

LOCAL

VOLUNTEERING

COMMUNITY STAR | MEET SOMEONE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Nurturing young mothers

STAR STATS

The volunteer: Carol Burrow
The community: Dallas
The organization: Alley's House, www.alleyshouse.org

Carol Burrow loves new challenges, especially when it involves helping those in need succeed.

The Dallas resident and mother of three girls recently took another young woman under her wing. She's been mentoring a teenage mother, Sarah Nash, for about a year through Alley's House, a nonprofit organization that helps teen mothers achieve their dreams.

Alley's House: Once an at-risk teenager herself, Allison Whitehead, executive director of the organization, said she grew up wanting to work with teenagers. While working on her undergraduate degree in social work from the University of Texas at Arlington, Whitehead had to formulate a plan for a social program, and her final project soon turned into an organization that has continued to grow over 13 years.

"I had done some research working with teen moms, a cause that was near and dear to me. So I evolved from working with at-risk teens to working with teen moms," she said.

Whitehead said a majority of the teen mothers her group mentors are interested in earning a GED so they can enroll in college. "We have a series of workshops that are



FROM LEFT: Carol Burrow has been mentoring Sarah Nash through Allison Whitehead's nonprofit group.

designed to help them learn the skills that they need to become independent, self-sufficient."

Not so different: Burrow was a single working mother with three girls before she retired from Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas in 1998.

"They were 4, 6 and 8 when I became single, and I had never worked a day in my life, nor intended to, and suddenly here we were," she said. "I do not believe I would have been able to do what I do today ... I never finished college."

Burrow finally settled on a job in health care after trying

to find the right fit. "My love had always been medicine and my volunteerism had always been in hospitals."

She said after volunteering at Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas, she became a foundation director for 14 years until her retirement.

The perfect mentee: "Sarah is determined, she knows what she wants, and her children are absolutely first," Burrow said. "I think the common sense that Sarah has is many years beyond 18. I keep looking for a role model in Sarah's family, and there isn't one. It's Sarah. She's the role model for the

whole family."

Burrow said she continues volunteering at Alley's House because of Nash. "They asked me what wouldn't I do, and I said I would find it hard to be with someone who wasn't committed to succeed."

Succeeding is exactly what Nash is committed to doing, with just one month until she receives her GED.

"You have to have the aspiration, you have to really want something and go for it," Nash said. "I don't like starting something and quitting; I've done enough of that in my life, and now it's time to finish something."

A typical day: When Burrow and Nash spend time together, it isn't a typical one-on-one meeting. The two go to the movies, shop and experience new activities together.

"We went to see the U.S. troops off at D/FW [Airport]," Burrow said. "It was very moving. I think that's one of the neatest things we've done."

She said her best experience with Nash was when the young woman shared some of her poetry with her.

"She writes beautifully, and it's from the heart," Burrow said.

Why volunteer? Burrow said she will always be involved in volunteer work in some way. "I really like working one-on-one and I like to be able to see the impact that an organization is having on someone's life," she said. "I've had many volunteer jobs, and what I discovered is I like to learn; I like new things."

Stephanie Daniels

LEND A HAND

1 Assisting seniors: The Geriatric Wellness Center of Collin County, which helps older adults in Collin County achieve physical, mental and spiritual well-being, seeks volunteers to provide nonmedical assistance to frail seniors post-hospitalization. Minimum age to volunteer: 21.
Time: Ongoing
Volunteers needed: Unlimited
Location: Collin County
Contact: Ramona Ramazani, 972-941-7335, ramona.ramazani@gwccc.org; www.gwccc.org

2 Event assistance: The Latino Cultural Center, which serves as a regional catalyst for the preservation, development and promotion of Latino and Hispanic arts and culture, seeks volunteers to assist with Target Second Saturdays, a free family event filled with arts and crafts, dance lessons, movie screenings, theater productions, story time, gallery tours and more. Min. age: 18.
Time: 11 a.m.-4 p.m., second Saturday of each month
Volunteers needed: 30
Location: Dallas (75204)
Contact: Noe Ortiz, 214-671-0051, manuel.ortez@dallascityhall.com; dallasculture.org/; latinoculturalcenter.org/

3 Weekly grocery shopping: Legacy Founders Cottage, which provides comfort and care to individuals critically ill because of conditions related to AIDS, seeks volunteers to pick up required items for the cottage. Min. age: 18.
Time: Every Friday
Volunteers needed: 1
Location: Dallas (75208)
Contact: Emily Graves, 214-941-7373, emily@legacycounseling.org; www.legacycounseling.org/founders-cottage



The Volunteer Center of North Texas receives thousands of volunteer opportunities from more than 1,400 area nonprofit groups. For more information, visit www.vcnt.org.

4 Auditor needed: Soul's Harbor Homeless Shelter, which helps men help themselves and break the cycle of homelessness, seeks a volunteer to audit the organization's financial statements. Min. age: 21.
Time: Ongoing
Volunteers needed: 1
Location: Dallas (75253)
Contact: Brent Burmaster, 972-286-1940, souls.harbor.dallas@gmail.com; www.soulsharbor.org

5 Conducting research: Recovery First Community Development Center, which develops people in the community in recovery, seeks volunteers to conduct research for grants, sponsors and locations for the Life Learning Program to have classes. Min. age: 25+.
Time: Ongoing, Monday through Thursday
Volunteers needed: 1-2
Location: Fort Worth (76112)
Contact: Deborah Davis, 972-835-2626, recoveryfirst@yahoo.com; www.recoveryfirstcdc.com

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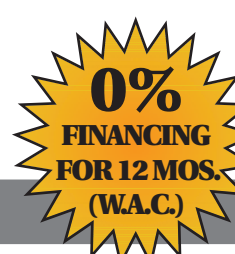
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