

DEE KING DIRECTOR OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES



A finance professional by training, years ago Dee King was working full-time as a credit manager at a private company while volunteering for a local hospice. As a volunteer, she facilitated bereavement groups, spoke in the community on behalf of the organization, and provided in-home assistance to patients and families. “My kids were growing up, and the nurturing part of my soul wasn’t being nourished anymore. The hospice was just what I needed,” explains Dee.

Dee became so passionate about the organization that when a full-time paid role opened up for an assistant director of volunteer services, she sold her house, moved to a small condo, and re-prioritized her personal life so that she could afford to take the pay cut required to turn her avocation into her profession at a non-profit. Through it all, she continued to volunteer for AIDS-related causes, including AFAN in Nevada.

Dee says she has frequently been asked how she deals with all of the sadness surrounding hospices and AIDS, to which she routinely replies, “You can’t change what’s happened in the past or in the future, but you can make a positive difference during the time you are involved with a family.”

The ideal volunteer is reliable, passionate, committed, and able to connect easily with strangers. When volunteers join the Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health, they typically tell Dee that they are surprised by how friendly the staff and volunteers are, and how much they have in common with other volunteers. A common bond is not surprising, given that more than 50% of volunteers are or have been caregivers to loved ones with various forms of dementia.

As Director of Volunteer Services for the Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health, Dee has taken the program from 0 to 70 volunteers, and along the way has created a three-hour volunteer orientation, including a module on Four Seasons hospitality training. Dee interviews prospective volunteers with a keen matchmaking eye, explaining, “My delight comes through interacting with volunteers, and getting to know each one well enough to match them with roles they truly find fulfilling.” Interested in getting to know Dee and her team of volunteers? She just may have the perfect role for you, too.

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