The first thing you notice when you step foot into the ServiceLink’s Concord office is Cay Bowman’s big smile and her cheerful hello. Since 2005, Cay has contributed over 18,000 service hours as an RSVP volunteer.
RSVP stands for Retired and Senior Volunteer Program. The Friends manages this Federal program in Merrimack, Rockingham, Strafford, and Belknap counties. We recruit volunteers like Cay and match them with nonprofits and public agencies. Matched organizations benefit through the dedicated efforts of RSVP volunteers; and seniors participating in the program receive the satisfaction of knowing that they’re helping improve our community.

Before retiring and becoming a volunteer with RSVP, Cay worked as the emergency room secretary at Concord Hospital. This experience helped shape her into the incredible volunteer she is today. Her work ethic and passion for helping people in need make Cay remarkable.

When it comes to Medicaid and Medicare, Cay is a wealth of knowledge. However, this wasn’t always the case. When she needed to enroll in Medicaid several years ago, she found the process overwhelming and remembers needing help. She also remembers what a relief it was to get some welcomed guidance. Since then, she's broadened and deepened her knowledge of Federal benefit programs and uses that expertise to help others.

Since 2006, Cay has volunteered 40 hours per week at ServiceLink, where she’s a Certified Medicare Counselor. ServiceLink does have a professional staff but relies heavily on volunteers like Cay, who spends much of her time helping clients complete Medicare Part D forms.

According to ServiceLink office manager Joel Green, Cay's help is vital during crucial open enrollment periods. "She has the tenacity and drive to accomplish anything," said Green. "If we didn't have her, we couldn't serve everyone who comes". In 2008, she was nationally recognized as a Silver Award recipient for her service. Cay is an integral part of the Service Link team here in Merrimack County.

Personally, one of my favorite qualities about Cay is her thoughtfulness. She could go in each day to volunteer and merely do what’s asked of her – but she chooses to do so much more. A wonderful example of this is her flower garden that she had started outside of the ServiceLink office. This would never be asked of her, but she chooses to take her own time to plant flowers and beautify the grounds because she knows it will make others smile.

Cay’s commitment to giving back to her community doesn’t stop there. She can also be found ushering several times a month at the Concord City Auditorium.
This volunteer gig is her way of “destressing” Cay says. That’s right, she even volunteers as a way to relax. Now that’s dedication!

For Cay, helping others gives her a sense of purpose. “Instead of sitting on the couch eating bon-bons, I'm helping people by sharing my gifts,” she once told us. “As seniors, we have a lifetime of experience, knowledge of the community, and talents – we should share them to make this a better place."

The Friends Program and RSVP is incredibly lucky to have such a dedicated, selfless volunteer. Cay’s talents and knowledge are remarkable, and we’re all truly thankful to not only have her as a volunteer but also as a member of our community. Thank you for making this world a better place, Cay!