



Project Linkage needs drivers

What do you do when you have an eager audience but not enough actors to perform the play? Project Linkage, a program of Metropolitan Family Service, faces this situation everyday when trying to match up the transportation needs of Mid-county residents with volunteer drivers. Access to transportation is a key factor in determining quality of life for Project Linkage's service population. It is this fact that fuels Project Linkage and informs its mission: to help older adults and persons with disabilities remain independent and in their own homes by linking them with volunteers who provide in-home support and transportation services.



Carl von Rohr volunteers his time as a driver for Metropolitan Family Service. Drivers are needed in Mid-county. Volunteer today to make a difference in the life of a neighbor.
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Started over 30 years ago by a consortium of religious groups in Northeast Portland, Project Linkage moved to MFS in 1987 where it has continuously provided transportation, friendly visiting, telephone reassurance and minor home repair services to folks in North and Northeast Portland. In partnership with the transportation agency, Ride Connection, and through the support of a dedicated volunteer and staff base, Project Linkage now provides rides throughout Mid-county. But there's a catch: Project Linkage needs to build its Mid-county transportation volunteer base and its capacity to impact the life of someone like you, your parent or neighbor. Take the experience of one elderly Mid-county resident who, for lack of transportation options, was unable to visit her sister in Northwest Portland. With the help of Project Linkage she now sees her sister regularly and was able to attend a recent family wedding. Another way to view the need for transportation in Mid-county is the turndown rate, a measure of ride requests that go unfilled due to driver shortage. In the last year, this rate has averaged 128 turndowns per month. It's a depressing figure, but with your help it can be changed.

As Project Linkage staff member Marcy Hughes says, "volunteers are crucial to the success of our program, and to the mobility of our community. People can volunteer with ease because the commitment is really flexible. We can work around schedules and don't require a huge time commitment - one hour a week is all it takes to make a huge difference for someone who needs to get somewhere."

Interested in driving in Mid-county? Please contact Heather Pruess at Metropolitan Family Service for an application at 503-249-8215 ext. 22 or heatherp@metfamily.org.