

**AHVRP Member Spotlight  
August, 2017**



Kristy Fidler, CAVS  
Director Volunteer Services  
Charleston Area Medical Center  
Charleston, WV

**How many beds does your facility have?**  
838

**How many volunteers does your facility have?**  
330

**How many direct reports do you have?**  
2

**Tell us why you got into healthcare volunteer resource management.**

Twenty years ago I envisioned a much different career path for myself. However, 4 years at our state's largest university soon gave me more than just a bachelor's degree in psychology, it also taught me as a young adult what really matters in life.

As I transitioned from college into my professional life, I was fortunate to have doors open in a variety of non-for-profit positions that gave me experience in working with volunteers. A few of those experiences included our state extension program, our local YMCA and the American Cancer Society. Along the way, I was at a meeting of state volunteer leaders when I met the DVS of Charleston Area Medical Center (CAMC). As she described her job, I thought "Wow! I want to do that." A few years passed and again life was prodding me to make a change. At that time, you still opened a newspaper to look for jobs. On a day that I was so ready for a change, I opened the newspaper and (cue the sunbeams and music) there it was a full ad with seeking candidates for a DVS for CAMC. My experience had continued to build in the time since I had met the previous DVS

so, nearly 4 months and 3 interviews later...the job was offered to me. Eight years later, I am still so grateful for the path God has shown me- even if it wasn't what I had in mind.

**What is your most successful program and why?**

I consider our VIP (Volunteers Interacting with Patients Program) to be one of our most successful. The program is implemented in 3 of our 4 hospitals. It has been in place for approximately 6 years and was one of the first grant funded programs that became fully implemented and funded by our hospital. Over the last 2-3 years, we have consistently averaged more than 1,100 patient encounters a month. That is a fantastic number, but what is more meaningful is when you are rounding with patients and they tell you about the wonderful visit they had with a volunteer. That is the moment you realize the direct impact that the work of our volunteers has on the life of someone who might otherwise not have someone to visit or talk with them.

**Any words of wisdom would you would like to share with someone considering this profession?**

I think there is a certain stigma that goes with our profession. Perhaps one that we must have an easy job. I certainly love my job, but it is most certainly not easy. This job allows me to build and grow relationships. Sometimes that requires the greatest skills of all- tact, diplomacy and being able to listen. It allows me to use a blend of my creative side and my analytical side. I haven't decided what the best type of degree is to have to do this job because I believe there are many skills you need, but I have figured out that the greatest quality one must have is love for people and some days- that can be a very hard job.