

# The Volunteer Spotlight

for volunteers, supporters and friends of Family Tree

Fall/Winter 2008

*A note  
from  
the  
director:*

## Gold Medal Volunteers Go The Extra Mile!

Like most of the rest of the world, I was glued to my television for a couple of weeks last month - mesmerized by the magic and majesty of the Summer Olympics. I couldn't pull myself away from it, even when they were showing sports in which I have very little to zero interest. The grandeur of the Opening Ceremonies, the excitement and hope that each and every athlete brought to their competitions, the dedication each athlete - despite their odds at winning - brought to their performances, and the tears of joy with winning or the tears of agony with losing ... all of it kept me on the edge of my seat and glued to the TV until the wee hours of the morning.

To my knowledge, none of our incredible volunteers are Olympic athletes. But as I watched the games, I was constantly reminded of all of you. When Liu Xiang, the phenomenal Chinese track superstar who everyone knew would easily win his hurdle events, had to pull out of competition due to an injured leg, I was reminded of BJ, our tremendous Admin volunteer who insisted on coming to work even though she was dealing with incredible pain from a pinched nerve in her back. And when I watched the American women's gymnastics team struggle through event after event in the team competition to ultimately win the silver medal - and to see two members of the team go on to win multiple gold medals in the individual events, I couldn't help but think of all of our amazing volunteers who commit to twenty hours of Domestic Violence training as a group or team, and then go on to work through emotionally difficult circumstances in our DV programs, only to come out a changed person and amazing individual volunteers.

Just as Olympic athletes are everyday people from all walks of life who go that extra mile to achieve greatness - so are our volunteers. Each and every day you step away from your own needs and desires to go that extra mile and give a little of yourselves to those who are unable to meet their own needs - at least temporarily.

It's exactly that dedication and commitment that make a regular guy who lives down the street from you an Olympic champion. And it's what makes you -- a regular person who has chosen to make a difference in your own community -- the best volunteer force I have ever worked with.

Thank you for going the extra mile ... for giving of your time and energies ... for changing people's lives with your love and kindness. I'm humbled by your selflessness and generosity. And I'm blessed to know and work with you!



Sean Wolfe  
Director of Volunteer Services



Sean Wolfe, Director of  
Volunteer Services, with  
volunteer Carol Labenz.

# DOVIA We Count On You Awards

## Three Volunteers Honored

Denver DOVIA (Directors Of Volunteers In Agencies) is a Denver Metro organization of non-profit volunteer management professionals which provides education and networking opportunities for its member agencies. Family Tree is a DOVIA member, and Sean Wolfe, Family Tree's Director of Volunteer Services, serves on its Board of Directors.

Every year, Denver DOVIA holds its annual We Count On You (WCOY) Awards. This year's awards ceremony will take place at the Arvada Center on Tuesday, September 16, from 11:30 - 1:00 PM.

This event recognizes special volunteers and volunteer managers among the member agencies. The award categories are: Individual volunteer, Youth Volunteer, Volunteer Group, Board Member, Corporate Volunteer, and Volunteer Manager. This year, Family Tree has three amazing volunteers who have been nominated for the outstanding volunteer awards.

Riley Carney is nominated for Outstanding Youth volunteer. Riley created a unique learning and literacy center for the kids at Women In Crisis shelter. Rose Rivera and Nan Fullerton are being nominated for the Outstanding Individual Volunteer. Rose serves as Women's Advocate at Women In Crisis, and Nan volunteers as the House Manager at House of Hope.

All three volunteers have demonstrated an incredible spirit of going "the extra mile" and have contributed a great deal to helping people become safe, strong and self-reliant. Congratulations to Riley, Rose and Nan. You guys ROCK!!

*Photos (top - bottom) - Riley Carney, Rose Rivera and Nan Fullerton.*



## "1 in 5 Americans Go The Extra Mile"

How many times have we heard - or even said, sometimes - that we just don't have the time to volunteer? I know I've been guilty of saying that, and I have worked in the non-profit and volunteer management fields for the past 16 years.

The good news is that although we hear that quite often, the reality is that people all across the country actually do have the time to volunteer, and they make volunteering a priority in their lives.

Nearly 61 million Americans volunteered in their communities in 2007, giving 8.1 billion hours of service worth more than \$158 billion to America's communities, according to the Volunteering in America report released by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Isn't that staggering? With the realities of outrageous gas and grocery prices, and preoccupation with the scary economy, it's mind-boggling to realize that volunteers contributed more than \$150 BILLION dollars to our communities and economies.

### *Other Key Findings:*

~ Intensive volunteering is on the rise: The percentage of volunteers giving over 100 hours of service per year reached its highest level since 2002, with 35.6 percent of all volunteers contributing at this "intensive" level.

- ~ College towns are hot spots for volunteering: College towns are home to students with strong volunteer habits and many highly educated adults.
- ~ Women volunteer more than men, and working mothers have the highest volunteer rate. About 29.3 percent of women volunteered in 2007, compared to 22.9 percent of men. Women with children and women who work have higher volunteer rates than other women.

"At home and abroad, in our big cities and small towns, every day millions of Americans are making a difference through volunteering. The American spirit of compassion is strong and vibrant across our nation," said Alison Young, Deputy Director of USA Freedom Corps at the White House. "Americans are continuing to answer the call to service, and their compassion is bringing hope and help to communities across America."

THANK YOU for going above and beyond in all that you do in your volunteer efforts at Family Tree. You're amazing, and we are making huge differences in people's lives, thanks to you!

*Parts of this article excerpted from:  
[http://www.volunteeringinamerica.gov/press/press\\_releases.cfm](http://www.volunteeringinamerica.gov/press/press_releases.cfm).*



# Volunteer Spotlight

## BJ Johnson

At the spry young age of 82, when many people are at least thinking about slowing down and enjoying a gentler pace of life, BJ Johnson sees life just a little differently. BJ has been volunteering in the Admin department at Family Tree every Friday for the past five years.

She does anything and everything asked of her, but her main activity is serving as Community Service Coordinator. She does the intake process with the community service workers, explaining our policies and procedures, going over confidentiality regulations, and explaining their duties and expectations. Not everyone is thrilled about being given community service hours to do, and so sometimes not everyone has a smile on their face when they come into our offices. But after speaking with BJ, 9 out of 10 of them walk out the door with one.

BJ is the epitome of her Leo zodiac sign: confident, ambitious, generous, loyal and encouraging. "I admire the dedication and caring of everyone I've worked with over the past five years," BJ says. "Just being part of such a great organization does more for me than I could ever do for it. It's rewarding to feel that my help makes a difference."

Family is important to BJ, and she often brings in pictures and stories of her visits with her family. Though she is a fifth generation Colorado native (and Wheat Ridge High School graduate), her travel agenda is extensive. "My favorite vacation was when I spent six weeks in Spain and some surrounding countries when my daughter and son-in-law lived there," she says.



*BJ at the age of 82, never misses a step.*

BJ's biggest goal is "to stay healthy, happy and independent." With her boundless energy and ever-present smile, it's hard to imagine that goal won't be met. When BJ puts her mind to something, it gets done.

When asked if she had a favorite quote or a motto to live by, BJ displayed that mischievous little smile of hers and said, "Try to maintain a sense of humor under all circumstances."

THANK YOU, BJ, for all you've done to help our families in need over the past five years, and for making Fridays our favorite day of the week to come to work at Admin!

## Family Tree Welcomes New Managing Director

We are pleased to announce that Mike Pritchard joined Family Tree as our Managing Director of Gifts and Community Support in early August. Mike comes to Family Tree with seven years of nonprofit development experience with Mile High United Way, Habitat for Humanity of Metro Denver, and the Rocky Mountain Multiple Sclerosis Center. At United Way Mike worked with Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper on Denver's Road Home, so he has an understanding of the issues homeless families face in the metro Denver area.



Mike Pritchard, new GCS Managing Director.

"I'm really excited to work with Family Tree because of our programs and the great team of employees and volunteers that help people overcome child abuse, domestic violence and homelessness each and every day," Mike says. "I'm looking forward to getting to know you and hope to see you sometime soon when you are volunteering with one of our programs or in the Administration building."

Welcome Mike!



## Welcome to Volunteer Movers & Shakers!

Since May, we've had 32 new volunteers come on board with Family Tree! Welcome to all of our new volunteers. We're so glad to have you on board with us. You're in for a thrilling and rewarding experience!

The following volunteers have transitioned to join the Family Tree staff since May:

- Lindsay Elkins, Karlis Family Center
- Alyson Grunder, Women In Crisis
- Morgan Rogliano, Gemini
- Sheryl Strubbs, Housing & Family Services
- Bonnie Vann, Women In Crisis

Congratulations, and welcome aboard!

A special thanks to Sundyne Corporation for printing this newsletter. We really appreciate it.



## Family Tree Volunteer Trainings - 2009

Month	Date	Time	Training Class
<b>January</b>	Tue. 13	6:00 - 9:00 PM	Homelessness 101
<b>February</b>	Sat. 7	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM	DV 101
	Thur. 12	6:00 - 9:30 PM	DV - Special Populations
	Sat. 14	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM	DV - Effects on Children/Perpetrator Tx
	Thur. 19	6:00 - 9:30 PM	DV - De-escalation Skills/Trauma
	Thur. 26	6:00 - 9:30 PM	DV - Legal Panel
<b>March</b>	Wed. 12	6:00 - 9:00 PM	At-Risk Youth - Class 1: Abuse & Neglect
	Wed. 19	6:00 - 9:00 PM	At-Risk Youth - Class 2: Runaway & Throwaway
<b>April</b>	Mon. 20	6:00 - 9:00 PM	Homelessness 101
<b>May</b>	Sat. 9	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM	DV 101
	Tue. 12	6:00 - 9:30 PM	DV - Special Populations
	Sat. 16	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM	DV - Effects on Children/Perpetrator Tx
	Tue. 19	6:00 - 9:30 PM	DV - De-escalation Skills/Trauma
	Tue. 26	6:00 - 9:30 PM	DV - Legal Panel
<b>June</b>	Tue. 2	6:00 - 9:00 PM	At-Risk Youth - Class 1: Abuse & Neglect
	Tue. 9	6:00 - 9:00 PM	At-Risk Youth - Class 2: Runaway & Throwaway
<b>July</b>	Tue. 14	6:00 - 9:00 PM	Homelessness 101
<b>August</b>	Sat. 8	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM	DV 101
	Wed. 12	6:00 - 9:30 PM	DV - Special Populations
	Sat. 15	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM	DV - Effects on Children/Perpetrator Tx
	Wed. 19	6:00 - 9:30 PM	DV - De-escalation Skills/Trauma
	Wed. 26	6:00 - 9:30 PM	DV - Legal Panel
<b>September</b>	Tue. 15	6:00 - 9:00 PM	At-Risk Youth - Class 1: Abuse & Neglect
	Tue. 22	6:00 - 9:00 PM	At-Risk Youth - Class 2: Runaway & Throwaway
<b>October</b>	Thur. 14	6:00 - 9:00 PM	Homelessness 101
<b>November</b>	Sat. 7	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM	DV 101
	Thur. 12	6:00 - 9:30 PM	DV - Special Populations
	Sat. 14	9:00 AM - 1:00 PM	DV - Effects on Children/Perpetrator Tx
	Tue. 17	6:00 - 9:30 PM	DV - De-escalation Skills/Trauma
	Thur. 19	6:00 - 9:30 PM	DV - Legal Panel
<b>December</b>	Wed. 9	6:00 - 9:00 PM	At-Risk Youth - Class 1: Abuse & Neglect
	Wed. 16	6:00 - 9:00 PM	At-Risk Youth - Class 2: Runaway & Throwaway

*Dates and times are subject to change. Please watch for emails for upcoming trainings. Volunteer Orientations are still the last Saturday of every month, from 10 AM - 4 PM.*

# What "Extra Mile"?



My name is Marian Katz, and I volunteer on the crisis line in Family Tree Homelessness Services Program in our main admin offices. I've been volunteering with Family Tree since 2001, and every time is a new experience for me.

As with most volunteer opportunities, my time here has been a mixture of good and not-so-good experiences. The best and most exciting things are when we are able to refer families to resources to help them -- whether that be rental or utilities assistance, shelter or temporary housing. The dark side (not-so-good experiences) to all of this is witnessing the overwhelming numbers of families still needing to seek assistance, and seeing our resources stretched beyond the max.

**"When people need help. . . there's no option but to jump in and do my part."**

*~Marian Katz  
Family Tree Volunteer*

I very much enjoy volunteering at Family Tree, and everyone in the Homelessness Services program has been incredibly supportive of my work there. I shrug it off when people talk about me "going the extra mile" or doing "above and beyond" what is asked of me. For me, there isn't really a choice. When people need help, and I have time on my hands, then there's no option but to jump in and do my part. And I know that all of the other volunteers at Family Tree feel the same way.



Volunteer Opportunities

**Visit**

**[www.thefamilytree.org](http://www.thefamilytree.org)**

safe, strong, self-reliant

Stories

Jobs

Photos



Visit us at [www.thefamilytree.org](http://www.thefamilytree.org)

*The mission of Family Tree is to help people overcome child abuse, domestic violence and homelessness to become safe, strong and self-reliant.*

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