

# DONNA



## Highmark Caring Place Volunteer

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***Donna***

Donna is no stranger to volunteering. She is very active at her church, and she spent a decade sharing her talents with special organizations. A friend told her about an opportunity to volunteer at the Highmark Caring Place in 2001. "I wanted to volunteer there because I love kids, and I looked forward to meeting an amazing group of volunteers," she said. Donna has been a dedicated volunteer at the Caring Place ever since.

Donna's individual niche as a volunteer is working with teens. She spends her volunteer time helping this special group with issues relevant to their age. "Teens are so vulnerable," she says. "They're caught between childhood and adulthood, and they benefit so much from relating to their peers." Donna has witnessed many transformations over the years. "There are so many stories," she said. "Each age group is so unique."



Donna affectionately recalls one young man's journey in particular. "He came every week, but he didn't speak or participate," she says. "He just wrote on the paper covering the work table. At first, his words were so tiny that nobody could read them. His words grew larger week by week until his pain and anger were evident. Over time, he found safety to allow himself to grieve in his own way." Donna treasures her memories of this particular youngster, but her affection for these special teens is much broader. "Personally, I love them all!," she beamed.

Donna recommends giving time to the Caring Place because volunteers see the results of their work. "Families who are sad, withdrawn or silent become open," she said. "They share their stories and form a unit." Helping others heal has provided a personal comfort for Donna, too. "I came to the Caring Place because it's an environment for healing," she says. "Every group offers the opportunity to help heal broken hearts."

***For more information about the Highmark Caring Place, visit us online at [www.highmarkcaringplace.com](http://www.highmarkcaringplace.com).***