



*Helping People,  
Changing Lives*

# Helping Hand

## Welcome

Welcome to the sixth issue of the Helping Hand! You are receiving this newsletter because you are either a participant in CAHF's Volunteer Engagement Project or you have expressed interest in it. Every month, we share ideas and best practices, exciting news on the project, and examples of volunteers making a difference across California.

## Greeting from the Project Manager

**Tina Hand**

**Volunteer Engagement Project Manager**

Hello, I'm Tina!

I started in my role as Volunteer Engagement Project Manager in late October and I am thrilled to jump into work on this valuable project.

I come to CAHF having most recently been a corporate event manager, but I also have experience working in associations and non-profits. As the Educational Coordinator for the Pesticide Applicators Professional Association, I managed volunteers across the state of California.

You will find that I am highly communicative and organized in my work while maintaining a positive attitude and sense of humor. Through the next year of the project, I will apply my skills in writing, video production and problem solving to support each facility and help them strengthen their volunteer programs. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any project ideas, concerns, or feedback; I value your input.

Thank you for taking a minute to get to know me. Now, let's get



back to working on improving your resident experiences and outcomes through volunteer engagement.

I recently found this [inspirational story](#) about a successful volunteering program in Salem, Oregon. This traveling group of volunteers has ambitions to recruit 100 volunteers and make 1,000 weekly connections with residents. One of the activities they have implemented in local SNFs is story time, where volunteers read, sing, and do activities with residents. I hope to see similar programs thriving across California as a result of the Volunteer Engagement Project

## Handbook Highlight

From [How to Create a Robust Volunteer Program in Your Skilled Nursing Facility](#)

One of the main objectives of the *CAHF Volunteer Engagement Project* is to develop a handbook that skilled nursing facilities can use to create a robust volunteer program. One of the recommendations in our handbook is that facilities create their own volunteer handbook for use with volunteers.

A comprehensive volunteer handbook is a helpful way to inform, educate, and support your volunteers through recruiting, training, and retaining. A great Volunteer Handbook can also save you time. Written information provided to each volunteer ensures that the volunteer starts off with important information he or she can refer to at any time.

Please refer to the CAHF handbook section entitled **Creating a Volunteer Handbook!** Be sure to have your handbook reviewed by your human resources and/or legal department.

## Upcoming FREE 2019 Webinars

### Volunteer Recognition

Wednesday, December 11

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (PST)

Registration coming soon!

One (1) CEU available for NHAP, BRN and NCCAP (activity professionals)

Click [here](#) to register for upcoming live webinars or watch previously recorded webinars on demand.

If you have topic suggestions for 2020 webinars, please email Tina Hand at [thand@cahf.org](mailto:thand@cahf.org)

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PROJECT

One (1) CE available - NHAP, BRN and  
NCCAP (activity professionals)

# Meg's Messages

Meg Thayer, Ph.D.  
Geriatric Psychologist

## The Benefits of Intergenerational Programs

Thanks to the benefits of science and medicine, people are living longer than ever before. While this is wonderful in many ways, it also creates a significant gap between the oldest and youngest members of our society. How do we keep these generations connected, and why should we try?

Research has shown a number of benefits of intergenerational programming for older persons, young persons, and for the community and society as a whole. Older adults who regularly interact with young persons under the age of 18 have been shown to score better on memory tests, take better care of themselves, experience fewer falls, live longer, and report increased life satisfaction. Youths who regularly interact with older adults have exhibited less truancy, better grades, increased compassion, a developing sense of community and citizenship, and more positive attitudes toward aging.

That's what we call a win-win! There are broader benefits to connecting our oldest and youngest as well. Intergenerational programs help both groups overcome stereotypes, encourage tolerance, and help our extreme generations feel less alienated and more like they can be productive, contributing members of society, no matter their age.



There are many ways to incorporate youth into your skilled nursing facility volunteer engagement. Contact your local elementary, middle, and high schools to see if they are interested in developing an ongoing program.

Youth/Elder projects such as gardening, reading, one on one visits, Music & Memory are a great place to start, so be creative! Technology training may also be a great way to bridge the gap and make the younger generation feel like they have something to teach.

While youth under the age of 18 generally do not have to go through background checks to volunteer, parental consent is usually advised (see your facility's Policies & Procedures). A sample Youth Volunteer Parental Consent & Release Form is included as an appendix in the Volunteer Engagement Project Handbook [How to Create a Robust Volunteer Program in Your Skilled Nursing Facility](#).

For more ideas, check out Generations United at [www.gu.org](http://www.gu.org).

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