

## Q&A With Dedicated UA Cares Volunteers

University Communications  
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Since UA Cares – the University of Arizona's annual giving campaign – began in early October, employees have clocked in more than 400 volunteer hours and pledged \$175,723 online.

Although the official campaign ended Nov. 22, there are a variety of volunteer opportunities coming up for employees who want to continue their involvement.

Campus Health employees **Amy Jackson**, medical administrative assistant, **Margaret Sifford**, office supervisor, and **Monica Johns**, office specialist, have been involved in the UA Cares campaign for a combined 19 years, donating time to nonprofit organizations and programs, such as Casa Maria Soup Kitchen and the UA Campus Pantry, which provides meals to those in need.

Jackson, Sifford and Johns recently invited UA employees to make brown-bag lunches for Casa Maria.

"We want the opportunities to be year-round, not just during the particular dates of the giving campaign," said Jackson, who has been involved for five years.

Lo Que Pasa spoke with Jackson, Sifford and Johns about their history of service and their plans for volunteering in the coming year.

### **Q: Why did you first get involved with UA Cares?**

**Johns:** When I was a new employee I did not want to be sequestered in my department. I wanted to know more people. I also think it's really important for people to give back to the community. I enjoy working with other departments and getting to know other people. It's created a good bond between all of us involved, and we are doing something really great.

**Sifford:** I got involved when the director of Campus Health thought I might be interested in helping the community – and I was. I've been involved since 2004. Volunteering is certainly a big part of who I am and how I live my life.

### **Q: What motivates you to volunteer?**

**Jackson:** It makes you feel good and it makes you happy. The overwhelming joy and excitement that we're doing something for someone else is impactful. Sometimes it can bring tears to your eyes, especially when you are doing something hands-on.

**Sifford:** I think all of us have had times in our lives where we have needed help from other people, so it's kind of like paying it back – or rather, paying it forward. I feel like it's important to put out that good energy.

### **Q: In what ways have you seen UA Cares impact the Tucson community?**

**Johns:** One example is an event we did last year. We didn't know how it was going to affect us until we got there. It was at the Tucson Unified School District clothing bank, which is for anyone with a student in TUSD. The goal was to provide clothing, such as prom dresses, accessories and other clothing, for kids of all ages. It was so touching to volunteer there because the people were so gracious.

**Sifford:** We have done so much with food drives for the Community Food Bank and the UA Campus Pantry. We've donated hundreds of cans of food.

### **Q: What do you want people to know about UA Cares?**

**Jackson:** It's definitely fun and helps build relationships. And the responses from people when you help them are so great. People are so grateful to receive any donations.

**Johns:** It's pretty neat that all you have to do is take \$5 out of your paycheck. You think that you would notice it but you really don't. I have two kids and both were involved with different things, so I would donate \$2.50 for one organization and \$2.50 for another each month. It's only \$10 dollars a month, but it really adds up because no donation is too small.

**Sifford:** I think a lot of people think it takes a lot of time and work, but it doesn't. All it takes is supporting what other people are already doing for you. Whether it is contributing to a burrito breakfast or filling out your slip to donate a few dollars every pay period, it's easy to be involved. The contribution can be very small yet it makes an impact. It's amazing that we can come together and do really great things.

For more information regarding participation and payroll deduction, visit <http://uacares.arizona.edu/content/ways-give>

[1]. For help with other questions, contact Sheila McGinnis at 520-626-4671 or [smcginnis@email.arizona.edu](mailto:smcginnis@email.arizona.edu) [2].

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