



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 17, 2010

MEDIA CONTACT:
Sandy Leander
Communications Director
602-274-5022 ext. 16
leander@duetaz.org

URGENT PLEA FOR VOLUNTEERS
VALLEY SENIORS NEED YOUR IMMEDIATE HELP

(Phoenix, AZ-) Duet™ urgently needs volunteers to help seniors who are homebound because of disability, lack of transportation, or disease. Due to pending City of Phoenix budget cuts, requests for Duet's transportation service have quadrupled in just one week. Volunteers for this Valley non-profit provide critical assistance with things such as rides to doctor appointments, grocery shopping, home repairs, friendly visits, computer training and more.

"We have not seen a spike in demand for our services like this in many years," said Elizabeth Banta, Duet Executive Director. "Announced cuts to Phoenix's Dial-a-Ride and Reserve-a-Ride programs will not only impact Valley seniors, they present a tremendous challenge to our organization. We are urging members of the community to help their neighbors by volunteering through Duet. Providing even one ride per month will make an enormous difference."

Planned cuts to Phoenix's Dial-a-Ride and Reserve-a-Ride may eliminate thousands of rides for seniors who cannot drive. Many of these individuals are already turning to Duet for help with transportation, even though the cuts are not yet in effect. Other issues are making this situation even more difficult. Volunteers often take summer vacations, which leaves many homebound seniors without assistance. Also, more people are "aging in place," thus the demand for Duet's free services continues to rise.

To become a Duet volunteer, simply attend one orientation. The organization will try to match you with a senior who needs help and lives nearby. Volunteers are trained and insured. They must provide proof of insurance, a driver's license and daytime phone numbers for two local references. The Duet office will take care of fingerprinting prospective volunteers.

To register for an orientation, call (602) 274-5022 or e-mail volunteer@duetz.org.

Upcoming Duet Volunteer Orientations

- **July 1**, Thursday, 3:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m., Church of the Beatitudes, 555 W. Glendale Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85021
- **July 15**, Thursday, 9 – 11:30 a.m., Church of the Beatitudes, 555 W. Glendale Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85021
- **August 14**, Saturday, 9 – 11:30 a.m., Palo Cristi Presbyterian Church, 3535 E. Lincoln Dr., Paradise Valley, AZ 85253
- **October 23**, Saturday, 9 – 11:30 a.m., All Saints' Episcopal Church, 6300 N. Central Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85012

To see who needs help in your area, visit www.duetaz.org and view our interactive service map. This map shows in “real time” our list of homebound adults waiting for caring volunteers - just like you. Services for homebound adults are available in Phoenix, Fountain Hills, Glendale, Litchfield Park, Paradise Valley, Peoria and Scottsdale. www.duetaz.org. If Duet does not provide services in your area, the organization can provide information about other Valley agencies that may be able to help.

While Duet does receive some funding from several Valley cities, it doesn't cover the agency's cost to recruit, train, supervise and insure volunteers, answer calls for help, and match seniors in need with caring volunteers. Like many non-profits have experienced, donations to Duet have decreased during this economic downturn. More financial support is needed to help the organization meet this new challenge.

It costs Duet about \$400 to provide regular services to a homebound adult for an entire year. That same amount only pays for about three days of nursing home care. Helping seniors live independently in their own homes is cost-effective. Donations can be made through the Duet website at www.duetaz.org.

###

Duet™ promotes health and well-being through a broad range of services to homebound adults, caregivers, faith communities and grandparents raising grandchildren.