

By: Cheryl Wilson, Community Caregivers SUNY Intern  
For Caregivers Corner

Let me introduce myself. I'm a junior at the University at Albany and this semester I'm interning at Community Caregivers. I've been here since January and I've already seen the impact that Community Caregivers has on the Capital Region.

I'm from a small town upstate, and an organization like Community Caregivers would make an incredible difference to the people living there. When someone needs a ride to a doctor appointment or to the store, they have to rely on family members or neighbors. With everything being just out of walking distance, this can be troublesome. If a family member is concerned about their elderly parent, or a friend who just had a medical problem, they often have to visit themselves or know someone in the immediate area who can check in on their loved one. Traveling to the area can be difficult due to poor weather conditions in the winter and spring. Those with family or friends who need care often end up taking time off from work and away from their immediate families to provide it. If there were an organization similar to Community Caregivers available, friends and family would be able to ensure their loved ones were well taken care of until they were able to check in themselves.

I was explaining my position at Community Caregivers to my grandmother and she expressed how useful such an organization would be to her. "Send them up here!" she exclaimed. "Your father had to take me to my last three appointments and he could use a break but he won't let me drive myself!" My grandmother, at 81, believes that she can battle a snowstorm to get to and from her chemotherapy appointments. While I admire her bravery, I wouldn't feel comfortable with her making the hour-long drive each way. Family members take turns bringing her to the doctor, but with only two of her children living locally, it can sometimes be difficult to find someone who is available.

Families in the Capital Region are lucky, because volunteers at Community Caregivers are just a phone call away and are ready to handle such situations. Whether it's a trip to the doctor or a visit to check in, our volunteers are willing to do what it takes to make sure your loved one is OK.

I'd like to invite you to try volunteering. Just a few hours a month can make a tremendous difference in someone's life. We have opportunities for volunteers to provide transportation, visit, shop, and provide respite, as well as office positions where volunteers assist with office work and answer phone calls to set up appointments.

Our upcoming spring orientation sessions for prospective volunteers are:

-Wednesday, April 7, at 9:30 a.m.

-Thursday, April 15, at 4 p.m.

-Wednesday, May 5, at 9:30 a.m.

-Thursday, May 13, at 6 p.m.

-Wednesday, June 9, at 9:30 a.m.

-Thursday, June 24, at 4 p.m.

All orientation sessions will be located at the Community Caregivers office at 2113 Western Ave, across from the 20 Mall.