

## Texoma Senior Corps Salutes Volunteers during National Senior Corps Week

SHERMAN, MAY 19, 2017 – Celebrating National Senior Corps Week, Dr. Susan Thomas, Executive Director of Texoma Council of Governments (TCOG) commended TCOG's Senior Corps volunteers for their more than 100,000 hours of service to the region.

In 2016, Texoma Senior Corps volunteers contributed 123,391 hours of service to ninety-seven tri-county stations which equates to a value of \$3,103,275 according to the Independent Sector Website on "The Value of Volunteer Time." Sixty-six local organizations in Cooke, Fannin and Grayson counties benefit from Texoma Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) volunteers. Approximately 140 local children are mentored by our forty Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) volunteers. Texoma Senior Corps volunteers serve as mentors to local students, transportation providers, food distributors, and meal deliverers, and they provide various other client based support activities throughout the tri county region each year.

Dr. Thomas said, "These volunteers provide a tremendous, positive impact on the lives they touch. Our communities are blessed to have these senior volunteers who continue to give of themselves to help support our various community programs."

According to the Corporation of National and Community Service, National Senior Corps Week, May 15-19, 2017 is the time to recognize not just the legacy of Senior Corps programs in communities, but also the unique ability of Americans age 55 and over to effect lasting generational impact. This week of recognition is also in accordance with the month of May which is Older Americans Month.

The Texoma Senior Corps volunteer program became active in Texoma in 1987. Texoma RSVP also became active in 1987 and the Foster Grandparent Program was added in 1997. Texoma residents age 55 and older, with a heart to serve, are eligible to volunteer in both programs. Those seniors interested becoming a Foster Grandparent volunteer must also meet certain income level requirements, be able to pass a physical and criminal background check, and commit to a minimum of fifteen hours a week. A small stipend and liability insurance are provided to volunteers who participate in the program. Texoma Senior Corps programs benefit the community, the organization, and the volunteer which creates a win-win experience for all involved.

The Texoma Council of Governments is a voluntary association of the local governments in Cooke, Fannin, and Grayson Counties. Established in 1968, the Texoma Council of Governments promotes economy and efficiency in the coordinated planning and development of the tri-county region through its community and economic development activities. Either directly, or through contractors, the Council provides housing, utility assistance, and weatherization services for low-income citizens in the region and assists the elderly through a variety of Area Agency on Aging programs. The Council also facilitates the delivery of grant funding for homeland security and criminal justice.

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