

**My name is Tuesday Glover, and I am the Director of Culturally Responsive Caregiver Support and Dementia Services, a service of Volunteers of America of Minnesota and Wisconsin.**

**Volunteers of America of Minnesota and Wisconsin is a nonprofit health and human services organization committed to serving people in need, strengthening families, and building communities. For 125 years, Volunteers of America of Minnesota and Wisconsin has offered a comprehensive range of innovative services and networks that responds to and evolves with the needs of the community in pursuit of its mission, to help people build hope, resilience, and well-being.**

**Culturally Responsive Caregiver Support and Dementia Service has historically focused on supporting African American and East African community members through education relating to dementia, offering memory screens, and supporting caregivers. The stress, health impacts, and costs associated with the long journey of caring for someone impacted by dementia often creates two or more people who are in desperate need of support. Our work, supporting caregivers, reveals the importance and impact of offering respite to caregivers.**

**Dementia, a disease of the brain, is fatal. This vicious disease can affect memory, executive functioning, day to day living and decision making. Those impacted by the disease will eventually forget their loved one's names, forget who they are and forget to eat. They will need a caregiver.**

**This caregiver journey can be stressful and selfcare is vital. Studies show that caregivers are more than twice as likely to experience depression when compared to non-caregivers. Self-care is essential for caregivers, yet the time for caring for oneself is often unavailable.**

**As I speak on behalf of my clients and caregivers in the Twin's City area, caregiver respite is in a crisis! As a part of self-care, our clients are seeking respite services so they are able to go to their doctors' appointments, go to the dentist or go get a haircut. The cost for respite is on average 30 to 40 dollars an hour, with a 3-hour minimum, averaging \$120 for 3 hours which is often unaffordable for the caregivers we serve. Most of our caregivers are retired and did not plan financially for respite services.**

**The Culturally Responsive Caregiver Support and Dementia Services program has recently collaborated with our VOA volunteer program called AmeriCorps Seniors to recruit volunteers to assist with short-term respite for our present clients so they can have respite services while the caregiver enjoys our dementia and brain health education classes. I ask that the state of Minnesota create more funding for the caregivers who care for older adults and as they care for their loved ones with dementia while in their homes.**

**Again, thank you for allowing me to advocate on behalf of caregivers, Volunteers of America of Minnesota and Wisconsin, and its Culturally Responsive Caregiver Support and Dementia Services program.**