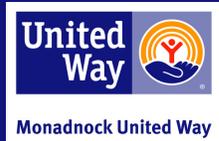


STRONGER TOGETHER

THIS IS MY UNITED WAY

by Corrine Marcou
Administrative Assistant, City of Keene



Our story starts 24 years ago when my then husband and I relocated to the Monadnock Region. At the time, our son was two; a year later, our daughter was born. After being a stay at home mom for two years, I began working part time.

When our kids were 6 and 9, we divorced and I was faced with raising two young kids alone. Needless to say, our world was flipped upside down. The comfort our children knew was gone, and I was faced with providing those basic needs of housing, food, and heat for my family.

As you can imagine, there were plenty of “no’s”, not because I was being strict, though I’m sure my kids would say different, but more because there wasn’t extra for the “yes’s”, even with a full-time job.

Then the recession of 2008 hit and I lost my full time job. Like so many others, I was faced with the deeper struggle of providing those basic needs. Luckily for me, and many others, there is help in our community. Southwestern Community Services was there for fuel and electric assistance, and The Community Kitchen for food. As anyone with teenagers understands, there is never enough food, and the help from the Kitchen was welcomed!

I feel very fortunate that I was unemployed for only 6 months and I’m happy to say I’ve been with the City of Keene for the past 13 years!

In 2015, I agreed serve as a Loaned Employee (LE) for the Monadnock United Way (MUW). To this point, I never gave the United Way any thought. During this time, I discovered that many of my fellow co-workers had, like me, reached out to and received services from a number of local agencies for a variety of reasons. Many expressed how their families had benefited from these agencies and how important it was to them that they donate, as they understand how vital these services are to our community.

Walking into The Community Kitchen for a site visit during LE training was emotional, as were the expressions of gratitude I heard. It was then I realized how much the Monadnock United Way affected my life. No longer did I feel ashamed for the assistance I received.

Our local agencies are here every day, for everyday people like me, people who want to work, work hard and are committed to making the life of their families better.

"Then the recession of 2008 hit and I lost my full time job. Like so many others, I was faced with the deeper struggle of providing those basic needs."

Like my co-workers and others who reach out for assistance, I’m not anyone special and I’m not alone. There are many people who struggle to make ends meet or who need assistance for a short time.

Thanks to the generous people in our community, the Monadnock United Way is there, because you never know when you’ll need a helping hand.



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