



the VOLUNTEERS

How did you first get involved with the program?

I wanted to do something worthwhile with my time so when I saw an advertisement for the training I called the number given and said "sign me up!" I have been a volunteer guardian for 21 years now.

What's your first memory of training?

I was amazed by how much effort was made by all of the agencies involved to help the needy children and families.

What has surprised you most about being a volunteer child advocate?

What surprised me the most was the number of children that were in unbelievable living conditions.

What do you find most challenging about this role?

One of the most challenging things about being a volunteer guardian ad litem is the length of time it can take to help make a difference.

What do you wish other people knew about becoming a volunteer?

I wish that other people knew how very satisfying it is to know that you have made a child's life better for them!

What would you say are some of your strongest beliefs about being a child advocate?

I heard a phrase a long time ago that sums up my beliefs: "No man ever stands as tall as when he stoops to help a child."

When your friends/family find out that you volunteer, what do they say or ask?

My friends and family have always told me that they are proud of me for giving my heart and time.

What would you tell someone who is thinking about volunteering but are still not completely sure?

I would tell them that they would never regret it and to give it their best. After all, if good people like you don't, then who will? I would tell them that the GAL staff works very hard to support you and they help you work towards a safe, permanent outcome for the children.

What do you do when you aren't volunteering/ working on your case?

I own and rent homes so I am always busy doing something related to them.

I also attend as many of the Continuing Ed In-Services held by the program. After twenty one years I am still learning newer and better ways to advocate!



Margaret Starling
Aiken Volunteer Guardian ad Litem

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