

# INSPIRE

## On Leadership

Fall 2016

### The ROI of community involvement

I love Kenosha and my list of reasons why is almost limitless. But near the top is the great leadership ROI I have received during my 36 years of community involvement.

I moved here upon college graduation, but my real education and growth came from working and volunteering alongside the incredible people who built and developed Kenosha.

Through volunteerism and engaging in activities, I've learned about social services, community infrastructure, non-profit funding and human resource challenges, cancer research, marketing and communications, concerns of the minority communities, government operations, the arts and business development.

I've grown. I've networked. I've met people and learned skills from them that I take forward to the next opportunity. I've gained wisdom, sometimes through missteps and over-committing. And I've gotten to know some wonderful people along the way.

I feel Kenosha is the perfect sized community for professionals to become. No, I didn't leave a word

off the end of the sentence. Kenosha is large enough (and growing!) to offer nearly every type of opportunity, yet small enough to need the volunteer or new employee who is just forming their skillset.

Those of us with "mature" professional careers have a different kind of investment opportunity: to encourage others to volunteer. Some of us are so used to saying yes (someone once used the term "helium hand"—love it) that we forget one of the best things we can do is say, "No, but let's see if 'Sarah' can volunteer some time—she has great organizational skills and could lead this".

Encouraging others' talents is a way of communicating confidence in the other individual's potential and giving them the opportunity to help the community while building their skills and knowledge.

Investing time and talents in Kenosha pays great leadership dividends and strengthens the future of our community.

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