

A gift of love at the Glenrose



At the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital, it's all about teamwork, building relationships and having fun.

It's no wonder volunteers like Thomas Yeung keep coming back year after year.

"Volunteering at the Glenrose is a very valuable experience. They don't just assign you a task; you feel like you're part of the team," says Yeung, a systems analyst for Capital Health.

While his career is a far cry from his volunteer duties helping physiotherapists and interacting with patients, he's happy for the change in work. "It's a good break," he says, adding that his volunteer work allows him to connect and build relationships with the patients he assists.

Volunteer coordinator Daryl Richel credits the hospital's rehabilitation focus for providing volunteers with a unique experience.

'REALLY SATISFYING'

"It's a rehabilitation environment and that makes it different from other hospitals, which are acute care," Richel explains. "Many of the patients here are long-term. You have the opportunity to establish relationships and see the treatment and progression in the patient. Seeing people get better is satisfying."

Yeung is quick to dispel the myth

You're more than just a name. The staff appreciates the volunteers.

THOMAS YEUNG

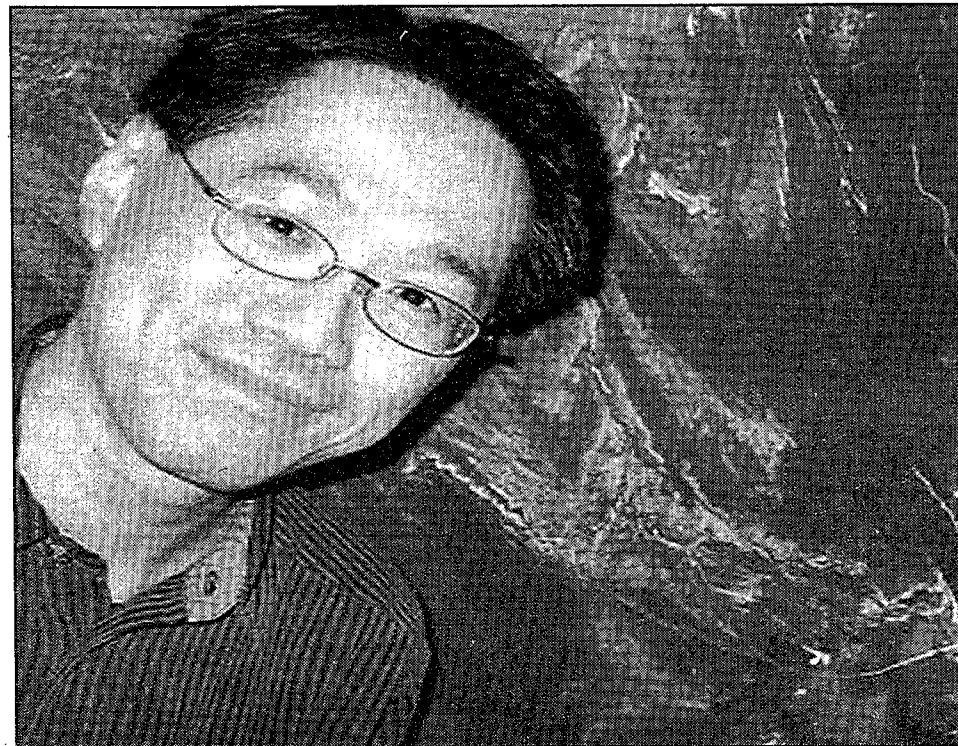


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YEUNG AT HEART: Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital volunteer of the year Thomas Yeung figures he gets back more than he gives during his time at this special facility.

that rehabilitation is only for the elderly.

Volunteers have the opportunity to work with pediatric and juvenile clients as well, he says. Richel agrees. "There's a

broad cross-section. We have the very young to the very old," he adds, pointing out that volunteer opportunities are just as varied.

One of the most common positions is the friendly visitor role where volunteers visit with patients and take

them out for walks. Other roles include pet therapy, daycare assistant, supper assistant, recreational assistant and more.

Richel notes that volunteers are especially needed to assist nurses.

"You provide an extra pair of hands," he says. "You're filling out charts, spending time with patients, socializing with them. It's nothing clinical." It's a great way to gain hands on experience without needing the technical know-how to help.

Another program is Kids on the Block. Designed to teach elementary school-

aged children about disabilities through puppet theatre, volunteers learn the script and the basics behind puppeteering, and perform shows at elementary schools. "It's a great opportunity if you're interested in creating awareness. In the past, we've had people do this because they were seeking a career in education. We've also had parents volunteer in this program," Richel says.

Richel simply needs volunteers who want to help. Having an outgoing and positive attitude, along with a flexible schedule, doesn't hurt either.

Yeung has nothing but positive words for the volunteer program.

"You're more than just a name," he explains. "The staff appreciates the volunteers and they really value your work."

One way the Glenrose does this is through its volunteer-of-the-year award where patients, staff and other volunteers nominate one particular volunteer.

NO SURPRISE

It was no surprise when Richel was named the 2008 honouree.

"The people are there because they want to be there. I don't see myself any differently," Yeung says firmly.

To find out how you can become a volunteer at the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital, visit www.capitalhealth.ca and click on "Hospital & Health Facilities," call 780-735-7986 or email VolunteerGlenrose@cha.ab.ca.

For information or suggestions for story ideas, contact Volunteer Edmonton communications coordinator Evelyn Pham at epham@volunteeredmonton.com, call 780-732-6655 or check out their website at www.volunteeredmonton.com