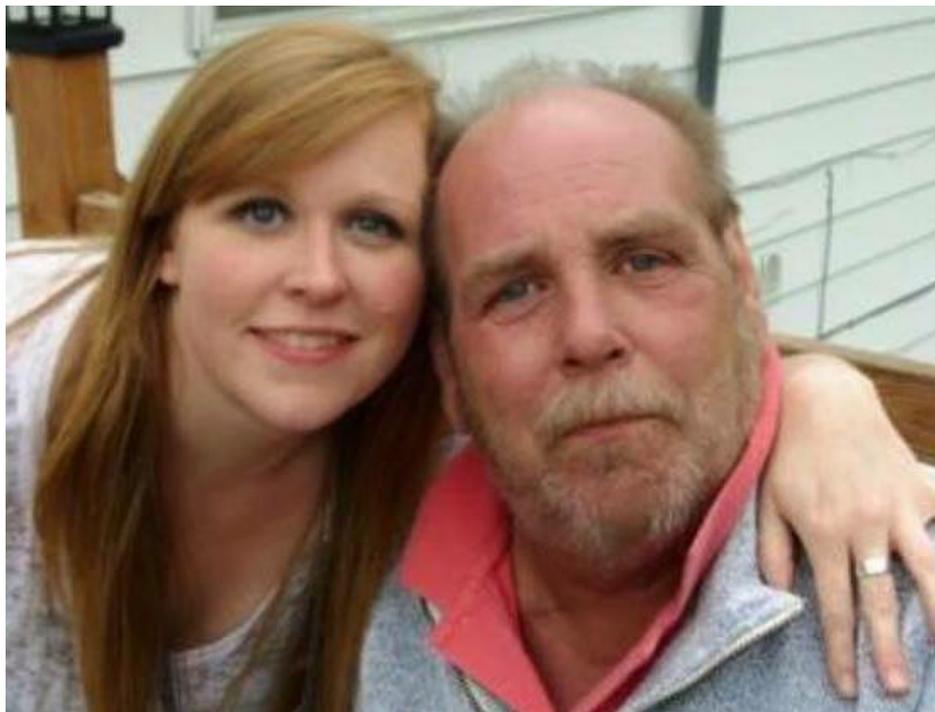


Meet Tricia Shirey, CareFirst's Volunteer Coordinator

Started by a team of volunteers in 1981, CareFirst relies on nearly 75 local individuals to provide support to area hospice families on a daily basis. Add a handful of retired professionals who assist with clerical projects and bereavement mailings, as well as a team of event planners who help fundraising efforts, and you will get a glimpse into the CareFirst Volunteer Department.

Empowering, inspiring, and coordinating this many volunteers is no easy task, although Tricia Shirey is up for the challenge. Having spent the past six years recruiting, screening, and training volunteers as the Program Coordinator for Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Central Southern Tier through the Family Service Society, Tricia appreciates the vital need for helping hands when support is needed most.

Tricia also spent eight years as the Program Coordinator at the Corning Area Youth Center. Tricia comes to CareFirst with a Bachelor's Degree in Community and Health Services from Empire State College and an Associate's Degree in Human Services from Corning Community College.



Like many CareFirst staff and volunteers, Tricia's mission driven personality comes from personal experience with hospice. In 2014, after living with lung cancer treatments for two years, Tricia's father came on hospice services. Having been a primary caregiver throughout his illness, Tricia was grateful for the opportunity to let go of some of this responsibility, so she could focus on her relationship with her dad and the grieving process.

"The most significant thing hospice did for me was it gave me a chance to breathe at the end; in our crisis they stepped in and made sure everything was taken care of so we could focus on him and the time we had left together". Hospice came back to Tricia's life in 2016, helping her beloved grandfather transition through his declining health.

This year, instead of hospice coming to her, she has chosen to come to hospice. Just as many former family members "hear the call" and want to give back, Tricia is putting her calling to work, as the Volunteer Coordinator. Her wealth of experience will expand the current program into a more meaningful experience geared to meet the needs of both the families and the volunteers.

A wealth of opportunities and experiences await current and new volunteers. For more information on ways you can volunteer for CareFirst, contact Tricia Shirey at 607.962.4100 ext 170 or via email shireyt@carefirstny.org.

