

Letter: Recognizing those who volunteer

To the community,

Volunteering is a very special gift given by men, women and youth at Barton Memorial Hospital. Whether it be with their own personal time or a monetary donation, I am constantly humbled by these volunteers' generosity and how greatly they help patients. Some are retired, wanting to stay active with their community, and some are youth volunteers just starting out in the working world to build their knowledge and resume.

April is National Volunteerism month. Volunteering sets a great example and reflects an empowering reason to give back, while offering a variety of health benefits. In a recent study, researchers found evidence that volunteers had lower blood pressure, lower levels of depression, increased life satisfaction, an enhanced well-being and were less likely to get dementia.

Barton is incredibly fortunate to have a dedicated team of volunteers working across many different departments. The community might not be aware of how many interactions with volunteers they may have from the moment they walk through our doors.

See those smiling faces at the information front desk? They are volunteers. Those friendly folks that will sit with you in the emergency department? Also volunteers. The men and women helping at discounted community wellness Lab days and blood drives? They are volunteers as well. If you were offered a magazine, snack, game or toy from our comfort cart, it was offered by a volunteer. From helping with important fundraising efforts to reading to residents in the Skilled Nursing Facility, the strong work ethic and deep sense of

caring from volunteers at Barton make a tremendous impact with patients and our community as a whole.

As I have gotten to know Barton's volunteers personally, I enjoy learning about their decision to get involved. Many of Barton's volunteers have a personal tie with the hospital and choose to volunteer not just here, but at other non-profit organizations in our community as well. These folks have hearts of gold and I am constantly humbled by their service and selfless giving.

Patti Cobel, guest relations coordinator at Barton Health