



Volunteer of the Month: February 2016

Karelis Vieira

As one of our newest Community Partners, Karelis has already proven herself to be a committed and dedicated to WBHI's cause. When she is not helping the women in her community, Karelis is an office manager for Molly Maids. She is pursuing her love of music by studying Music Business at Miami-Dade College. In her free time, Karelis also loves to paint and draw.

Karelis began volunteering with WBHI in the Fall of 2015, after some convincing from a close friend. After her first outreach, Karelis was hooked, and came out every Saturday after that. Knowing she would be able to help fight breast cancer and heart disease was one of the main reasons Karelis decided to be a part of the Community Partner Leadership Program. For Karelis, it was personal because her grandmother died from cancer and she wanted to help educate women on breast cancer and heart diseases from becoming death sentences. "I really enjoy the satisfaction of knowing I'm helping the women we serve and making a difference in their lives."

Being able to make a difference with likeminded people has also been a highlight of Karelis' experience as a volunteer. "I love the comradery between the volunteers, it's a great feeling." She also mentioned how much she's learning about herself from being a Community Partner. The first time Karelis spoke in front of a crowd of volunteers she was extremely nervous. "I practiced word for word what I wanted to say, but the moment I got up there everything I practiced went out the window," she said. To Karelis' surprise, she relied on her instincts to get her through her speech and it turned out better than she could have hoped for. Being a Community Partner has definitely helped Karelis get out of her comfort zone, and help her realize her own potential.

When asked what message she wanted to communicate with potential volunteers, Karelis said "try it at least once, because you will definitely want to come back. It's always a fun time, you get to meet new, incredible people and at the same time you get to make a difference. It's a win, win!"