

# Featured Volunteer

**Janna Gallery: “It’s fun to see the children grow and become better students.”**

*Article written by Brian Mozey, Cooper High School student*

## **What were the reasons you decided to volunteer?**

In 2006, my daughter was killed in a car accident and I wanted to give back in her memory by volunteering in the district.

## **Where do you volunteer? Which grade levels do you assist?**

I’ve been volunteering as a tutor at Meadow Lake Elementary School since March 2009. I assist in a second grade classroom.

## **What do you do as a volunteer?**

I follow the teacher’s directions and perform miscellaneous tasks for her. Grading papers, assisting particular students in specific subjects are just a few things that I do while volunteering.

## **How do you connect with the students you assist? How do you build a relationship with them while you are volunteering?**

It’s not hard to develop a relationship with the students as long as you put a smile on your face and make a comfortable environment for them. Connecting to the students personal interests is another great way to create a better learning environment.

## **What do you enjoy most about your experience?**

The individuality of each student is the best part as well as being able to see the teacher every week. Each year, the students change and it’s fun to see their individual strengths and continue to build from them.

## **What advice would you give to new volunteers?**

I would tell the new volunteers that patience is a virtue. Sometimes elementary students can be a little rowdy but being patient can make your experience better. I would also tell them to enjoy their time at the school because every day is different.



## **What impact has volunteering had on your life?**

I’ve been volunteering off and on for what seems like forever, but it’s been so much fun. Since my own children are getting older, I enjoy being around and helping younger children because they speak their minds and aren’t guarded. It’s also fun to see the children grow every year and become better students throughout their education.

## **What impact do you see that volunteering has on the students and staff in the school?**

It seems like the students and staff appreciate the volunteers who come and help. When students pass their tests or reach one of their goals, they come to you and show how grateful they are for your help which always brightens up your day and makes you feel more welcomed.

## **What is the school environment like? What is it like to be in a classroom today?**

The class size is much smaller compared to my school years. Instead of 32 students, there are 21 students. It’s interesting to see the individual characteristics of student in every class.

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**How does your company promote your volunteer work? What does it mean to you to work for a company that embraces community service?**

The company I work at, Century Link, donates \$500 to the VIP program if I reach 40 hours of volunteering within a six month time frame. I really appreciate a company that values volunteering and is willing to donate to a great program like VIP.

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**About the Volunteer...**

**...from the teacher**

"I am so grateful that she takes time out of her day to give back to the students here at Meadow Lake. She is always willing to help out wherever needed. Janna's helping a couple hours a week makes a tremendous difference. Thank you, Janna!"

**...from the students**

"She helps me with math and listens to me read."

"She's nice and always smiles."

"I like when she comes. She tests me on my words."

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**The heart of a volunteer is not measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others.**  
*DeAnn Hollis*

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