

Social Call Brings People Together for Connection and Friendship

Social connection, especially for isolated and at-risk older adults, is at the heart of Front Porch Community Services programs. The Front Porch Communities Foundation's annual Celtic Cup Golf Tournament raises funds to support these critical programs. Social Call, connecting adults 60 and older with volunteers for a weekly phone or video call, is one of the Community Services programs that changes lives.

Rita LaForce, 81, was lonely before being matched with her friend, Austen Creger.

"Although I have good friends, I don't have many," said Rita, a San Francisco resident. "I was feeling really shut in."

Rita and Austen have spoken weekly for the last three years, and the conversations have improved their quality of life.



Rita LaForce and Austen Creger, Social Call participants, recently got to meet in person for the first time after having known each other by phone for three years.

"I can't tell you what Austen has done for me," Rita said. "She encourages my creativity. I read my poems to her, share my projects. I am much more outgoing. Austen has made me want to make a real contribution to the world."

Austen feels the same way.

"It's so inspiring to talk to Rita," said Austen. "She never ceases to amaze me. We talk about her past, present, and future, and it's incredible to see the world through someone else's perspective."

Rita and Austen are two of 450 people in Northern California, and more than 1,100 nationwide, who participate in Social Call. Front Porch Community Services staff matched participants with a high

level of detail, including shared interests, values, and needs. The matches are diverse, with 70% being intergenerational and 30% peer-to-peer.

“The beauty of the relationship is that both people in the match are offered the chance to feel seen and heard,” said Katie Wade, the senior director who oversees Social Call. “It builds lifelong friendships and increases vitality.”