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Community Champ Shout-Out – recognizing Florence Agravante-Arcega, a veteran in the volunteer community

Our **Community Champ Shout-Outs** series celebrates those who go above and beyond in giving back to their community.

We've featured two Shout-Outs so far—check out the stories of Carol Lee and Hugh Sharman if you haven't already!

Here's the story of our next Community Shout-Out recipient—an incredibly generous and passionate individual named **Florence Agravante-Arcega**, who works in our Winnipeg office.

A veteran in the volunteer community

Florence, a Federated Insurance Policy Audit and Admin Trainer, has been involved in a long list of volunteering gigs—both through work and in her personal time. She's participated in Team Volunteer Days at Agape Table and Koats 4 Kids, helped with the Relay for Life campaign, and is a regular volunteer with the Christmas Cheer Board. In addition, after the devastation caused by Typhoon Haiyan, Florence helped initiate and organize a fundraising campaign to support the victims in the Philippines. On top of all that, she regularly volunteers at her local church and at Agape Table on weekends!

We spoke with Florence to find out more about what drives her to be so involved in her community, and to hear more about her various volunteering experiences she's had.

Different needs and different experiences

Florence has worked with many different fundraisers and organizations—does she have a favourite? After explaining how each fundraiser or event has a different need and a different impact, she said, "I can't choose a favourite, because they're all so close to my heart."

When volunteering with Agape Table and Koats 4 Kids, she said she's able to see the great need out there—it changes her perspective on life, and drives home how we can share what we have with those who are less fortunate. "Both experiences were very heartwarming," Florence explained. "It encouraged me to speak to my friends and family about how great it is to volunteer on our own time, outside of opportunities at work."

Florence also described how Relay for Life was a great opportunity for her to bond with her co-workers and really feel

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fortunate. "Both experiences were very heartwarming," Florence explained. "It encouraged me to speak to my friends and family about how great it is to volunteer on our own time, outside of opportunities at work."

Florence also described how Relay for Life was a great opportunity for her to bond with her co-workers and really feel like a family within Federated. "It was nice that we got to work together and build that camaraderie as a team—we had an experience as brothers and sisters working together," she explained. It's similar to the Christmas Cheer Board that the Winnipeg office participates in, working together to provide a family with a great Christmas. "It's so worthwhile, because when you knock on the door to deliver the gifts, you see the excitement on their faces and the whole aura changes for the entire family," explained Florence. "It's such a rewarding thing to do and it just fuels us every year."

Inspired to give what she can

We know that Florence is an inspiration for many people around her in the office, so we wanted to know what, in turn, inspires her. She explained that it's not just one thing—it's a combination of many things that have happened in her life. "I think the biggest impact for me was growing up in the Philippines," she said. "Our church helped us when I was young, and we had nothing. Now, volunteering gives me an opportunity to give back what I've been blessed with and, at the same time, use it as a tool to teach my own son important values."

Florence understands that sometimes there may be challenges to volunteering, and that it's easy to get discouraged. "Many people believe that the world is so corrupt and chaotic that there's no use in volunteering because it won't change anything. I know we can't change the world, but we can look at what we have and take a portion of that to give back."

Taking a quick baby break!

Florence is taking a volunteering break right now—she's pregnant!—but is eager to start again. "My goal right now is to take care of my pregnancy, but once it stabilizes, I'll get back on my feet!" said Florence. She plans on walking for the CIBC Run for the Cure in October and really looks forward to the Christmas Cheer Board again, as well as the next Team Volunteer Day!

Thanks for all your commitment and generosity within your community, Florence—you're a true Community Champ!

Do you know a Community Champ who deserves a Shout-Out?

Here's how it works:

- Send your nomination of a fellow employee to Drita Bogic, Manager, Social Responsibility
- If the employee fits the bill, we'll profile them and their efforts through an intranet article
- The employee will also receive a recognition piece that they can pin up on their cube

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