

Warm & Welcoming



Everything changed for Emily Washcovick on October 16, 2018. After a four day build up, she experienced her first manic episode resulting in hospitalization, a Bipolar diagnosis, 6 days of inpatient treatment, and 7 weeks of outpatient treatment at Rogers Behavioral Health. Reflecting back on that chapter of her life, she describes the experience as "surreal".

Emily has always been very candid about her mental health journey, and she could not be more grateful for her time at Rogers. "Rogers saved me. It changed my life. I firmly believe that where I'm at today, which is a much more balanced and healthy place, is due to the treatment I received at Rogers."

When Emily heard RMHC was opening a Family Room on Rogers' Oconomowoc campus, she knew immediately that she wanted to be involved. "I love that we get to see families enjoying the Family Room and that it feels like we're making a difference. I enjoy being a friendly face when families walk through the door and as a former patient,

I'm grateful for the times I can offer a bit of perspective, reassurance and hope." Family Room volunteers are key to creating a warm and welcoming environment – without the stigma that often surrounds mental health. "Even if families arrive with nothing at all, we welcome them and we offer them so many opportunities to connect and have fun. I take a lot of pride in making sure everything looks clean and well stocked. Whatever they want to do – whether it's watch a movie, paint something in the Creativity Room, or play Scrabble...we have it ready to go."

Emily smiles as she recalls a recent volunteer shift... "I was baking banana bread in the kitchen and a family came in with their three young kids. Almost immediately, the girls asked if they could help me bake so I kept them busy while mom and dad connected with their son who was in treatment. Before I knew it, we had finished baking bread and we were on to baking cookies! I love that we had everything available and that we were able to create a special memory for this family."

What Emily loves most about volunteering is seeing families connect. "The Family Room is the perfect space for families to visit with their loved one in treatment, but it's also a space where they feel safe to open up and connect with each other. It changes their perspective and helps normalize their experience. I'm so proud to be a volunteer here, and I hope to see more programs like this open around the country."



Scan for Emily's time as a Family Room volunteer

