

What Do Shepherd's Centers and Starbucks Have in Common?

How often do you struggle to describe what your Shepherd's Center does? It can be challenging because we do so much for so many people with vastly different needs. We're about health and wellness, lifelong learning, support services, volunteerism, social enrichment, caregiver support, friendship...you can add to this list.

One word that continues to be used to describe what we do is community. Story after story highlights the sense of identity and belonging that emerges after individuals, including staff, feel when connected to a Shepherd's Center.

But if you are at a loss to find one word, consider what others have said, "Shepherd's Centers have to be experienced!" I believe this is true because Shepherd's Centers transform the lives of older adults.

Author and business executive Donald Miller shared this about the Starbucks experience:

Starbucks exploded by not just offering customers a cup of coffee but by giving them a comfortable, sophisticated environment in which to relax. Customers felt good about themselves when they walked into a Starbucks. Starbucks was delivering more value than just coffee; they were delivering a sense of sophistication and enthusiasm about life.

They were also offering a place for people to meet in which they could experience affiliation and belonging. Starbucks changed American culture from hanging out in diners and bars to hanging out in a local, Italian-style coffee shop.

Even if you don't frequent Starbucks, I suspect a positive feeling comes to mind. I contend we can substitute Shepherd's Centers for Starbucks, and it would read something like this:

Shepherd's Centers are not just offering lifelong learning but creating a welcoming, inclusive environment where older adults can use their wisdom and experience to continue contributing to society. Individuals feel good about themselves when they walk into a Shepherd's Center. Shepherd's Centers are delivering more value than just programs; we are delivering a sense of purpose and enthusiasm about life and aging.

We are also offering a place for people to connect and experience affiliation and belonging. Shepherd's Centers are changing American culture from aging being about challenges and decline to being about expanding opportunities to live happy, healthy lives with meaning and purpose.

At every age and stage of life, we all seek to belong to a caring community. Being part of the Shepherd's Centers community with you is a joy!

Sarah Cheney

SCA Network Featured in the NYT

If you missed the earlier communications, the Shepherd's Centers of America Network was recently featured in *The New York Times* article, "**You May Need That Procedure. But Do You Really Need an Escort?**" by Paula Span, published on March 25, 2023.

The article highlights the challenges faced by older Americans who require basic screenings or operations that involve anesthesia or sedation, and need to arrange for someone to take them home afterward. Our volunteer driver programs have been addressing this crucial need by providing trained volunteers who serve as medical escorts and offer door-through-door transportation for older adults in our community. This service is instrumental in ensuring that older adults can access the healthcare they need without the added stress of finding transportation.

This one article generated a number of inquiries from coast to coast for those wanting to volunteer at a local Shepherd's Center as well as organizations wanting to learn more about starting a Shepherd's Center in their community. This awareness building opportunity is good for us all!



[Link to Article](#)

Guests of Honor

The Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia recently hosted a special Lunch N Life event featuring former White House Butler Alan DeValerio. DeValerio shared historical insights into his experiences working with the Reagan administration and serving the White House, including memorabilia from state dinners and holiday parties. He also presented his new book, "A History of Entertainment in the Modern White House."

The event was an opportunity for members of the community to hear from someone with firsthand experience serving in the White House, as well as to learn about the history of entertainment in the modern presidency. Attendees were able to ask questions and engage in discussion with DeValerio, gaining a unique perspective on a crucial aspect of American political history. See photo below.

LifeQuest of Arkansas collaborated with the local paper, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, to offer a workshop for non-subscribers of the newspaper to learn how to navigate the newspaper and find LifeQuest classes on an iPad. Each participant received a free iPad.



Sara Case, at **Mid North Shepherd's Center (IN)** for purchasing a van to start volunteer transportation services to get older adults to medical appointments and deliver meals.

Lisa Miller, Lynne Garms and the team at **Shepherd's Center of Kernersville** for hosting a great regional meeting. More than 20 Shepherd's Center staff, board members and community champions participated.

Our partner, **OneSkin**, for

These examples highlight how program committees are tapping local resources to offer great classes. You can also consider the SCA Network Speaker's Bureau available in the [E-Exchange](#), where speakers are identified for a number of different virtual class opportunities ranging from one-time to multi-week. Let us know if you have a speaker interested in presenting to other Shepherd's Centers by emailing us at staff@shepherdcenters.org.



[Link to Article](#)

featuring the SCA Network and volunteer extraordinaire Becky Entenmann with a live event sharing about our mission for connecting older adults.



5/2: National Teacher's Day. Who are some of the great teachers in your field? Can you honor a teacher who is also a great volunteer or donor for your cause?

5/29: Memorial Day (US). Officially marks a day of remembrance for those who have died in military service to our country. Unofficially marks the beginning of summer.

Measuring Success

We collect data for a reason. It's one way that we measure success. Take for example that collectively the SCA Network reaches 170,000 older adults annually and our volunteer services have a value of \$21.4 million. We are one of the largest organizations serving older adults.

This is one reason we ask affiliates to share data about their people and programs. We aggregate information and report the national impact Shepherd's Centers have across the nation. Your impact is great information to share across your community as well. Check out the 2022 Impact Summary from [Shepherd's Center of Greater Winston-Salem \(NC\)](#) and [Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia](#) available in the [E-Exchange](#).

The report from Shepherd's Center of Greater Winston-Salem highlights the record-breaking year with 7,777 older adults served, 40,069 attendance at classes, and 15,584 one-way rides. No extra digits in these impressive numbers! In addition to the stats, Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia nicely highlights all of the awards received by the center and volunteer leaders, adding to the experience of all involved.

We need you to participate by completing the 2022 impact survey, which is **significantly** shorter than last year's survey. Your participation ensures that we are more accurately measuring success. You can complete the [impact survey here](#) in about 15 - 20 minutes.

Additionally, in an effort to increase the demographic data collected at each center, SCA also has released census data collection forms. This is a one-time drive to better capture important demographics about all individuals connected with a Shepherd's Center – volunteers, participants, and service recipients. You can [read more about the census](#) here or reach out to us at staff@shepherdcenters.org.

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