

Volunteer of the Year – Southeast Wisconsin

Maddie Frohmeier

United Way of Jefferson and North Walworth Counties



As a volunteer driver for Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee County for over four years, Maddie Frohmeier transports seniors to their medical appointments and to local grocery stores, helping them to maintain their health and independence. The lack of public transportation infrastructure in Ozaukee County makes service like hers vital for many senior citizens, as without dependable transportation, seniors may see their health decline as a result of missed medical appointments or experience limited access to adequate nutrition caused by lack of transit to local food pantries or grocery stores.

Maddie routinely gets up in the very early hours on Saturday morning to help one of her clients be at their dialysis treatment by 5:30 a.m., providing these pre-sunrise rides to them on 46 Saturdays in 2022! By driving this individual to his weekly dialysis treatments, Maddie ensured that he could access the medical care he needed to maintain his health.

After helping her initial passenger return home following their appointment, Maddie typically continues her day assisting another client that is an elderly Army veteran with her grocery shopping. By assisting this veteran with her grocery shopping 35 times last year, Maddie played a crucial role in helping her access proper nutrition and maintain an independent lifestyle.



While one could easily quantify the contributions Maddie has made through the number of hours she volunteers, rides she has given, or the number of miles she has driven, the impacts of her service go beyond just providing transportation to her clients. Maddie also provides her clients with a sense of companionship and forged connections with them that helped reduce their feelings of isolation. She focuses on building relationships and fostering social connections with her clients, creating a supportive and friendly environment for her riders that addresses the isolation issues that many homebound seniors face.

Her service has tangible impacts on those receiving rides, as the Army veteran getting help with weekly grocery shopping has seen a significant change in her life since Maddie began providing assistance to her. The two of them have bonded over their shared love of books and puzzles, swapping their favorites and discussing their thoughts. This goes beyond conversations while driving in the car, as she also does in-home visits with the veteran, showing how Maddie fosters genuine connections with her clients that go beyond her service role. This connection helped reduce the veteran's feelings of isolation, as it provided her with a sense of companionship that she might not have experienced otherwise.

When describing what made Maddie's service stand out for recognition, Carissa Barnes from the Ozaukee Nonprofit Center explains that "Maddie Frohmeier demonstrates outstanding passion and commitment to making a difference in her role as a volunteer at Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee County... By navigating around her full-time job and personal responsibilities, she showcases her dedication to overcoming logistical challenges and delivering consistent service ...Maddie's dedication to meeting both the practical and emotional needs of her clients has made a tangible difference in their lives, and the lives of others in the community, creating lasting change and fostering a more caring and supportive environment for seniors in Ozaukee County."

