



DWC's Superstar Volunteer: Barbara Petersmeyer

Although Barbara Petersmeyer is a superstar for an endless number of reasons, her work at the Downtown Women's Center is what makes her an exemplary volunteer. For the past 2 ½ years, she has held weekly positions at DWC, ranging from the kitchen to donation sorting. As a sorter, she genuinely cares that our participants get to “shop” for donations that are in top condition and spends hours sifting through dozens of bins to ensure the best “shopping” experience for our women. When she noticed we were missing larger bins to help organize the donations, she offered to purchase them herself!

In addition, she enjoys getting to know not only the staff and other volunteers, but also learning from our peer leaders, women with lived homelessness experience. In her role, she provides practical feedback about ways to improve DWC and consistently goes beyond what is needed for her shift. For example, she once immediately took donations we couldn't use to another agency who would utilize them. That sense of initiative is what DWC looks for in a volunteer.

Besides her weekly shifts, she's helped multiple times with larger events, such as the annual Homeless Count, our fundraisers/appeals, and holiday events, where she brings friends and family to cultivate new relationships with DWC. As part of the first group of Volunteer Ambassadors at DWC, we are forever grateful to Barbara and everything she does for us and our participants on a daily basis.