April is **Volunteer Appreciation Month**. We are so grateful to the many dedicated volunteers that help us make a positive impact for the people we serve throughout Michigan. We can’t do it without them. Here are a few of their stories.

**Lee Riedl** is a new volunteer to Samaritas Senior Living of Grand Rapids, but has truly become an integral part of the community. With Lee’s help, families are now getting support with Medicaid applications and navigating the multitude of paperwork associated with obtaining Medicaid. She routinely volunteers to be an advocate for families and residents, graciously taking on tasks that many find very difficult to understand. One of the most unique ideas that she has brought to the campus is a veteran recognition wall. With her creativity, the community now has 3 displays showcasing photos of our veterans with their names and plaques, recognizing their service to our country. She is gracious, kind, and incredibly generous of her time and talents. She is a phenomenal volunteer, and completely deserving of the Individual Volunteer of the Year Award from Leading Age Michigan!

Life is a little easier now for dozens of homeless families served by the Samaritas Family Center emergency shelter in Westland, Michigan, thanks to the efforts of caring members at **UAW Local 163**. With the help of the local’s Women’s and Community Services committees, the 3,000-member strong local donated money, construction help and carpentry skills to transform the center’s community room, adding air conditioning, new paint and flooring, and a gaming system and foosball for the kids. The goal was to make it more welcoming and make it feel more like home.

**Lisa Palczewski** has been very instrumental in helping our seniors at Samaritas Senior Living of Grand Rapids find their voice and share their stories in the spirit of building a strong and loving community. A retired English teacher of 30 years, Lisa came to help us begin a newsletter for the residents and by the residents. The Samaritas Sampler just celebrated its first year and it is better than ever. Lisa and a staff member head up the editing portion but the content is beautifully compiled by our senior community. Lisa also volunteered as an Academy professor where she led writing classes. One resident in particular was treated to her expertise in writing as she helped him write his story and legacy for his family to have always. Her love for seniors and spirit of sharing her gifts are so evident in our community and to all of us who have the joy of sharing her good works.
In Southeast Michigan, **Randell Merren** is an extraordinary volunteer with our New American services. He has been a volunteer with us for a few years and helps with everything from transportation to moving furniture to attending workshops. Another volunteer, **Archie Hensley**, is our first Swahili speaking volunteer and has helped us tremendously with our two Congolese families last year! **Mary Haley** is also a Swahili speaking volunteer who has dedicated hundreds of hours to these Congolese families. Thank you three for helping some of newest neighbors people find comfort.

**Tom Meyer** has played the piano at Feast of Victory for 30 years. Over the years at Feast, he would come over to Samaritas with church kids to minister to the seniors. Then, when it came time for him and his family to find a home for his dad, Samaritas was the logical choice. Tom’s father loved music and even enjoyed his son’s piano playing from down the hall when he was bed-ridden during his last days. Tom has volunteered at Samaritas Senior Living of Traverse City since his father moved in three years ago. Residents seemed to still enjoy his music after his dad passed away, so he continued to come and play. Thank you Tom, we are so grateful for you.

In Saginaw, **Hoseia Ransom** is another wonder volunteer making an impact in the community. He helps with all the activities and programs we do at the Saginaw Community Center. Hoseia volunteers because he loves the neighborhood and he also restarted the Neighborhood Association. Thank you Hoseia!

Thank you to all of our volunteers who go above and beyond for the people we serve. You are the rock that starts the ripple of positive change.

Volunteer with Samaritas and Make a Positive Impact in Your Community!
If you would like to volunteer or learn about Samaritas volunteering opportunities, please contact Lauren Brosch at 313.308.8866 or email LBros@samaritas.org.