

GET TO KNOW BUNNY MCELLIOT FROM TCMC TEENAGE VOLUNTEER TO TCMC AUXILIARY PRESIDENT!

You started volunteering as a teenager at TCMC right after it opened. Can you tell us when/why you wanted to volunteer at the 'new' hospital at the time?

Growing up, I always had an interest in medicine. In 1966, as a junior in Vista High School, members of our high school's Future Nurse Club were invited to volunteer in the "Tri-Teen Program" at Tri-City Hospital.

What were your duties as a volunteer at the time? What were your first impressions of TCMC?

We helped on the medical floors with the medical staff doing tasks such as making beds, helping with patient's needs like bringing them water bottles or magazines, interacting with the children who were patients, taking specimens to the lab, wheeling patients to procedures and more. My most memorable event was being allowed to watch a spinal tap being done on a patient. I LOVED being there! I felt like I was part of the team.



*Tri-City Healthcare
Auxiliary President Bunny McElliot*

Fast forward several years later... you began working at TCMC. Tell us about that time in your life and why you decided to come back.

I ended up making teaching my career, but took a two-year break to help with some family illnesses. During that time, I applied for a job in admitting at Tri-City. I loved being there. I felt like I was part of the hospital family. It was a friendly, fun and fulfilling place to be. I did return to my other love, teaching, and ended up retiring after being in the classroom for 40+ years.

Now you're retired and are the TC Healthcare Auxiliary President. Tell us about why you returned to TCMC after you retired and what you do now.

I tried various places to volunteer when I retired, but didn't quite find the right fit. An ad in the newspaper about Tri-City Auxiliary piqued my interest. They were starting a new department, advocacy, to help accentuate the patient experience. When I stepped in the hospital I knew I was 'home' was back with my 'family' and belonged. Advocacy was a great fit. I fell in love with being back at TCMC and being part of the medical center once again.

Since rejoining the TCMC family, I've worked the following Auxiliary departments: Advocacy, High School Volunteers, Surgery, Information Desk, Board of Director member and now President.

GET TO KNOW BUNNY MCELLIOT CONT.

TCHA offers annual scholarships to local students who are studying nursing. From 1973 to date, the Auxiliary has given away \$1.3M in scholarships. Tell us why this is important to the Auxiliary and the students it supports.

One of TCMC's goals is to support education to those in our community studying for a career in healthcare. The Auxiliary has honored that mission. Our first scholarship was awarded in 1973 to a nursing student for \$100. We now have given anywhere from 60-100 scholarships per year since then to student hospital volunteers or nursing students from our local colleges. The scholarship awards evenings are SO rewarding!

If someone in our community wants to volunteer with the Auxiliary, what can they do? How can they reach you?

We welcome more volunteers! Volunteers are valued and needed members of the TCMC family. It's a wonderful place to spend important hours. For more information about what we do and how to be involved, see our website at: tricityhospitalvolunteers.org. or call our office: 760.940.3125.

Anything else you'd like to share with our TCMC Family?

I enjoy spending time outside of TCMC with my family, as well as my friends from church and work communities. My favorite activities are traveling, camping, 'making memories' vacations, playing guitar, ukulele, group sing-a-longs, playing card games and crafting.



CELEBRATING VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION MONTH

Our Tri-City Hospital Auxiliary Volunteers are amazing! In 2023 alone, 174 volunteers served over 23,000 hours! If you added that all up, that's the equivalent to the number of hours 11 full-time TCMC employees would log annually. WOW!

During Volunteer Appreciation Month, we'd like to introduce you to some of these dedicated and hard-working individuals – if you can call volunteering at TCMC work. If you ask any one of our volunteers, it's more like a gift of love they extend to our TCMC community and staff.

Sharon Hambly Clerical Unit Volunteer Joined Auxiliary in 2013

"I like volunteering at TCMC because I enjoy giving back. And I feel like I have a purpose here at the hospital. In the Clerical Office, you're in the center of everything. I enjoy that and get to meet everyone."



RoseMarie Castellano ICU Volunteer Joined Auxiliary in 1996

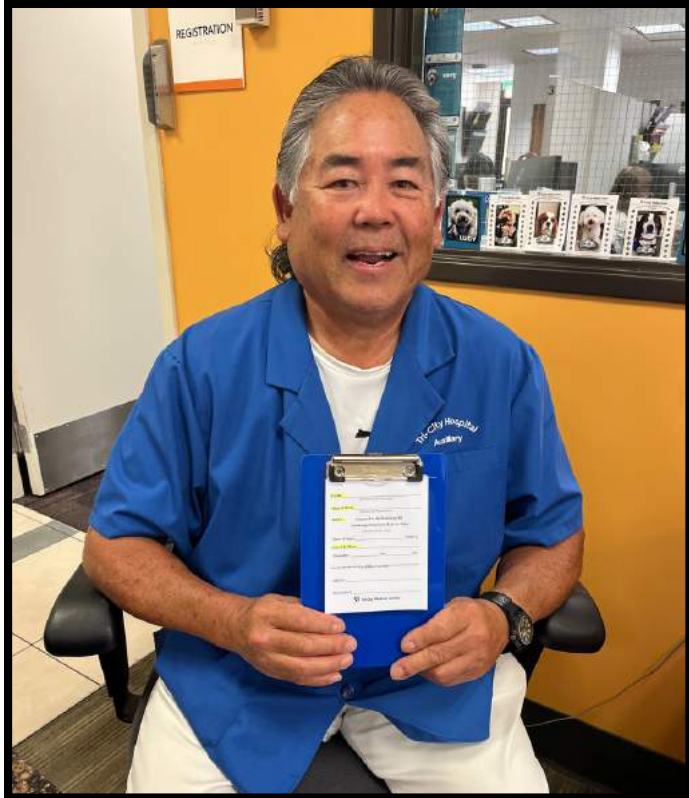
"I love volunteering because I want to give back to the community. TCMC has been great to my family. My second daughter was born here! We're SO blessed to have this hospital in our community. I've been coming here since the hospital opened."

*****RoseMarie provides weekly flowers to adorn our Information Desk where visitors check in to see their loved ones in the hospital.***

CELEBRATING VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION MONTH

Donna McConnell
Information Desk
Volunteer
Joined Auxiliary in 1999

“Giving back is all about trying to help people. That’s why I volunteer – it’s just SO rewarding. And I enjoy getting to know the people who come here and work here. All of the hospital staff are just great people.”



Daryl Wasano
Registration Volunteer
Joined Auxiliary 2019

“I was doing physical therapy at TCMC’s (former) Wellness Center and was told that if I volunteered, I’d get a discount. Although I started out with dubious intentions, I found I enjoyed who I was volunteering with and ended up staying. I LOVE OUR VOLUNTEERS!”



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CELEBRATING VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION MONTH

Don Dupuis
Registration Volunteer
Joined Auxiliary 1990
Has served 9,200 hours over the past 34 years as a TCMC volunteer!

"I joined the Auxiliary just to get the heck outta the house – just kidding! Honestly, I love the comradery, the organization and the people. I get free meals for volunteering over 25 years here at TCMC. And I also get my exercise here at the hospital. I walk 10-12 miles a month. Pretty good for an (almost) 90-year-old!"



Nate Cobb
Registration Volunteer
Joined Auxiliary 2022

"In June 2021 my wife of 60 years passed unexpectedly. To get through that (I knew) I needed to get out of the house and be around people. It feels good to volunteer. Especially here (at TCMC). I enjoy doing things with people and for people."



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