main ASC office. Other potential volunteer activities include disseminating informational materials, staffing a display table, or taking photos at a community event or fair.

Nancy Posos, ASC Lead Specialist, supervises Benefit Counselor volunteers. Individuals interested in becoming volunteers should contact Nancy at nposos@aacog.com, or by phone at (210) 918-1281.

Information is provided to seniors who are confused, have questions, or have previously encountered problems with public benefits and prefer one-to-one assistance.

Benefits Counseling Services include:

- Medicare
- Medicaid
- Medicare Prescription Drug Plans
- Long Term Care

Legal Assistance Services include:

- Wills
- Powers of Attorney
- Veterans Benefits
- Advance Directives

Currently, there are three volunteers, all certified benefits counselors, who make this free service available. Appointments are necessary and are currently available on an hourly basis from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday.

Bob Ross Multi-Service Senior Health and Resource Center-City of San Antonio

2219 Babcock, San Antonio, (210) 207-5300

Tuesday, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Mary Devora, Volunteer Counselor

Alamo Area Council of Governments, 8700 Tesoro Dr., Suite 700

San Antonio, (210) 477 3275, Call 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday

Wednesdays, Jim Jonson, Volunteer Counselor

Northeast Senior Center, 4355 Center Gate Dr, San Antonio, (210) 207-4590

Monday and Wednesday, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Sue Bell, Volunteer Counselor

Mary Devora retired in 2001 from Frost Bank, where she was senior vice president for personnel, which included responsibility for employee benefits. Mary started counseling in 2002 because there was such a need. She also wished to share her knowledge about retirement benefits, insurance, long term care, and related topics. She enjoys making a difference in her clients' lives, and is committed to helping seniors. She advises seniors to locate and store all their retirement, wills, and insurance documents in locations known by trusted family members or friends.

Jim Jonson began counseling in 2005. For 30 years, he was a federal bank regulator, retiring as vice president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City. He determined that the Medicare Advantage and Supplemental Plans are the most troubling topics for his clients. He wanted to give something back to the community and volunteered after seeing an ad for counselors. He advises seniors to be careful about their choices and insurance agents, to research options, and get advice from professionals.

Sue Bell also started volunteering 2005, helping seniors understand the Medicare Part D Prescription Drug program. She explained, "As a retired practice management consultant from the medical field, doing benefits counseling allows me to use my knowledge developed during my 30 year career. Doing this work at a senior center allows me to have a personal connection to my clients. I have always considered myself a problem solver and I will go great lengths to resolve a problem. It is also an opportunity to give back to the community, learn a great deal of new information, and meet some wonderful people."

[Benefits Counseling flier](#) for printing/posting