

In the Spotlight: **Sylvia**
Nussbaum

The word **"retirement"**
simply was **not in**
her vocabulary.

SYLVIA NUSSBAUM'S IDENTITY FOR NEARLY FIVE DECADES HAD BEEN TIED TO HER SMALL STORE AND THE CUSTOMERS SHE LOVED. IN RECENT YEARS, FLEETING THOUGHTS OF RETIREMENT WERE QUICKLY BRUSHED ASIDE.

But last year, when new building owners doubled her rent, Sylvia realized she couldn't fight retirement any longer. So with great reluctance, she sold her business.

At JVS, we know that coping with the changes that come with aging is difficult. For some, it's the loss of loved ones, declining health or loss of independence. For others, like Sylvia, it's the end of a career. Finding new things to enjoy, staying physically, mentally and socially active, and feeling connected to community are important for healthy aging.

For Sylvia, just the idea of retirement was scary. She worried about not being able to remain active, involved, busy - like she had been her whole life.

Sylvia's remarkable work ethic began at an early age in London, England, where she was born. (You can still detect a bit of her British accent.) By age 14, she was working at her mother's hardware store every day after school. She moved to the U.S. when she was 21, where she and her husband raised their three daughters.

With shop-keeping in her blood, Sylvia started "I Am Woman," a small boutique in Southfield. As owner and manager of the store, she worked five or six days a week for 46 years.

Sylvia's daughter knew that charity work was always something her mother wanted to do as soon as she had the circumstances, and the JVS Senior Service Corps seemed like a perfect fit. Senior Service Corps volunteers meet once or twice a week at JVS's Southfield office where they work on projects for local nonprofits.

Sylvia liked the idea, and began her new "career" as a volunteer just a few short months after leaving the store. She is very sociable, and converses on any subject with grace and ease. Her fashion sense is impeccable. And her positive energy only seems to increase with time. So, not surprisingly, she quickly became a productive addition to the JVS family.

True to her character, Sylvia gives full credit to the people of JVS - her fellow volunteers and JVS staff members - who enthusiastically welcomed her from day one. But all of us are quick to note how easy she has made it for us to feel that way.

So you'll find Sylvia here every Monday and Wednesday. You can't miss her. She's the one laughing, joking and keeping the conversation lively, positive and interesting.

382 senior adults

participated in enriching activities to safely remain engaged and involved in the community, and age in familiar surroundings.

567 family care partners

received support, referrals, respite and counseling.

Believing that the human spirit never stands still, JVS services for seniors promote a sense of personal worth including enriching day programs for people living with dementia, caregiver respite and support, memory training, volunteer opportunities and community engagement.