

PMI Mass Bay Chapter, Inc.

October 27, 2006

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 4

HOME

Member Profile – Ellen DePaul

Maker of Connections.

by Geoff Moore, project manager & freelance writer

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Making the right connections is an asset that many project managers recognize as an important skill in delivering quality projects on time and in budget. Ellen DePaul, Senior Project Manager with PTC, a Needham based product development software company, has also embraced making connections in her life outside of the immediate work environment, as her way of reaching out to the community to help others.



Ellen joined PMI in the summer of 2003 and became a certified PMP in June 2004. In May 2005, when Linda Desmond, President Elect 2006-2007, called a meeting to brainstorm ways to augment the current job referral network, Ellen was ready to help. One of her first tasks was to compile a spread sheet of 900 companies in the Boston region who were hiring project managers. Within 2 months Ellen was leading the newly named and growing PMCC team which was exploring online networking tools, improved flow of job opportunity information and job related corporate outreach.

With the team's mission and objectives established and an active and enthusiastic group of 18 volunteers in place, Ellen passed the baton of leadership to June Morrison in mid November 2005.

While connections at PTC and PMI Mass Bay are very important, it was joining the Big Sister Association and her connection and devotion of time to Little Sister, Thelma, that Ellen says was the best decision she ever made.

When Thelma was only 4 years old, her mother, Maria, became paralyzed as the result

of a car accident. Eighteen months after the accident, the once happy Thelma, became somber and withdrawn.

In 2000, Ellen became a Big Sister and was introduced to Thelma, then 7 years old. Almost six years later, Ellen's advice to anyone wondering if being a Big Sister it is right for them is, "Go for it. You will want to be with your Little Sister and the time will magically appear." She is also quick to point out however, that once the bonds are formed, commitment to a Little Sister must be maintained.

Ellen saw Thelma every week, taking Saturday afternoons out of her busy schedule for trips to the zoo or beach, rollerblading, movie outings or Thelma's favorite activity, hanging out together at Ellen's condo, playing games and talking about things only sisters can share. Maria's mother gradually saw a positive change in Thelma; she became more engaged at school and was smiling a lot more. Ellen friendship with Thelma extended to include Maria and they became like sisters themselves.

Today, Thelma is more self confident than ever, excelling at school and attending the Big Sister Association of Greater Boston black tie 25th Anniversary Gala, where she spoke with Mayor Menino and met CBS4 Meteorologist, Mish Michaels. The following day, 20 November, both Ellen and Thelma were featured on CBS4 Boston 'Sunday with Liz Walker' TV program, and earlier this year Ellen was named Big Sister of the Year!

So how does Ellen find the right balance for her? She shared a few of her guiding principles.

"Recognize that you can't say yes to everything, associate with positive, independent people and make time in your life for the people that truly matter."

This has enabled her to contribute in many ways, but she is adamant when she says that, "Thelma and Maria have given me so much more than I've given them."

To find out more about Big Sisters Association of Greater Boston, go to www.bigsister.org

For more details of the work of the PMCC team or to volunteer, contact June Morrison at june.morrison@usa.net or see www.pmcc.jotspot.com

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Published by PMI Mass Bay Chapter, Inc.

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