



# Community Concerns

## Helping Neighbors Maintain Independence

(NAPSA)—When the basic tasks of everyday life become too difficult, many Americans face the loss of their independence. Sadly, too many will face this challenge alone.

More than one-quarter of Americans over age 55, approximately 16 million people, struggle with daily activities as simple as shopping, cooking and housework. Nearly one-half of those with difficulty do not receive any help from family or others.

Such was the case for Ester, an 83-year-old woman who has osteoporosis and spinal fractures. A lightbulb in Ester's home blew and she couldn't reach the fixture to change it. She was forced to rely on a flashlight to find her way around her home.

Fortunately, Sarah came to Ester's rescue. Sarah is just one of thousands of Faith in Action volunteers around the country who give a few hours a week to help neighbors with long-term health needs maintain their independence.

Faith in Action is an interfaith volunteer caregiving organization. It helps bring communities together by connecting volunteers with their neighbors in need. Each week, volunteers help their neighbors with small tasks, such as taking them to doctor appointments, helping with groceries or yard work, and running errands. The program is supported by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which has helped to establish nearly 1,000 local sites since it began in 1984.



**Actress Della Reese, pictured with a volunteer caregiver and care recipient, encourages more Americans to help their neighbors in need.**

Recently, the group took action to increase awareness of free services and to recruit new volunteers. "Most people want to do good, most people want to help, they just don't know how," says Della Reese, singer, actress and Faith in Action national spokeswoman. "Faith in Action gives them a chance to make a real difference."

There are hundreds of Faith in Action programs across the country working to ensure that more Americans get the help they need to stay in their homes and live in their communities.

To find a nearby program and to learn how to volunteer, call (877) 324-8411 toll free or visit the Web site at [www.faithinaction.org](http://www.faithinaction.org).