



S.T.E.P. NEWS

Community Achievement Award

Getting Involved in Community Activities

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SCQF COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Vonnie Wright takes part in a brand new pilot scheme which will give volunteers at The Marie Trust a recognised qualification for the vital work they do at the centre.

Vonnie has been volunteering as a Café Assistant since March 2014 and will gain a Community Achievement Award (CAA) SCQF Level 5 for her volunteering work. The centre's Skills Development, Training and Employability Project (STEP) are working alongside Glasgow Kelvin College to deliver the qualification. Vonnie is the 5th person to undertake the award at the centre

And their Peer Employment Programme (PEP) – whose

motto is Learning, Developing and Participating - offers volunteering opportunities to people who are affected by homelessness, addiction, mental health or offending backgrounds.

"I have been volunteering for a year now at The Marie Trust in the Café Service serving people who come into the centre for something to eat. When I first applied I was so nervous, I didn't think I would get it and when I got my letter saying I was accepted I could not believe it. -I got the letter on my birthday so it made my day I kept my letter. I was so pleased I felt I needed a break and to do something new with my time and get me out of the house. I felt it was time for me to focus on myself for a change, whilst helping other people."



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WHAT IS IT? THE CAA EXPLAINED

The CAA means that people volunteering get recognition for the work that they are carrying out in their community.

They are designed to support, recognize and accredit learning and achievement in a community setting.

It allows people to get involved in assisting in the delivery or development of community activities.

It is self directed learning allowing participants to design their own learning by designing personal milestones and achievements

while working in a community setting. Volunteers are supported by Community Learning and Development Workers from Glasgow Kelvin College and The Marie Trust

There are four levels: SCQF 4,5,6, and 7.

VONNIE'S JOURNEY

"I have raised kids and worked all of my life, and for the most of it I have never put myself first."

"When you have kids its never about you-you are always to focused on helping them that you neglect yourself and forget about what you want to do. They are grown up now and I feel its time for me to do something which makes me happy and gives me something to look forward to."

"I used to work as a painter and decorator and was self employed for years.-I'm a really practical person and can turn my hand to anything. I used to decorate nursing and residential homes and love talking to the residents, having a laugh with them and making sure they were alright. I missed them when I left."

"The last time I worked was volunteering with Shettleston Housing Association and I worked 3 days a week with the elderly in sheltered housing, I loved it. I used to take people out to Loch Lomond and to Fife, we took them everywhere. We even took them to see the Riverdance!"

"I'm good with people and will talk to anybody. I know what it feels like to be isolated and this brought me to volunteer at the center. I take everybody as they are and try to make the café a welcoming place. I make sure I smile at everyone and give them a warm welcome as that's the things which make people feel better, especially when they are really down and life is hard for them."

"It's brilliant working here at the centre- you feel

better about yourself. You think life is hard until you have been in here and then you see that there are people a lot worse off than you."

"When I'm working in the café and see that the food is running out, we will be phoning down to the kitchen asking if they have anything at all, I hate seeing people going without food. I always try and make sure people get fed. they need nourishment and it might be the only meal they have that day so its important that we help them and make sure there is something to eat when they come in. ' A little bit of difference goes a long way!"

"Volunteering here makes me want to get out of the house and help people., I would work in here every day of the week for nothing if they let me. I really love it. I work Tuesday mornings with May serving breakfast, and on Wednesday I work the afternoon shift with Annemarie and Monica. That's what's good about here, there is always someone on hand to help in any situation"

"I meet people here who I would normally not meet in the street or not have the opportunity to meet otherwise. I love hearing what people have been up to at the weekends and catching up. I have developed friendships I never thought I would have."

"It has helped me with my own mental health, it's brought me back out of my shell and gave me confidence. I hope to go on and continue to work with older people but I'm not giving up my volunteering here!"



"I have always enjoyed working with people, if there is anything I can do, I will try and help. As long as they want me I will be there"

Greg, Intervention Worker at The Marie Trust says "as a project worker with a number of duties which include responsibility for the canteen. I draw comfort from working alongside Yvonne as I can confidently engage with clients at their tables in the canteen knowing Yvonne is a very competent volunteer behind and in front of the counter with our service users. 'Yvonne is attentive, has a very calming manner, is very respectful and very engaging when in conversation with the people who frequent our service and Yvonne's presence is much appreciated"



Monica, Vonnie and Annemarie work in the café every week.

NEXT STEPS

The aim of the CAA is to allow those who take part the choice to progress further.

This may mean progressing onto a higher level of award, undertaking other forms of education or training or moving into employment.

Vonnie has been working with Frances, Team Leader of the Skills Development Project to plan her next steps and develop her portfolio. The award has helped me think about what I want to do next and also helped me think about what I do in the center. I have absolutely loved doing the award-I think its great. I write everything down what I do in the café and we keep a record of this and it goes in my folder. I have enjoyed doing it as it has led to new things for me which I probably wouldn't have done if I hadn't been involved.

“When I started I didn't know where it would lead me and what I would have achieved by the end of it. I met every week or so with Frances and we talked through the award. We had a chat about what I was interested in and what could help me get back into work. I want to get back to work again in the future but not necessarily painting and decorating but I want to do something which could get me a job and not take too much time. I want to develop skills which could go with the one's which I already had. I have always wanted to do a tiling course, and I think I could do this easily, I know the jist of it and my son

did this when he was younger so

I know what it involves. We did an application online for The City of Glasgow College for the NPA Tiling Course, and I got an interview. When I went for the interview there was me and 6 other young lads, I sailed it! I could not believe it when I got a place for August and am really looking forward to it. It's time for me to focus on myself and do something for me”

“Working with older people has always been something which has stayed with me. I really enjoy older people and hearing their stories. We looked a volunteering and Frances met with Alzheimer's Scotland and told them a bit about me, what I do at the center and my work with older people. They arranged for me to go to an interview. I was really nervous but they were lovely and accepted me as a volunteer-I was delighted. I got registered on the PVG register and have begun my training with them before I go on to volunteer in the day centres. When I went for my training I was a bit nervous about fitting in and then though-no! I have the right to be here ! I had a lot to say about what I have done with my life, my work as a painter and decorator, volunteering with older people and volunteering at The Marie Trust. I think people where really surprised. I was really proud of myself.”

“I've been on my training for Alzheimer's Scotland and did brilliant.. I'm going to volunteer in the their day centre. I cant wait to get started and....I got a place at college!!”

ANNEMARIE'S PROUD OF VONNIE'S ACHIEVEMENTS



Annemarie Morrison is an Intervention Worker at The Marie Trust Intervention Service and has worked with the Marie Trust for over 15years. Part of Annemarie's role is to oversee the Café Service making sure the volunteers are supported. Annemarie says “Vonnie is really good at interacting with service users and has a really cheery manner. I think one of the positives of this is that if a situation where to flare up in the café, she can descale this easily with the way she interacts with people. She has a really down to earth attitude and is really grounded, service users have taken to her really quickly as she is so approachable and friendly, and this makes people feel welcome. Her work practice is second to none; she is very competent-always looking for something to do”



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The Peer Employment Programme

The Peer Employment Project is a Supported Volunteering Service based within the Skills Development, Training and Employability Project which provide opportunities for individuals to volunteer in the center with support from an named mentor. The Project engages with individuals who have experienced mental health and addiction issues with the aim of reducing offending behavior and preventing repeated homelessness and supports them to plan their next steps into education, employment, volunteering or training and widening access to mainstream services and reconnecting individuals with services within their communities. Employability has been cited as one of the main factors in the prevention and alleviation of homelessness, enabling individuals to develop their identity, promote self esteem and confidence, remove labeling and stigma which certain sections of society experience, and provide a route out of homelessness.

“Yvonne is attentive, has a very calming manner, is very respectful and very engaging when in conversation with the people who frequent our service,” Greg, Intervention Worker

What people are saying about Vonnie.....



A word from the Sandy, “Vonnies has been an extremely valuable member of our volunteering team and her efforts have been greatly appreciated by myself as Director of the Marie Trust.”

“I have worked alongside Vonnie on several occasions and find her enthusiasm and genuine regard for service users to be exemplary. Her friendly and warm manner shines.” Alan, Intervention Worker

“Vonnies is a very caring, funny, lovely girl to work with.” Sharon, Café Volunteer

“Vonnies has brought a lot of smiles to people’s faces. When she is serving in the café she is always friendly, kind and helpful, even when she isn’t feeling at her best. She genuinely cares about people and always puts in maximum effort. Well done Vonnie and keep on smiling.” Catherine, Fundraiser

“Vonnies is cheerful and very much a people person.” Pat, Kitchen Volunteer

“Vonnies is helpful, Funny and listens” Sid, Service User

“Vonnies is a really good character who is hardworking and a lovely person.” Karen, Marie Trust Cook

“Vonnies is always so bright and colourful. She stands out in the crowd” Maureen, Café Volunteer

Team Leader of the Skills Development, Training and Employability Project, Frances McKinlay, is delighted with Vonnie’s contribution and progress. Frances, who has been with The Marie Trust for over nine years, said: “Vonnies has made a vast contribution to the café service at the day centre. She has welcomed people in from the streets on cold mornings and greeted them with a friendly smile and made sure that people in need got something to eat. She goes out of her way to make sure that people who

are destitute get access to services at the centre and will call on staff to ask for permission to give service users meals out of the discretionary fund if she knows someone is in need and is not afraid to ask for help. Her attendance has been great and she does not let the day centre down but will often offer to cover more shifts if the centre is short staffed—she has been an absolute joy to work with and should be really proud of herself for what she has achieved.-we are!”



A delighted Frances