

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Natalie Yates: Walking for a Cause

It's one thing to volunteer and help those in need, but what if you're the one who needs life-saving help? That lifeline not only saves you, it also gives you purpose. That's what makes **Natalie Yates**, Corporate Communications, so dedicated and driven to help the organizations that brought her back from the brink when she needed a transplant.

In 1995, Natalie was very ill and in need of a kidney transplant. She was very fortunate that her sister, Wanda Mason, was a match and able to donate one of her kidneys. During this very frightening and challenging time, Natalie found a resource and friend in the National Kidney Foundation of West Tennessee, and she decided that once she recovered, that she needed to give back in gratitude. So she became involved.

Natalie's involvement came through participation in the Kidney Foundation's fundraising "walks." In May, she became a part of the MLGW SSAC's team, found sponsors and walked in the "Kidney Walk" that began at Rhodes College, helping the Foundation raise a total of \$30,000. On November 7th, the Kidney Foundation will host "Sip Around the World," a wine tasting at the Botanic Garden, their biggest fundraiser of the year. She is also involved with the Mid-South Transplant Foundation, and takes part in their various activities including speaking to raise the awareness and emphasize the importance of organ donation.

"Being able to do the Kidney Walk in May was significant," says Natalie, "because I was finally able to participate. I was off the meds, which had made it difficult, and was therefore able to exercise, get in shape,

lose weight and be able to walk in the event – a real milestone for me.

"I also walked in the Diversity Walk in September, of which FedEx was one of the major sponsors," she says. "My daughter works for FedEx, so I really enjoyed being able to walk with her in that event. It was really very special for me."

Through her Kidney Walk sponsors, which included donations from the Grizzlies organization, family and co-workers at MLGW, Natalie was able to raise \$400 for the Kidney Foundation. Her efforts will now go toward helping others who are suffering from various chronic kidney diseases and need transplants in the Mid-South, truly defining what it means to volunteer and give back.



MLGW's *Volunteers In Power* newsletter spotlights outstanding MLGW volunteers in each issue.

Volunteer Events Calendar

Volunteer for one of these upcoming events. Contact information is listed by each event, so get in touch and join in!

October 2008 (Energy Awareness Month)

- **Project MAX** – Friday, October 31, 12-4 p.m. Team building for Water Eng./Water Ops. Contact: **Jackie Royston**, Residential Services, 528-4181 or jroyston@mlgw.org

November 2008

- **American Diabetes Association Walk** – Saturday, November 1. Contact: **Mary White**, Employee Activities, 528-4245 or mlwhite@mlgw.org
- **United Way Campaign** – November 3-14. Contact: **TJ Redmond** and **Bart Stoebner**, 528-4835 or tredmond@mlgw.org or bstoebner@mlgw.org
- **Project MAX volunteer weekend event** – Friday, November 21. Team building for Electric Distribution Engineering. Contact: **Jackie Royston**, Residential Services, 528-4181 or jroyston@mlgw.org

- **Memphis Recovery Centers 5K Run/Walk** – Saturday, November 22, 9 a.m. Overton Park. To register, call Tina at 272-7751 or register on the Internet at www.s2fevents.com. Early registration: \$15.

December 2008

- **Adopt an Angel Program/Angel Tree** – December. Contact: **Mary White**, Employee Activities, 528-4245 or mlwhite@mlgw.org
- **Christmas Kettle Campaign** – December. Walgreens at Main and Madison. Contact: **Anet Parkinson**, Community Relations, 528-4820 or vparkinson@mlgw.org

Volunteer! Give back to the community and experience the joy that comes from helping others.