

# UNITED VOLUNTEERS

**“IN ORDER FOR A COMMUNITY TO FUNCTION AND BE SUCCESSFUL, EVERYBODY HAS TO CHIP IN WHEN THEY CAN.” - JEN CALDWELL**

Every year, a handful of dedicated volunteers in North Carolina are awarded the Governor’s Volunteer Service Award. This award honors the true spirit of volunteerism by recognizing individuals who make a significant contribution to their community through volunteer service. Two of this year’s recipients include local United Way volunteers Alyce Barrett and Jen Caldwell.

Their passion for volunteering stems from a love of community. When Alyce and Jen moved to Greensboro with their families several years ago, both immediately sought ways to become involved in the new community they called home, and both looked to United Way to make it happen.

They started as volunteers for Handbags for Hope, an annual handbag auction hosted by United Way’s affinity group, Women United. Both women chose this event because it engages local women and raises money to support United Way’s focus on breaking the cycle of poverty.

Today, Alyce and Jen are co-chairs of the Handbags for Hope planning committee. Both always show up, recruit volunteers, form partnerships with companies and ensure everything goes as planned. “We want to have fun, and we always want to make the event better than the previous year,” says Alyce.

While both women are thankful to be recognized with the Governor’s Volunteer Service Award for their contributions, both also say the act of encouraging others to volunteer is more important.

Alyce says, “United Way reinforces the importance of being a part of a community by making an impact and we should encourage everyone to be involved. Supported people support others.”

Likewise, Jen says, “Nothing in history has ever survived when it functions by itself. In order for a community to function and be successful, everybody has to chip in when they can.”



(L-R) Alyce Barrett, Jen Caldwell. Photo / Vanderveen Photographers