

# INSPIRING FAMILY TO GIVE BACK

Mario has been involved with United Way for more than a decade. Now he gets his family involved too. ♦



"I started volunteering when I was young. My family would take me to help out around the holidays. Once, when I was around 12 years old, I was the mascot for an ice cream company that held an event for children with mental illness. Dressed up in my bear costume, I remember feeling privileged and happy to be useful.

I discovered United Way through my workplace, RBC, where I've been for 22 years. I've always set aside time for volunteering, but with United Way, it has become a deeper part of my life. Often people don't realize what an incredible impact United Way has on the community!

While many organizations focus on a single cause, United Way helps many different types of people: seniors, individuals with disabilities, and children - a cause I am particularly passionate about. I have two boys aged nine and eleven, and it pains me to see other children who don't

have the same opportunities they do.

I want to instill a desire to give in my children. I think it's important not to force them to get involved - I want that desire to give back to come from them. My children taught me that although there's nothing wrong with persuading people to give, it's better to inspire them to inspire others.

I often ask my family to volunteer with me. They may resist a bit at first, but they always end up being happy about lending a hand. They realize how much good it does and how lucky we are. And if you don't have time to get involved, my advice is to donate as much as you can. People ask me why I give, and I always answer, 'Why not?' Giving does so much good for everyone." -Mario

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