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[Download a photo from the Senior Companion Luncheon.](#)

Sunbeam Superheroes Celebrated at Luncheon
Senior Companions Address Poverty Through Volunteerism

(OKLAHOMA CITY) – At Sunbeam Family Services, volunteers are superheroes with invisible capes. Through the Senior Companion program, 82 volunteers provide high-quality, in-home support and companionship to 200 seniors age 60 and older.

“Senior Companions provide compassionate, caring services to individuals – and serve as a resource for their families,” said Patrick O’Kane, director of senior services at Sunbeam. “Many Senior Companions have been donating their time for over 20 years. In some cases, we have Senior Companions who once volunteered their time are now being served through the program. This luncheon is a time to celebrate all that our volunteers do to support our community.”

At the luncheon, volunteers were treated to a superhero-themed luncheon, complete with generously donated prizes. Lindsay Echols, director of community engagement at the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma, was the keynote speaker.

The celebration was also made possible through Sunbeam’s Senior Services Advisory Council, which includes: Alexis Heatrice, Cox; Antonio Carbajal, OKC Fire Department, Becky Aust, OG&E; Carla Scull, Alzheimer’s Association; Carolyn Wall, Caregiver; Cathy Patterson, Integris; Charlie Buchanan, City Rescue Mission; Cindy Opheim, DHS; Darci O’Connor, Midwest City Nursing Center; Darren Braswell, VA Medical Center; Dedra Ray, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Representative; Donetta Starks, Mary Mahoney Memorial Health Center; Ella Patterson, Foster Grandparent Program; E’Shaina Harned, HCA Healthcare; Evelyn McCoy, Community Partner; JoCarolyn Chambers, The ALS Association; Joel Herdzina, Right at Home; Josh Attaway, St. Luke’s United Methodist Church; Laura Larue, Oklahoma Hospice Care; Lesley Norman, Caregiver Representative; Linda Thele, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Representative; Lisa Sydnor, Salvation Army; Melissa Mahaffey, Tealridge Retirement Community; Orientia Thomas, Caregiver Representative; Ovidia Holmes, Caregiver Representative; Paige Mills-Haag, Concordia Senior Living; Patricia Wofford, Senior Companion Program; Peggy Paddyaker, Oklahoma Attorney General; Regina Anaya, Valir PACE; and Vicki Wood, EOC Tech Center.

“According to AARP, nearly seven baby boomers turn 65 every minute – and this will continue into the 2030s” said O’Kane. “Nearly 90 percent of people over 65 want to stay in their homes as long as possible, which is why the Senior Companion program is so important.”

Ninety-four percent of clients served by Sunbeam’s Senior Services program were at or below the poverty line, which is \$1,041 per month for one individual. In-home care is less expensive than residential nursing facilities, and means better health outcomes. Low-income families can’t provide the supportive care their loved ones need due to high costs. Sunbeam provides over 85,000 hours of in-home services through Senior Companions, saving each family up to \$24,000 per year.

Sunbeam is seeking new Senior Companion volunteers. For more information call Marien Breckenridge, lead senior companion supervisor, at 405-609-8930.

Sunbeam's mission is to provide help, hope and the opportunity to succeed to people of all ages in central Oklahoma through Early Childhood, Counseling, Foster Care and Senior Services. Last year, the organization served nearly 15,000 central Oklahomans. For more information call 405-528-7721 or visit sunbeamfamilyservices.org.

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About Sunbeam Family Services

Founded in 1907, Sunbeam Family Services is one of Oklahoma's longest serving nonprofits and is one of the original United Way of Central Oklahoma Community partners. Sunbeam's mission is to provide help, hope and the opportunity to succeed to people of all ages in central Oklahoma through Early Childhood, Counseling, Foster Care and Senior Services. To learn more, call 405-528-7721, visit sunbeamfamilyservices.org, or join the conversation on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.