

**August 2020**

**Name:** Madeline Carrera, PhD



**Tell us a little about yourself:**

Madeline has been working to connect students with community-based learning opportunities at Gateway Technical College for just under nine years. She started in her role as an AmeriCorps\*VISTA working in collaboration with United Way of Kenosha County, ELCA Outreach Center, and the Sharing Center. She just completed her doctorate from Cardinal Stritch University this March. She is a mom of two tornadoes (children) and a lap mop (dog). In her spare time, she likes to go dancing with her partner, read new books, garden, and quilt.

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

I started volunteering during Days of Service, Days of Caring, and Readers are Leaders when UWKC would have opportunities during the time I was working as an AmeriCorps VISTA with UWKC, ELCA Outreach Center, and the Sharing Center in 2011. In 2013, I joined the Community Investment Committee and have volunteered as often as I can since.

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

When I was an AmeriCorps VISTA, I spent a year in service to three nonprofits in our community – one of which was United Way of Kenosha County. I wanted to keep being involved because I believe UWKC offers great opportunities for program development in Kenosha, but also volunteer opportunities for people who are looking for one-time volunteer opportunities.

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

My favorite volunteer experience is the Readers are Leaders events. I love reading Fox in Socks to kiddos. I love their faces when they realize that I'm there to read to them and not just some random stranger. My favorite moment of all time was this year when my kiddo was finally old enough to be in one of the classrooms I could read in. I loved reading to his class!

**What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

In her spare time, she likes to go dancing with her partner, read new books, garden, and quilt.

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

Make sure you have a firm understanding of your capacities and aim for a project that will help you verify if it's the right thing for you. When I started volunteering in the Community Investment Committee, I didn't really realize how much reading was involved in a short amount of time. But after getting used to it, I found it to be the most rewarding volunteer experience that suits my strengths and talents.

**What is your favorite quote?**

Leo Rosten said, “the purpose of life is not to be happy—but to matter, to be productive, to be useful, to have it make some difference that you lived at all.” ((this quote is commonly credited to Ralph Waldo Emerson, but is actually Leo Rosten, 1962).

**Tell us something that inspires you?**

I love hearing about people who use their talents and interest for the good of the community.

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