



Positive Aging

Newsletter

Fall 2025 Edition

Connections to Community, Vitality, and Security

Now more than ever, linking older adults, adults with disabilities, and caregivers to services and community is essential.

It not only means a great deal to our clients, it means a lot to our supporters and our service providers: *the sense that we're all weaving greater vitality and security into the fabric of society.*

When our donors and our staff come together, each doing their part, we're able to



fund and manage more Sound Generations programs—and everyone wins!

An older adult can lose a loved one, or have decreasing mobility, or may not be able to complete household repairs. These circumstances can be overwhelming and can cause aging adults to feel powerless and isolated.

None of us should view these concerns as vague or hypothetical. The generation that brought us civil rights progress *and* frisbees, the wellness industry and personal computers—this generation is currently moving through their 60s, 70s, and 80s.



In just five years, one-in-four Americans will be aged 60 or over. Current funding and anticipated cuts will not keep pace with the growing demand for services necessary for these older adults.

Every day, Sound Generations meets each client's needs. Over 25,000 King County area residents get and stay connected to community and resources each year. We want to sustain and increase our scope, and reach more people facing challenges. Some of them could even be *your loved ones*: advancing in age and on the verge of requiring the kind of assistance we consistently deliver.

One of our staff members shared a story that brings our message home:

"Yes, Daniel (name changed) is a lovely member. He lost his wife about 18 months ago and started coming to the center for lunch and companionship. He is probably in his 90s. When the pandemic hit, he began coming almost every day to pick up lunch. He is fiercely independent, though getting a little frailer and won't hear of us delivering lunch. We love to chat with him every day and he always leaves us with 'Bless you, thanks for all you do for me.' He's a really good guy." —Carlye (former staff member)

(story continued, page 3)

Keeping different generations connected means that aging adults, parenting adults, and growing children all benefit. Relationships and activities can boost happiness and health.

From Jim Wigfall, CEO

Season of Gratitude and Connection

Dear Supporters,

As the colors of fall begin to surround us, I'm reminded of how much strength and vitality come from being connected — to each other, to our community, and to a shared purpose. This season offers us a moment to pause, reflect, and celebrate the gratitude that powers our mission: ensuring that every older adult has the resources, respect, and relationships they need to thrive.

In this edition of Positive Aging, we explore the power of gratitude and giving — both direct and indirect — and how each act of kindness creates a ripple effect of hope and possibility. You will read about how thoughtful contributions today can bring life-changing assistance to our aging neighbors and how simple gifts of time and in-kind support help build stronger, more compassionate communities.

We also highlight the multitude of ways supporters can make a difference — from becoming a Positive Aging Partner with a recurring gift to joining our network of volunteer transportation drivers who keep the wheels of independence turning for those who can no longer drive themselves.

As you read these stories, I hope you feel as inspired as I do by the connections, compassion, and commitment that make this community so special. Thank you for your continued partnership, generosity, and belief in this work. Together, we are building a community where aging is celebrated, supported, and full of possibility.

With Gratitude,



Jim Wigfall, CEO

Connections to Community (continued from cover)

Your thoughtful contribution today will boost support for elders facing barriers by providing critical resources for programs including:

- **Food Security.** Nutritious cooked-from-scratch meals with new friends at 27 Community Dining locations across King County; and affordable Meals on Wheels for home-bound older adults
- **Resource Navigation.** Personalized advice from Pathways Information & Assistance program
- **Transportation.** Free transportation to appointments, for shopping, or family visits
- **Minor Home Repair.** Handyman services that enable older adults to age in place, safely and independently.

Let's join forces to ensure that every older adult in King County can access the enriching human relationships and vital services that Sound Generations is uniquely positioned to provide, now for over 57 years.

You can make your gift tax-deductible for 2025. Donate on or before December 31. Help transform two of life's aging concerns—**isolation and loneliness**—into connections and community. **Your gift makes this life-changing assistance possible for our aging neighbors. ■**



Sound Generations Community Dining program is a network of sites throughout Seattle & greater King County where those aged 60 and up can enjoy an affordable, nutritious meal in a warm social setting.

Three easy ways to support older adults in King County, including special donations for the holiday season:

1. **Visit our Amazon Wish List**, <http://bit.ly/3K9QnP2>, to view our program needs.
2. **Link your Fred Meyer Rewards Card** and then you can donate while you shop.
3. **Double your donation!** Many employers match in dollars or volunteer time. See if your employer matches your gift. www.soundgenerations.org/workplacegiving



Are you already a Sound Generations supporter?

Your investment in our effective programs has had a positive impact on the lives of many of King County’s aging adults, and the people who care for them.

Here’s our impact for the first six months of 2025.

Updates on first half of 2025



Food Security

340,075
Meals Provided

7,215
Older Adults Served



Senior Centers

58,576
Senior Center Visits

550
One-on-one Tech Sessions



Transportation

32,473
Rides

1,886
Riders



Health, Wellness, & Project Enhance

4,859
EnhanceFitness Participants

49
EnhanceFitness Locations



Assistance Services

2,352
People Provided with Information and Support

248
Counseling Sessions for Family Caregivers



1,188
Minor Home Repairs



464
Elder Law Cases

Be among the community members we count on to provide a critical lifeline to programs for older adults. Together, we will increase their sense of belonging and independence in 2026.

www.soundgenerations.org



4

A Season for Gratitude—and Thoughtful Giving

Viewed from any perspective, gratitude is good for your health!

Contemplating what you are grateful for, and then expressing it to others, has been linked to a host of physical and mental benefits. What's more, it is a practice that is easy to incorporate and strengthen in your daily life.

In the past few years, major health institutions and medical schools have been researching the practice of gratitude. Their studies indicate that gratitude improves health, reduces depression, lessens anxiety, and results in better sleep. It also seems to support heart health and reduce chronic pain.

A recent four-year study hints that gratitude can even lower the risk of death for older adults: "A 9% reduction in mortality risk is meaningful...." says Tyler VanderWeele, PhD, Harvard, co-investigator in research on gratitude published in the journal *JAMA Psychiatry*. "But what's remarkable about gratitude is that just about anyone can practice it. Anyone can recognize what's around them and express thanks to others for what's good in their life."

VanderWeele consciously incorporates the regular practice of gratitude around his family's dinner table. Parents and kids take a moment to reflect and mention something for which they are grateful. "I do think it makes a difference and can be a very powerful practice," he says. "Even on those bad days where life seems difficult, that effort is worthwhile."

And now let's talk about the benefits of giving. After all, your gratitude is likely linked to someone or something that gave you a gift, a resource, an education, an experience, etc. (Come winter, we will all be feeling grateful for the gift of a sunny day!)



How does someone who gives and practices generosity benefit?

Kelli Harding, MD, author of *The Rabbit Effect: Live Longer, Happier, and Healthier with the Groundbreaking Science of Kindness*, reminds us that:

- human beings are social creatures; we mirror the emotions of one another and we uplift each other
- generosity affects our well-being, providing a mood boost, a more positive sense of self
- our immune system gets a lift
- even our genes are altered by the social environment that we live in and help create
- generosity has a ripple effect and motivates others to be generous.

(continued next page)

Thanks & Giving (continued)

When you give, the receiver of your gift gains the sense that they are seen, valued, and connected. Positive social connections are essential to our overall well-being.

What about indirect giving?

When you donate to Sound Generations, it is fulfilling to remember that your gift reaches many older adults who, like you, need to be seen, valued, and connected. **Giving a financial gift really does affect clients in profound ways, as this story illustrates:**

"I was looking for ways to establish local connections and start my life here. I came over for a couple of meals and joined the art club. ... It was a lifeline for me.

Seeing someone every day, who saw me, and staying connected to the senior center even in this one small way, seeing the volunteers come by to bring the food and even chat just for a few minutes."

—Betty W, client at Shoreline-Lake Forest Park Senior Activity Center

Try it out. Respond to the season of gratitude and giving with a gift to Sound Generations.

When you do, visualize and remember the human beings affected by your generosity! Help build our community connections and receive the boost that giving brings! Our gratitude will overflow into many services for hundreds, perhaps thousands, of aging adults.



Giving, whether direct or indirect, has a ripple effect that extends your generosity beyond the initial impulse. Find out how you can benefit many others with your gift of financial resources, time, and/or energy.
<https://soundgenerations.org/individual-support/>



Setting up a Donor Advised Fund (DAF)

is a simple, cost-effective way to manage your charitable contribution to Sound Generations. If the logistical uncertainties of giving have been holding you back, this is an easy approach you can use to connect with us.

Your DAF will allow you to enjoy immediate tax benefits and will go directly to support Sound Generations. A recommended grant through your DAF gets put to work immediately.



YOU

Use this QR code to access the DAF widget tool
and give securely online.

US

THANK YOU...

The fog has cleared!
The mysteries solved!
And our gratitude
flows to everyone
who made this year's
Sound Generations
Golden Gala a
splendid success!

Couldn't be with us?
Contribute to our
successes now:



Through the Generosity of our Volunteer Transportation Drivers, the Wheels Keep Turning

Our society has been built around cars and roads.

Most of us obtain a driver's license and then gain access to a car, which allows us to get to and from our important destinations. And public transit services fill in the gaps for those who choose not to drive, or who don't have the resources to pay for a ride-hailing service.

But many adults, at some point in their aging process, find themselves in need of transportation solutions that are unique to their circumstances. They may be compelled to move more slowly and use a walker. Or they may be on a low, fixed income. Or they may no longer drive a car. They could be without nearby family or friends to assist them. Without the practical means to get to medical appointments or

the grocery store, these older adults –almost by default–can end up isolated, and become vulnerable to a host of physical and emotional challenges. For them, the fabric of our society begins to unravel. And our community is weaker because of it.

Sound Generation's Volunteer Transportation service provides free, personalized, safe rides to essential appointments. We strive to keep older adults connected through the generosity of volunteers who truly show up with free, custom, transit solutions. Think about those words: free – custom – transit – solutions. Can we make that available to more of King County's older residents?

Our drivers who offer their time, energy, and vehicles are nothing short of amazing, yet they seek no glory.



They do, however, earn the high praise and lasting gratitude of thousands of King County older adults. Here are two examples:

“Our volunteer, Prakash, has driven Mary on several occasions and knows that she likes classical music. On one afternoon ride, he and Mary talked about a public television special that had been on the night before and featured Pavarotti, the preeminent opera vocalist. Prakash happened to have one of Pavarotti’s CDs in the car, so he slipped it in and they listened to it until they arrived at Mary’s doctor’s office. On the way back home, they continued listening. As they approached Mary’s home, she became very quiet. In her driveway, she asked Prakash if they could sit in his car for a moment more so that she could finish listening to the CD. The song ended, and Prakash ejected the CD and handed it to Mary so she could take it inside and keep it. Mary broke down crying and told Prakash that this was the first gift she had received in the last four years.”

—Melissa R. Tribelhorn, Former
Recruitment & Outreach Coordinator,
Volunteer Transportation Services Program



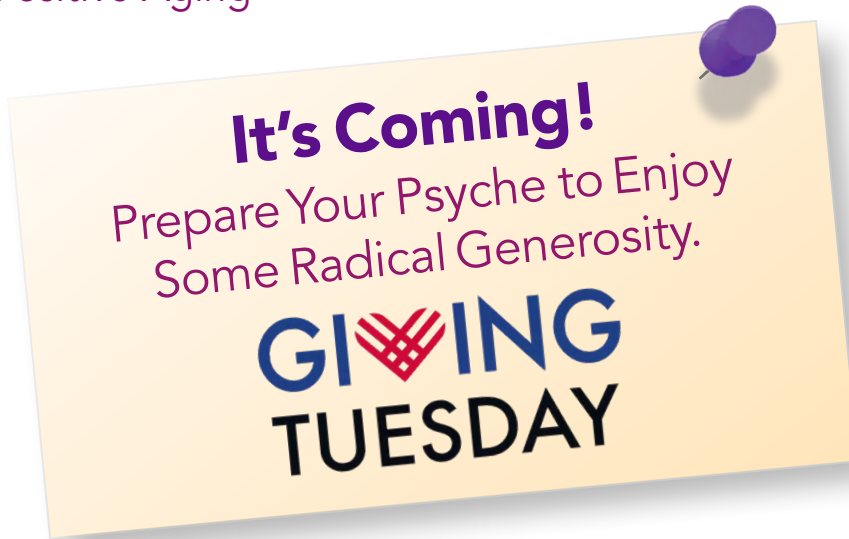
Become a volunteer! From giving rides to Meals on Wheels to assisting us with events—there are many ways to help! Contact Kaitlyn Redwood, our Mission Engagement Associate at: kaitlyn.redwood@soundgenerations.org or call 206.727.6230.

Our volunteers helped one client, Jill F, to move from stressed to secure:

“The people at Sound Generations Volunteers (Volunteer Transportation) helped me out, above and beyond. I had a medical appointment at 9:00 am, but my doctor called last night to say he had to change our meeting to 4:00 pm. I had another appointment at 12:30 pm. I thought I was going to be wicked frazzled. The volunteers were able to change their schedule. Then my doctor called again very early this morning to say he could see me as originally planned after all. I dreaded making another call to Sound Generations.

But once again they changed their schedule for me. The drivers only took 3 to 5 minutes to arrive. I made it to both appointments on time. It was especially kind of Sound Generations, since this was the first time I used their service. I was amazed at the way they were willing to accommodate the changes.”

Volunteer Transportation provides more than just a ride to the doctor; our volunteer drivers give valuable, flexible assistance and emotional support to clients we are honored to assist.



On December 2nd

Instead of requesting mere transactions, we're transforming how we engage with our community by growing our **Positive Aging Partners**. Your participation supports a critical lifeline to programs for older adults.



A gift of just \$50 or more a month has a big impact.

Plus, enjoy exclusive benefits, behind the scenes information and early bird invites to our events.



Sound Generations is the nonprofit that connects staff and volunteers with aging adults across King County to provide those in need with essential services. When you make a regular donation, you will be ensuring access to meaningful assistance for more people on their aging journey.



Did You Know?

We launched a new program in the Spring of 2025, the first and only program of its kind in the U.S.

The Elder Education Institute's new **Decision-Making Capacity Professional Training Program** has already trained 27 clinicians across the United States.

It addresses a real assessment need as more adults move into their later years. An older adult's ability to make sound decisions about their life can sometimes be called into question, and requires a skilled evaluation by a trained professional. Previously, there were no programs in the region to provide this evaluation and training.

Elaine Barber, Legal Council for the Elderly/AARP, has described this professional training program as *"a vital course in understanding the complexity of capacity assessments, filling a long-term gap in mental health professional education."*

Barber, herself, is a spring of 2025 graduate of the new course. Registrants are now signing up for the fall sessions from various states and we are anticipating an increasing number of professionals who will commit to this course and other workshops being developed and presented.



Want to find out more about the Elder Education Institute? Contact Alison Laird Craig, Program Manager, Elder Education Institute: alisonc@soundgenerations.org



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**Connections,
Gratitude,
and Giving**

