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## **Memorial Medical Center Seeking Volunteers of All Ages**

SPRINGFIELD – Several decades may separate Greg Robbins and Eugene Bishop, but they share a common interest – the desire to make a difference.

A retired service technician, Bishop spent a good part of his life troubleshooting equipment for others. Robbins works in the research lab at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine but will leave this fall for medical school in Wisconsin. The experience that Bishop has gained as an 18-year volunteer at Memorial Medical Center is precisely what Robbins hopes to take with him to medical school.

“Through the exposure to patients and the services we provide, I’m getting relevant experience that will help me through my career,” Robbins said.

In Bishop’s eyes, it’s that hands-on experience and desire to help that will make Robbins a great physician. “It will change his outlook,” Bishop said. “He’ll understand how people hurt, and what he can do to make them better.”

The two men are among the 400 volunteers at Memorial Medical Center. The hospital’s Department of Volunteer Services is in the midst of recruiting additional volunteers for 2010. The department is seeking people of all ages who can donate time, energy and support to improve the health of the people and communities the hospital serves, said John Budny, director of volunteer services at Memorial.

“The service provided by our volunteers allows clinical staff to concentrate on the important medical concerns and services a patient requires,” Budny said. “They provide over 61,000 hours of

volunteer service annually and are most often the first and last contact that patients and families have with Memorial.”

The work performed by Memorial volunteers includes helping with patient discharges, escorting friends and family members, transporting blood, making phone calls, selling merchandise in the Gift Shop, staffing reception lounges, providing directions and delivering flowers to patients.

“We are flexible with scheduling and attempt to not only match the volunteer to positions for which they are best qualified but that also meet their interests,” Budny said.

Volunteers go through a three-part training process. They attend a general orientation to volunteer service and Memorial’s volunteer program. They go to small group meetings that provide detailed information on program policies and requirements and review personal interest areas for volunteer assignments. New volunteers also shadow experienced volunteers at least three times to learn the requirements of a position and become familiar with the medical center.

Students can also gain volunteer experience through the Memorial Teen Volunteer program offered in the summer. All volunteers receive a complimentary meal in the cafeteria during each day of service.

To learn more about volunteering, people can call (217) 788-3552 or send an e-mail to [wright.brandie@mhsil.com](mailto:wright.brandie@mhsil.com). Applications are also available at [MemorialMedical.com](http://MemorialMedical.com). Visitors to the website can select the Volunteer “Quick Links” near the bottom of the home page. Forms can be faxed to (217) 788-7096 or mailed to Department of Volunteers and Community Service, 701 N. First St., Room C-006, Springfield, IL 62781-0001.

Memorial Medical Center, 701 N. First St., is a nonprofit, community-based hospital in the Mid-Illinois Medical District at Springfield. For more details, visit [ChooseMemorial.org](http://ChooseMemorial.org).

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