

# Volunteering in the African-American Community

By Charlene Hunter James | Special to the VILLAGER



Charlene Hunter James

stronger through volunteering.

Church participation and social involvement are important predictors of volunteerism within the African-American community. The church provides an avenue for determining needs in the community. Many well-known organizations in the African-American community have a long-standing record of service and advocacy, including the NAACP, the National Urban League and many prestigious fraternities and sororities. There are countless volunteers, whose names you may not know, giving their time and talents for the betterment of the community and society each day.

One such Texan is Houston octogenarian Charlotte Kelly Bryant, who knows how important it is to give back to her community. Since retiring from teaching in 2002, she has continued

to serve by volunteering for her church, community fundraisers and the Blue Triangle in Houston's Third Ward, which was originally founded as a place where women and girls of color could come together to learn.

"I volunteer because my passion to serve is greater than anything else," says the former teacher at the DeBakey High School for Health Professions. "God has given me good health and the ability to give back."

Volunteering may also be helping to keep Bryant healthy and active. Studies show it's good for your health and can even decrease anxiety, depression, loneliness and isolation, especially in volunteers who devote at least 100 hours annually.

One of the best things about volunteering is that anyone can contribute. Everyone's experiences and talents can create meaningful

changes in their communities.

"It's not a glitzy job, but it makes you feel great knowing you have made a difference in the lives of so many people," says Bryant.

Bryant, like many who have come before her, is revered by those she has served and continues to serve. So next time you feel like you have nothing to do, why not share your skills and your passion with others through volunteering? It's good for you, and the clear payoff is also the social good you have done. Chances are you will find the experience rewarding.

AARP is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that offers volunteer opportunities for people of all ages. Learn how you can get involved by going to [aarp.org/volunteer](http://aarp.org/volunteer) or by calling 1-888-687-2277.

Charlene Hunter James is the AARP Texas all-volunteer Executive Council President.

# Carver Opens Exhibit of National Celebrity

by Adrienne Isom | Special to the VILLAGER

(AUSTIN, TX) - The City of Austin's George Washington Carver Museum conducted a reception and exhibition opening and visit honoring Mrs. Angela Medearis, this past February second.

Angela is a well-known, celebrated book author, who reached the status of being a noted, Acclaimed Children's Author in the country. The exhibition theme surrounded «Our People and Other Children's Books by Angela Medearis». Angela Shelf Medearis is Austin based. At the event, Angela spoke about launching out by faith, leaving solid employ-

ment she had at a law firm. She stated that she was bound to do something more with her talent, and be a dedicated employee of herself. Since that leap, she has more than one hundred publications to her credit.

Angela is also a well-known author of many books of cooking, as well as being a Chef. She formerly had a seasonal television cooking show and made many appearances on shows such as Dr. Oz, the TODAY Show and more.

At the reception, Medearis's younger sister, (Who is a professional caterer) re-created a multitude of reci-



Angela Shelf Medearis

pes of dinner, lunch, and dessert, all from Angela's cookbook as hors d'oeuvres.

There were also several books authored by Medearis, as well as her father, (A legend in civil rights and real estate sales in San Antonio), available to buy,

Carver Director Dr. Bamedeli Demerson, is keeping with his intent to serve the community "Build and Inform", structure to bring new, and local entities to the museum to educate and excite visitors.

The exhibit runs through June 22, 2019.

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