



## Helping Hands University Park

If you're new to UP, you may be unfamiliar with HHUP (Helping Hands University Park). Established in 2017, HHUP is a town committee with the mission to help residents remain in their homes as they age. We do this through volunteer services, educational programs and social activities and partnerships with other individuals and organizations that complement our mission. By engaging a wide range of residents, we enhance the quality of life for the entire community. HHUP is led by a Town Committee which meets monthly; meetings are open to the public. Committee members are: Loretta Vitale Saks, Chair; Ned Goldberg, Vice Chair; Bob Saks, Secretary; Linda Verrill, Treasurer and Liaison to Town Council; Sabrina Meyers and Sue Yarvin, at-large members.

We currently have 36 trained and vetted volunteers and nearly 50 members, though we consider all UP seniors and persons with disabilities as prospective members. One need only complete a simple application form to become a member; no fees are requested. Call 301--892-6636 to receive an application by mail or visit [helpinghandsup.org/members](http://helpinghandsup.org/members) to find it online.

We are fortunate to receive funding from the Town. So far, these funds have been used primarily for programming-related costs, office supplies, mailings and organizational membership dues. We anticipate having additional expenses as we grow.

**Introducing the Temporary Assistance Fund (TAF)** Occasionally, we meet UP seniors who are facing unanticipated emergencies requiring funds that they simply don't have. In recent town newsletters, we have highlighted a number of State and Federal programs that can sometimes provide invaluable assistance to eligible individuals. But too often, there is simply nowhere to turn when the need is great and immediate. Fortunately, for our community, such emergencies don't come often. That said, like every American community, we are aging and will have more and more seniors in town in coming years.

We ask you to imagine that you have lived in University Park for 30-50 years and you retired several decades ago. You live primarily on your social security check and pension, along with some savings you try not to dip into. Slight increases in social security payments have not kept pace with the cost of living. Wanting to age in this lovely community, you've learned to live frugally. What if your furnace goes out, your old stove breaks down, or you are faced with a significant amount of non-reimbursable medical expenses?

Feeling unable to provide emergency funds from our Town-budgeted monies to residents caught in such situations, we wrote policies and criteria for awarding small grants, developed an application and asked Suellen Ferguson, Town Attorney, to review it all. We then presented our

proposal for a Temporary Assistance Fund to the Town Council, where it was unanimously approved on July 1, 2019.

HHUP hopes to raise enough funds to be able to help UP seniors with small grants when emergencies arise, for example: In-kind or monetary assistance; Food/ Nutrition--Meals on Wheels; Housing--temporary emergency assistance; Medical--small co-pays, urgent care visits, services such as short-term health care aide assistance. The number and size of grants will depend entirely on how much money we are able to raise. In addition to providing grants, HHUP will assist such individuals in locating additional resources. The TAF application and HHUP TAF Policies and Criteria are available at: [helpinghandsup.org/resources](http://helpinghandsup.org/resources) as well as the Town website: [upmd.org/189/Helping-Hands-UP-Committee](http://upmd.org/189/Helping-Hands-UP-Committee) If you have questions, we'll be glad to answer them. Simply email us at [HHUniversityPark@gmail.com](mailto:HHUniversityPark@gmail.com) or call 301- 892-6636.