

# The Volunteer Voice



MONTHLY VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

Volume 5, Issue 3

Senior Editor: Julie Strassman

Associate Editor: Natalie Gemberling

March 2017

## Spring Bling: Women Empowering Women

Spring is right around the corner, and that means it's time for the 5th annual Spring Bling! This event provides an opportunity for our female supporters to come together as women empowering women, while enjoying hors d'oeuvres, drinks, and a silent and live auction. Most of the families we serve are headed by single mothers, so we are extremely devoted to improving the lives of women. Plus, when women's standard of living improves, they pour their additional resources into the well-being of their children and relatives, benefitting their whole family! So come have fun at Spring Bling and help us empower women to achieve economic independence, self-sufficiency, and a path out of poverty! This year's event is Thursday, March 9th from 6 - 9pm at the glamorous Boo Cat Club near the Central West End. Tickets are available online at [kingdomhouse.org](http://kingdomhouse.org).



Attendees of the 2016 Spring Bling enjoy hors d'oeuvres and drinks while mingling and bidding on silent auction items.

### Volunteers, Save the Date!

Mark your calendars for a fun, family-friendly event in honor of Volunteer Appreciation Week

**Thursday, April 27: 5:30 - 7:30pm**

More details to come!



### New Volunteers

- ◇ Jesse Shipley
- ◇ Brian Dugan
- ◇ Rachel Miller
- ◇ Chad Hanson
- ◇ Katherine DiRe
- ◇ Tiesha Gatén
- ◇ Jasmine Jackson
- ◇ Carol Smith
- ◇ Michelle Chu
- ◇ Kassandra Diaz
- ◇ Alyssa Belosi

**Welcome to the Team!**

### March Birthdays

- ◇ Maura Cosgrove
- ◇ Sister Rosemary Dedentro
- ◇ Suzanne Gentry
- ◇ Yvi Martin
- ◇ Kate Steele
- ◇ Sicong Sun
- ◇ McKenzie Telthorst
- ◇ Barb Whitaker

**Happy Birthday!**

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## Volunteer Spotlight - After School Assistant Kelsey Ryan

**What is your occupation?** I'm a food scientist!

**How long have you been volunteering with us, and what keeps you coming back to volunteer at Kingdom House?** I have been volunteering with Kingdom House for about a year and a half. I come back for the kids - I love seeing them each week and watching them grow and develop. I hope in some way I can positively influence their lives, whether by helping with homework, encouraging their academics and extracurricular activities, or just being another adult present who cares about them.

**How did you first hear about/get involved with volunteering at Kingdom House?** I had seen the Kingdom House building near where I work, I had heard about corporate volunteer activities at Kingdom House, and then I also had a friend who had worked with Kingdom House before. So I was familiar with the organization a little bit, and trusted it. When I was looking for a place to commit some of my free time, I was focused on choosing the right place for me. I wanted a place in the city where I could encourage and mentor kids, obviously the future of our community. I thought the best way to do this would be through homework help, tutoring, or teaching, and the Kingdom House After-School program turned out to be a perfect fit! I filled out the application, interviewed, and started as soon as I could!

**How has volunteering at Kingdom House benefited you?** I breathe a sigh of relief every Monday I get to come to Kingdom House after work. As with most volunteer roles, working

with the After School kids probably benefits me more than the kids. When I walk in the door after a busy Monday, I instantly relax, laugh, and focus on the things that really matter. I guess it's a little bit of therapy for me! I'm excited to teach some food science lessons to the kids too - I love to share my nerdy passion for food science with others.

**In your opinion, what is the best thing about the St. Louis metro community?** I love the diversity of the city - the people, the neighborhoods, the places. Most large cities are diverse, but each is special in its own way. I love our unique St. Louis make-up and that we have events to recognize our diversity and celebrate events of many cultures. Also, we try to help each other out - the definition of true community.

**What book/movie inspired you recently and why?** Not too recently, but a few years ago I read a book called "The Blue Sweater" by Jacqueline Novogratz. It is her own story about leaving big banking to give back in the developing world. It was inspirational to hear about what a person with an average background can do to influence change.



### Help Kingdom House Win Brackets for Good!

Kingdom House is competing in the 2nd Annual Brackets for Good St. Louis fundraising tournament. Participating nonprofits are competing to out-fundraise their opponents, earn increased exposure, and have a chance to win \$10,000! The six-round tournament takes place over six weeks, with each of the first four rounds lasting a full week and the semifinal and championship round each lasting three days. Round 1 ends this Friday night at 8 pm. A donation in the amount of \$5 or more will help us move on to Round 2. \$1 = 1 point. The more money we raise, the more lives we can impact, so please donate today!

[Donate at stlouis.bfg.org](http://stlouis.bfg.org)