



Making a Difference in the Life of a Child

"America's Grandma," Virginia McLaurin, charmed the hearts of President and First Lady Barack and Michelle Obama with her infamous dance at the White House and has been working to help children in the DC community for several years. According to Virginia, when she initially volunteered with UPO her intentions were not only to enrich their lives, but hers too. She is a proactive and warm hearted volunteer that captures the true spirit of our Foster Grandparent program. Her dedication and life experience makes her an incredible source for youth who need a caring and nurturing figure to help them along.

Our Foster Grandparents, a lively and committed group of 250-plus seniors aged 55 and older, nurture and share their wisdom with DC's youngest residents. Daily, they volunteer for various roles such as classroom assistant in DC's elementary schools, hospitals and other institutions. They bring smiles, spread joy, and create lasting experiences that the children never forget.

Don't believe us? Meet three of our dedicated Foster Grandparents.



"What has UPO done for me? Or rather, what have I done for UPO? Just to be a part of the organization to help these kids...that's where we are mostly needed. As part of UPO's Foster Grandparent program, I'm a volunteer at Malcolm X Elementary School. I help classroom teachers with the daily lessons and I read to the children. I haven't missed a day since I started years ago. I love going every day to hear the children say "Mama Meechum, help me with my work." It's overwhelming, sometimes I get so full I wanna cry. But I'm just happy that I'm able to do something and give something back to our children."



"I've been in this program for 16 years. My fellow grandparents are very helpful. One year, when I needed something moved in my house, they came and took everything out of my basement for me. It was the whole crew there. Even Cheryl Christmas, Program Director, came and painted my fence on the outside. They stayed the whole day. I've been alive for a long time, I'm 82 years old. Since joining UPO's Foster Grandparents program, I've been at the same school for 16 years. It's home to me and as I see the kids over the years, they still remember me."



"UPO has given me an opportunity to work with young people. And, since working with UPO's Foster Grandparents, I have worked with DC youth from different parts of the city. I enjoy what I do. UPO offers many locations to volunteer as a Foster Grandparent. I like my location. I'm at Job Corps. My role gives me the opportunity to give something back to the youth."

+ \$517,847

**in value returned
to the community**

+274

Foster Grandparent volunteers

+ Over 182,000

**in Foster Grandparent
volunteer service hours**

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