HOW YOU’VE CHANGED LIVES

YOUR SUPPORT IMPROVED READING & BUILT EMPATHY.

Karen, a longtime FLIP volunteer at Poplar Grove Elementary, had a student who was very resistant to reading at the beginning of the school year. He wanted no part of books! He only liked video games and books were boring. The more Karen worked with him and encouraged him to read about things that he was interested in (even video games, in the beginning!), the more he began to really appreciate what books could do. By the end of the year he was reading a little above grade level. He and Karen were both so proud. “The most amazing part of this endeavor is watching kids grow in both skills and empathy,” said Karen. “Even more touching, though, was what he chose to buy at his school’s book fair. He got himself one book and bought a small flashlight for me. He told me ‘I know you don’t see that great, I wanted you to have this to read at night and so you won’t trip and fall.’” Karen was so moved by his thoughtfulness. Educators see that these programs not only have an impact on student academics but a social-emotional one as well.

YOUR SUPPORT HELPED VAN TO SMILE AGAIN.

Van loved to laugh which if you asked his wife Ruby that is what attracted her to him. At a party, Ruby asked her friend who the man was, that was always smiling and laughing, and the rest was 56 years of marriage. Van thought one day how little he smiled or laughed anymore, not because he did not want to, but he was homebound and had little interaction anymore with people. Ruby had passed away a few years back, most of his friends were deceased, and his one child was in the military and lived overseas. After a stay in the hospital, the social worker recommended he start Meals-on-Wheels. He really was not sure about it since he liked to take care of himself. But Van decided he would try it, and he LOVED it! Everyday a volunteer brought his meal. They would laugh at his jokes, ask him if he watched the Titans game, and always give him a smile. Daily interactions with friendly volunteers are helping seniors to stay engaged and maintain their wellness.

YOUR SUPPORT CAME JUST IN TIME!

Julie came from a very affluent lifestyle and even owned a successful company with her husband. Unfortunately, the sale of their company went to litigation which eventually led to her husband filing for bankruptcy and walking out on the family. Julie began working but the company went under shortly after she started. To make ends meet, she sold everything she could - a grand piano, dining room table, paintings, lamps, and jewelry. She tried to keep anything that was important to her boys. They managed to survive for quite some time until they sold the house and had to find a new place to live. The family ended up living with friends at various places each week until Julie found a place. With moving and storage expenses she had nothing left for food. One morning, Julie drove past a Second Harvest mobile food pantry while dropping her son off at school, so she returned and got in line. “It was very humbling, but I made a bunch of friends in line,” Julie said. “At the mobile pantry I got fresh produce, milk, juice boxes for the kids, eggs, and more.” It was a relief for Julie to know that when the kids got home, they were going to see that their mom took care of them. Struggling families deal with the anxiety that comes from not knowing if you can pay your bills or eat. Julie shared, “Even if you came from a nice lifestyle anyone can hit a bad patch.”