

## Volunteer spotlight

# Mary Ann Francois



Volunteer for 4.5 years

Touro

### **My favorite memory volunteering**

On one occasion, I met a lady whose husband was in the hospital for surgery which was scheduled to last approximately two and a half hours. She spoke very little English, had not eaten and was stressed. We were able to communicate through simple words and hand gestures. She became more relaxed as we chatted until she was informed her husband's surgery was successful.

One of the strategies that I use with people in stressful situations is to talk to them about something which makes them happy and brings joy. In this instance, our guest expressed appreciation for my time and sincere interest. She gave me a big hug and thanked me for being at Touro with her that morning.

### **My inspiration to volunteer**

Two long-time friends encouraged me to volunteer. However, Touro is my family's hospital of choice. My son is a Touro baby! In addition, my husband had a cerebral hemorrhage at an early age. I immediately took him to Touro, where he received outstanding professional care from his neurologists and the entire staff. He is alive today thanks to Touro.

### **My favorite part of volunteering**

I enjoy volunteering because it gives me the opportunity to be of service to others as well as meeting and interacting with people from diverse backgrounds. Volunteering is more than a commitment; it is a blessing to be able to sincerely care for and help people when they need it most.

### **My little something extra**

My hobby is sewing. As a seamstress, I designed and made bridal gowns and bridesmaids dresses. In addition, for many years I designed and constructed costumes for three krewes that paraded with the Zulu club on Mardi Gras day.

### **Why I'm extra-ordinary**

My diverse work experience over the years has been invaluable in interacting with people. I was a regional manager for our local telephone company, responsible for various community relations and regulatory affairs activities. I was also a registered lobbyist for this telecommunications company. As a former business owner, I have extensive experience in teaching employee training & development classes in Customer Service Skills, Effective Telephone Techniques, Team Building and Business Etiquette & Protocol.

I am a Certified Etiquette Consultant and a graduate of the Protocol School of Washington in Washington, DC. I also have experience in teaching American and European dining skills to teens and adults.

### **My day job**

I am retired but serve on three Boards. I presently serve on the FBI New Orleans Citizens Academy Alumni Association, where I am a director. I am on the trustee board of my local church and a board member of the condominium association, where I am editor of the condo newsletter.

**More great volunteers needed!**  
**[LCMHealth.org/volunteer](http://LCMHealth.org/volunteer)**

