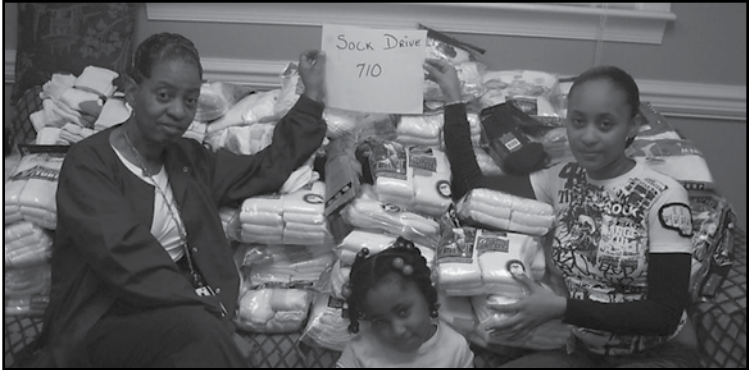




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Residents Give Back to Those in Need



Residents of CHP's **Ansell Gardens Apartments** in Portsmouth, Virginia have a history of helping others in their community, and proved they were up to the challenge once again when they decided to “**Sock-It-to-the-Seniors**” by donating socks and other goods to their local **Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)**. RSVP coordinated the drive in order to help the homeless and residents of nursing and retirement homes. Along with **Property Manager Sylvia Gaines** and **AmeriCorps members Waldensia Barnes** and **Tara Williams**, Ansell Gardens residents were able to gather over 1,300 pairs of socks! “We just spread the word and sent out flyers, and before we knew it loads and loads of socks began to come in,” said Barnes.

The group set an original goal of collecting 100 pairs, but soon realized they were exceeding that amount. To help with the flood of socks and other personal items pouring into the management office, four residents offered to help count and distribute the donations over a three-week time period. Because of the surplus of donations, 900 pairs of socks were given to RSVP and the remaining amount, along with items such as soap and toilet paper, were donated to a local church. “I think we did exceptionally well.

Above: AmeriCorps volunteer Waldensia Barnes; Jadia Penn, Ansell Gardens resident, and Tara Williams, AmeriCorps volunteer, keep count of socks collected for senior citizens and the homeless.

Our initial goal was small, but the project ultimately grew into something that we could have never imagined,” Barnes said.

With a grant from AmeriCorps, CHP is able to place AmeriCorps members such as Barnes and Williams in our program sites to work directly with our residents to increase literacy, teach conflict resolution skills, and promote a sense of civic engagement through service in the community. CHP is committed to providing these services because they support the long-term viability of neighborhoods and promote positive, successful resident and community development.

Dental Program Gets All Smiles in Virginia

Like many Americans, a number of residents at CHP’s [Bluegrass Apartments](#) in Pulaski, Virginia are without adequate dental insurance coverage, and find a visit to the dentist’s office is beyond their budget.

With dentists’ fees rising far faster than inflation and more than 100 million people lacking dental insurance, the percentage of Americans with untreated cavities began rising this decade, reversing a half-century trend of improvement in dental health.

In the first months of his work as [Services Coordinator](#) for CHP, [John Sabean](#) became increasingly aware that many Bluegrass Apartment residents had neglected their teeth because they simply could not afford proper dental care. “It was not because they didn’t care about their teeth. In most cases, it was because they did not have the money or the access to dental caregivers,” said Sabean.

Fortunately for those living at the Bluegrass community, help is only \$20 and approximately forty miles away at the [Free Clinic of the New River Valley](#) in Christiansburg. The Clinic’s [Dental Program](#) provides a wide range of dental care services to low-income residents in the surrounding area, thanks in large part to the generosity of two New River Valley foundations--the [C.E. Richardson Foundation](#) and the [Community Foundation for the New River Valley](#). Funding from these foundations, totalling over \$5,000 since March 2003, helps the Free Clinic provide oral examinations, extractions, fillings, oral surgery, dentures, and gum treatments at a relatively low cost to their patients.