

April 2020

Name: Barb Brattin



Tell us a little about yourself:

I'm the Director for Kenosha Public Library (KPL) and I also serve as the Director for the Kenosha County Library System (KCLS) which provides the technology support for both KPL and Community Library. I'd describe myself as adventurous. I moved to Kenosha in 2014 from Colorado. I grew up in Ohio and also worked in Illinois. I've traveled across most of the U.S. and have spent time in Europe, Ecuador, and Vietnam. I have two wonderful sons, Neil and Eric, and 3 grandchildren Elias, Ella, and Bryn. I live with a very big Anatolian Shepherd named Gigi, and an ill-behaved cat named Garfield.

How long have you been volunteering for United Way of Kenosha County?

This is my second year on the Community Impact Committee. I've volunteered with Readers are Leaders for a couple of years, too. This year I read weekly with two second graders at Brass Community School.

How did you get involved with United Way of Kenosha County?

I was a KABA mentor at Brass Community School for four years before the United Way Readers are Leaders program began. I have a real affection for Brass. Joel and his team are doing great work there. When the RAL opportunity came up, I jumped. Last year I had one student, this year I have two. When Pat Demos called me last year to help with the CIC committee, I said, of course!

What is your favorite experience/story from your work with United Way of Kenosha County?

I'm working with two very different students in the Readers are Leaders program this year. One is extremely curious and wants to learn everything. Another has a very hard time paying attention to anything longer than 1 minute. The curious one wanted to talk about animals all the time, so at Christmas I surprised him with a thick book on animals from all over the world. Every week he reports back to me about the relative size of animals and we speculate based on height and weight who would win a wrestling match. We have so much fun together. What a joy to watch a child eagerly learn!

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

I love to garden, hike in National Parks, travel, read, and I'm a political junkie. I write novels in my spare time and hope to become a full-time writer when I retire.

What would you say to someone who is thinking of volunteering for United Way of Kenosha County?

Helping others will bring you joy. Do it!

What is your favorite quote?

"Never give up, for that is just the place and time the tide will turn." Harriet Beecher Stowe.

Tell us something that inspires you?

My parents were immigrants who lost everything to war and came to this country to provide their children with a safe and stable life. They will always be my inspiration.