

Bergen Volunteers

WHAT GOES AROUND,
COMES AROUND

Paula Webber is an energetic Ridgewood senior who has been volunteering with Bergen Volunteers' Golden Connections Program for over a year. Paula is also legally blind. But she has never let her disability define her or prevent her from doing anything, including making good on her commitment to give back. As a mentor in Bergen Volunteers' Golden Connections program, Paula was matched with Jeanette, an 89-year-old widow who lived independently. Paula would call Jeanette each week to check in and catch up. "Jeanette and I bonded from the start and our friendship took off immediately," Paula remembers. "We were supposed to speak for about 20 minutes once a week, but sometimes we would talk for hours about our grandchildren (Paula has eleven, ages 7 through 28), about books we were reading, TV shows we were watching and we even exchanged recipes." Jeanette recently passed away at the age of 90 but Lisa Tredici, Bergen Volunteers' Mentoring Program Manager, has already identified another match for Paula. "As is usually the case with volunteers," Lisa



Ridgewood resident Paula Webber, center, volunteer and client of Bergen Volunteers, with Director of Community Programs, Lisa Tredici and Director of Development and Communications, Sharnpreet Nagra.

notes, "Paula gets so much more out of the experience than she ever thought she would."

Paula herself is also a recipient of Bergen Volunteers' services. She is a client of our CHORE program where skilled workers and handy individuals volunteer their time for repair services and home maintenance. This might include installing a handrail or grab bar, replacing a smoke detector or light bulb, or weatherproofing a window, activities that might be difficult or dangerous for a senior or a person with a disability to perform themselves. Paula also participates in our CHEER program where volunteers shop and deliver her groceries weekly and perform other light errands like visits to the post office, prescription pick-ups and library book returns. To strengthen the impact of

our CHEER program even more, in addition to our regular adult volunteers, Bergen Volunteers engages autistic students of The Epic School to deliver CHEER services, accompanied by a staff member. This volunteerism allows Epic School students to become involved in meaningful tasks and further develop their own life skills.

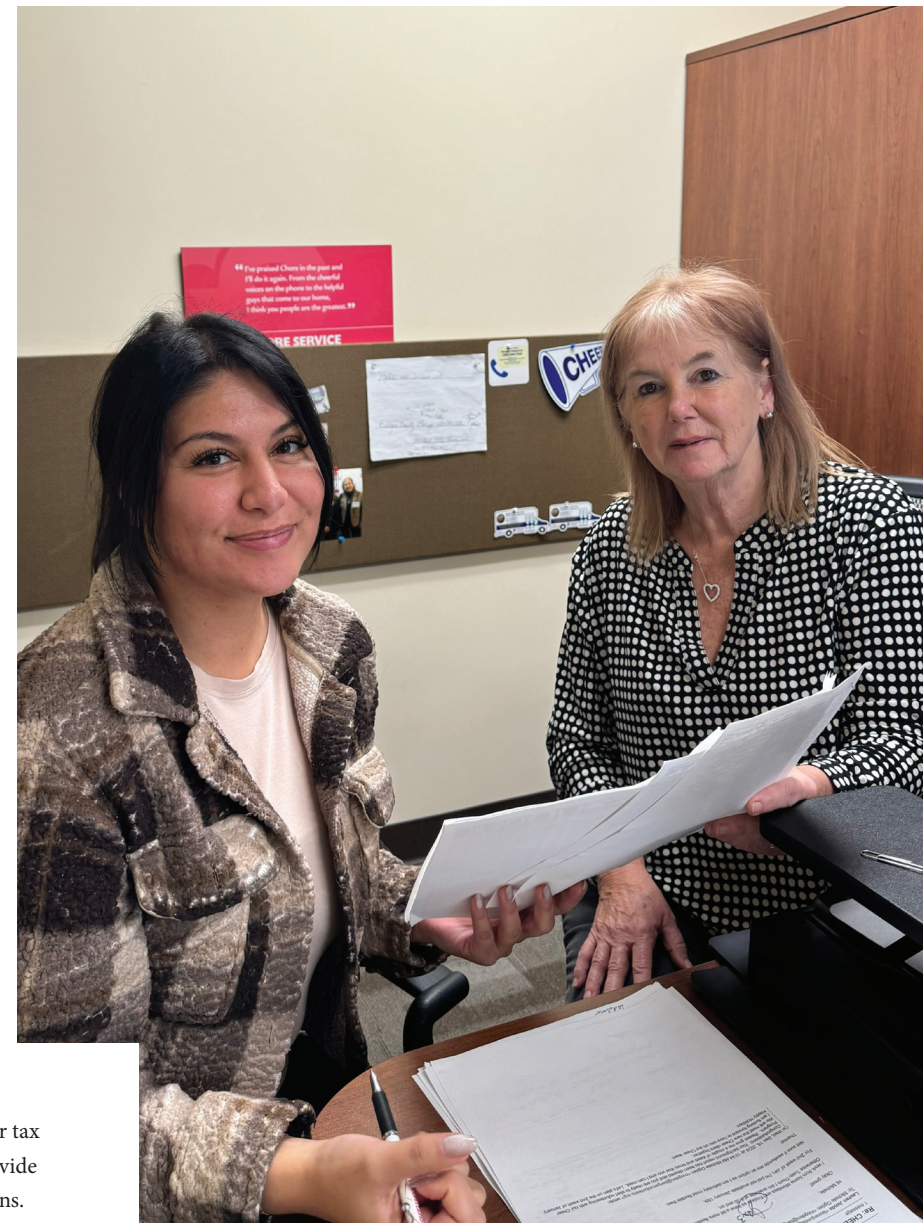
Bergen Volunteers was founded in 1966 to connect individuals, including retirees, with volunteer opportunities throughout Bergen County. Our human services and training programs span a wide range beyond the vital CHEER, CHORE and Golden Connections programs that help seniors age in place. Our mentoring program has matched over 4,000 youth, ages 8 to 18, with 500 dedicated mentors and caregivers, including

many who read weekly to underserved children. We offer volunteer tax preparation assistance and we fulfill holiday wish lists. We also provide classes, coaching and training in civic leadership for adults and teens.

"I don't sit still," Paula says. "There is just too much to do." So in addition to her Golden Connections work, Paula, with her service dog Harper, volunteers for The Seeing Eye, speaking at schools and other organizations about being blind and the importance of seeing eye dogs. She reads with the assistance of Seeing AI and has even tried cross-country skiing with New England Ski for Life. "I'm not handicapped," Paula says. "I just can't see so I have to do things differently."

Volunteering is for anyone who, like Paula, can give their most valuable resource, their time. Bergen Volunteers just moved to our new facility on Eisenhower Drive in Paramus, bringing us even closer to Ridgewood and we offer unique opportunities that accommodate many schedules and talents. To learn more about us, please visit our website at bergenvolunteers.org. You can make a difference in someone's life — including your own.

Sharnpreet Nagra is the Director of Development & Communications for Bergen Volunteers.



Bergen Volunteers staff members Diana Kochaha, Community Programs Coordinator, and Michele Ogden, Senior Program Manager.

creations photography
BY ANGIE
201-566-5215

creationsphotographybyangie.com
[instagram.com/creationsphotographybyangie](https://www.instagram.com/creationsphotographybyangie)

ON TIME webdesign biz  

Locally Owned & Operated In Bergen County Since 2000

Website Design & Hosting, Social Media Content Creation & Management, Google Business Profile Updating, Video Creation, SMS Text Messaging Campaigns, Logos & Flyers

**Work directly with the owner at all times.
Great rates and service.**

 **201.741.5654**
fred@ontimewebdesign.biz