

# Volunteer Organization Profile: Athens/Limestone Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Alabama

*Volunteering in America 2011*

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Alabama, serving both Athens and Limestone County, AL, gives adults aged 55 and older the opportunity to volunteer their time and abilities to both nonprofit and public agencies in and around their community.

Athens/Limestone County RSVP volunteers primarily work on disaster response, education, financial planning, and care giving. Program highlights include:

- **Disaster Response:** Following the devastating tornados affecting the areas in and around Tuscaloosa, 25 RSVP volunteers deployed 1,100 spontaneous volunteers. In the weeks and months following the disaster, Athens/Limestone County RSVP volunteers aided in a number of activities including coordination, cleanup, and food and clothing distribution
- **Education:** During the 2010-2011 school year, 75 Athens/Limestone County RSVP volunteers assisted 450 students in reading, reading comprehension, and mathematics. Students working with Athens/Limestone County RSVP realized a 90 percent increase in reading scores.
- **Financial Planning:** In 2010, Athens/Limestone County RSVP's Volunteer Income Tax Program assisted 1,200 taxpayers who received more than \$1,000,000 in refunds from the federal government.
- **Care Giving:** Athens/Limestone County RSVP offers a respite program for care givers every Friday allowing them three hours of personal time. Athens/Limestone County RSVP also delivers meals to senior citizens in the community.

“Athens/Limestone County RSVP is proud of the diverse work undertaken by our committed volunteers across northern Alabama,” said Betty Ruth, executive director of Athens/Limestone County RSVP. “Whether helping students achieve academically, assisting seniors with financial planning, or rebuilding from this spring’s devastating tornados, Athens/Limestone County RSVP and our volunteers are devoted to helping those who need it the most.”

One area in which Athens/Limestone County RSVP volunteers have demonstrated great impact is in disaster response and recovery. Henry White, a former teacher and current volunteer, joined Athens/Limestone County RSVP immediately after his retirement 10 years ago. Henry was one of the many volunteers who mobilized following this April’s tornados affecting northern Alabama. Henry spent eight straight days using his tools to cut and clear trees and debris from the 383 destroyed or damaged homes, helping rescue crews reach storm victims with food, clothing, and other crucial aid.

“After retiring from teaching, I knew that I wanted to continue positively impacting the lives of Alabamians. Athens/Limestone County RSVP has given me the opportunity to give back to the community in which I have lived my entire life,” said Mr. White. “The inspiring work by Athens/Limestone County RSVP following the events of this spring’s tornadoes is a testament to the dedication of our volunteers who helped get their neighbors’ and friends’ lives back on track.”

With 500 Senior Corps volunteers, Athens/Limestone County RSVP is a Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) grantee. The organization also receives funds from the Athens-Limestone Area United Way, the State of Alabama, private foundations, corporations, and individual donors.

More information about Athens/Limestone County RSVP is available at [www.al-rsvp.com](http://www.al-rsvp.com). You can also contact them via email at [bruth@al-rsvp.com](mailto:bruth@al-rsvp.com).

The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that engages more than five million Americans in service through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs, and leads President Obama's national call to service initiative, United We Serve. For more information, visit [NationalService.gov](http://NationalService.gov).