

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE

Agency: VINE Faith in Action

Program: Summit Center

Service: Provides a safe, welcoming environment where older adults can go to stay healthy, active and engaged, participate in classes and activities and get connected with volunteer opportunities

Need: Over the next 20 years, the number of adults aged 65+ is expected to *double*, and by 2030, 25% of Minnesota's population will be 65+. This group of retirees is healthier and will live longer

Impact: This year, 5900 individuals will take part in a health & wellness program or activity through the Summit Center

Marilyn*, an older woman suffering from Multiple Sclerosis, came to the Summit Center in Mankato looking for an exercise class. She was having difficulty with walking, and had experienced some falls. After talking with her, the Summit Center wellness coordinator recommended to Marilyn that she try a class in Tai Chi since studies have shown that the gentle exercise improves balance and flexibility, and is suitable for people of all physical abilities.

Marilyn decided to give the class a try. Since then, she has been diligent in attending the classes and re-registering for each new session. Marilyn went from using a walker when she first came to Summit Center, to using only a cane, and at present, she doesn't even find it necessary to use the cane.

In addition to the vast improvement in Marilyn's balance and mobility, she reports that regular attendance at the Tai Chi classes has also improved her general sense of well-being, and her symptoms of depression have decreased. She has developed new friendships with some of the other people in the class. Marilyn and her husband have also recently become VINE volunteers themselves and once a month pick up and make deliveries to the Summit Center.

Summit Center programming includes health & wellness programs, health screenings, exercise classes and organized outings.

Additionally, Summit Center seniors, together with VINE staff, coordinate volunteer services that positively impact

the community while creating meaningful volunteer opportunities for seniors.



Greater Mankato Area United Way's funding of the Summit Center ensures that there is a safe, welcoming place where older adults, regardless of income level, can go to stay healthy and engaged, to socialize, keep up on their interests and develop new skills and knowledge.

* Individual's name has been changed for privacy