

Volunteer spotlight

Heath Allen

Volunteer for **20 years**

Children's Hospital New Orleans



My favorite memory volunteering

For many years, I would take one of my daughters and go to Children's Hospital (CHNOLA) on Christmas morning. We would join Santa Claus (Ernest Pettigrew) and go room to room. Santa would deliver a toy to the kids, and we would sing a Christmas carol and visit with the family. So many groups generously donate time and toys to Children's Hospital leading up to Christmas, but on Christmas morning, it's generally very quiet. It was a great opportunity to share a little love and holiday cheer with kids, families, and staffers. I cherish those Christmas mornings.

My inspiration to volunteer

Working at WDSU-TV, I co-hosted the Children's Miracle Network Telethon with Norman Robinson and Margaret Orr for about 20 years. I did stories with the incredible kids, their families, and the amazing, life-saving doctors, nurses, and staff. One miracle after another. I was hooked. I started helping out in the playroom on 4 West and played music room to room. Somehow, I just never stopped going back and playing music room to room.

My favorite part of volunteering

By far and away, smiles are my favorite part of volunteering. Singing to kids is kind of a roll of the dice. Playing room to room is a very personal encounter, and too often comes at a tough time. So when you can play a song for a child and get a smile or some laughter, it's a win. Kids are so smart and brutally honest. So always remember it ain't about you. By the way, if there's something about "peas" in a song that always gets a smile!



My little something extra

I ran the Dublin (Ireland) Golden Pages Marathon in 1996 with the Leukemia Society "Teams in Training". I survived.

My day job

I play music at nursing homes and assisted living centers. I also coach Miracle League baseball. Disaster relief following hurricanes. And teach Sunday School.

More great volunteers needed!
LCMHealth.org/volunteer



Children's Hospital
New Orleans
LCMC Health