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Volunteer of the Year Brian Scarberry helps troubled youth

180 Juvenile Diversion program teaches, counsels teens

There are many reasons why people volunteer. Some do it because they have been helped in the past. Some volunteer because they can't find gainful employment but still wants to use the gifts they've been given. I've talked to a few people who just have a lot of spare time and they don't want to be lazy. Brian Scarberry believes in the power of volunteering, so much so that it is a component of a nine-month crime prevention program he helped create.

I first met Scarberry at Caribou Coffee in Waukesha with his colleague Rebecca Scott. One of the first things I noticed about the 2011 United Way of Waukesha County Volunteer of the Year was his brutally honest, but not abrasive, conversation style.

"He's my mirror," Scott said. She, if anyone, should be able to say that. She and Scarberry work very closely together teaching, motivating and counseling troubled young adults ages 14 to 20 years old.

Scarberry's brutal honesty works very well with the population of students that he works with.

"He asks hard questions that make a person think about what he/she is doing," Scott said.

As a self-described juvenile delinquent, Scarberry made a 180-degree shift in his own life.

"I was going down the wrong road, making bad decisions," said Scarberry, who owns Lake Country



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Car Wash in Pewaukee.

After high school, he decided to pursue a degree in criminal justice, which was his career for several years. Now, he serves as the executive director of 180 Juvenile Diversion, a program with a current caseload of 54. The program was a brainchild of Scarberry and County Executive Dan Vrakas.

They work with the Waukesha County court system to rehabilitate youths. Statistics show that the program is working. Eighty-nine percent of students graduate successfully, with only 11 percent going on to re-offend.

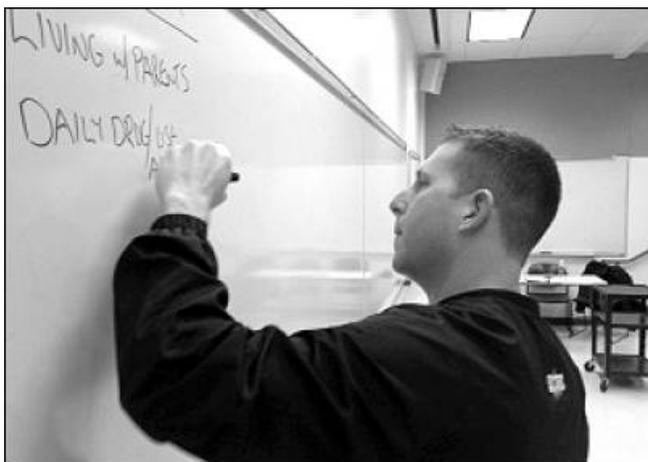
Scarberry said that he was surprised to find out that he was nominated for United Way's Volunteer of the Year award.

"I don't do this for recognition," he said.

One of Scarberry's greatest joys is to see lives changed. He said that people often come back to him and say that 180 made them more productive citizens.

From where does Scarberry receive his inspiration to volunteer? "My young son reminds me of a simpler time."

Conversations I've had with Scarberry have centered around local restaurants, sporting events or movies and faith. Even with his many responsibilities and busy schedule, he



Submitted photo

Brian Scarberry helped to create 180 Juvenile Diversion, a nine-month crime prevention program. He was named the 2011 United Way of Waukesha County Volunteer of the Year.



Submitted photo

Brian Scarberry, right, holds the 2011 United Way in Waukesha County Volunteer of the Year award he won recently. His colleague Rebecca Scott, left, works closely with Scarberry teaching and counseling troubled young adults.

makes time for chats over coffee at Caribou.

A man of character, simplicity and honesty, those are all words to describe the 2011 Volunteer of the Year Brian Scarberry. Don't you want to get to

know him too?
I'll see you around.

(Gregg Wandsneider's column runs Wednesdays in The Freeman. He can be reached at gwandsne@gmail.com.)