

# Grantee HIGHLIGHT



MOSES TAYLOR  
FOUNDATION  
*Advancing Our Legacy of Health*



Responsive  
Grantmaking

**GRANTEE:**  
Ignatian Volunteer  
Corps (IVC) of  
Northeastern  
Pennsylvania



**Grant awarded:**  
\$40,000 over  
two years for the  
Friendly Visitor  
Program

The mission of Ignatian Volunteer Corps (IVC) of Northeastern Pennsylvania is to provide men and women age 50 and better with meaningful opportunities to serve others. For the organization's director, Teddy Michel, that means creating real, tangible connections between and among individuals.

After applying for a grant from Moses Taylor Foundation in late 2019, and getting the green light for funding in early 2020 for the IVC's Friendly Visitor Program, everything seemed to be in place.

That was, of course, until the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

**"We started to roll things out in January," Michel said. "By April, after COVID-19 hit, we flipped the switch from an in-person friendly visitor program to a program that worked over the phone."**

In collaboration with NeighborWorks of Northeastern Pennsylvania, a community development organization providing programs and services that create and preserve responsible homeownership and affordable housing in Northeastern Pennsylvania, IVC initiated the C.A.R.E. Call Program, a physically distanced adaptation of the Friendly Visitor Program.

C.A.R.E., which stands for "Connection and Resource Engagement," is a program aimed at reducing older adult isolation throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania. The program kicked off in mid-April 2020 with eight IVC

members who made more than 430 C.A.R.E. calls to older adults in the community.

"One of the things that we found through this program was that there is a need for connection," Michel explained. "It's just a real fundamental basic human need."

Trying to meet the needs of the older adult population in the community during the peak of COVID-19 physical distancing was an especially important feature of the C.A.R.E. Calls Program, said Michel. When asked if any particular challenge stood out when implementing the program, Michel discussed home repairs as being one of the biggest hurdles to overcome.

**"The biggest challenge is our inability to meet all of the needs of small home repairs," he explained. "There's such a backlog [due to COVID-19]. Some individuals need larger scale home modifications, but others just need some smaller projects."**

When asked what's next, Michel said that IVC is continuing to work with partners such as Moses Taylor Foundation, NeighborWorks, and others to continue to serve the needs of the local older adult population.

"More good things are going to come," he said. "The older adult population still has more to contribute to the community."