

SERVING

Mom and Daughter Team Up to Serve Together



Jill's House gives Anna (left) and her mom Elaine the chance to serve and care together.

Why do you serve at Jill's House?

Elaine: My parents lived with us for about seven years before they passed away in 2013. As they aged, their care became more and more demanding. We were blessed by their time with us, but there were days when we really needed a break. So the Jill's House mission made a lot of sense to us. I'm happy to help these families who care for their kids day-in and day-out probably for the rest of their lives.

Anna: I like serving at Jill's House because I want to be an occupational therapist. It's given me great hands-on experience working with kids with a wide range of special needs. Jill's House has strengthened my desire to work with this population.

What surprised you about volunteering at Jill's House?

Anna: Before serving at Jill's House, I understood that parents benefit from respite. But it wasn't until I started serving with the kids that I saw the friendships that the kids form at Jill's House. You can tell that the kids are excited to see each other. It's great to see their friendships grow.

Elaine: When I serve at Jill's House, I'm reminded that you can't underestimate these kids. The staff treats each child with a dignity that assumes they are able to do things for themselves. I see many parallels between serving these kids and serving the elderly. As we care for both groups, we need to give them the respect they deserve.

What would you say to someone interested in volunteering at Jill's House?

Elaine: Serving here gives me a healthy dose of perspective. I can see my life and priorities more clearly after I spend time with these kids and remember their parents' loving care for them. It's been really good for me. You'll get a lot more than you give.

Anna: I think it's one of the best things you can do. You can learn so much while you're here and you'll leave happier.

How does serving together affect your volunteer experience?

Elaine: It's nice to have a teenage daughter who wants to do something with you. Jill's House is something we have in common, and serving here has been a healing experience for both of us. We needed something after my parents passed to feel ...

Anna: useful.

Elaine: Right, exactly. It's been good for both of us. Life can be so rushed, but we have this time to slow down and serve together.

To learn more about serving at Jill's House, visit jillshouse.org/serve or email maryrachel.robbins@jillshouse.org.