

Dennis & Shanin Engman

Mental health has been a priority for Dennis and Shanin Engman since Shanin first began experiencing Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). It involved several years of learning to manage treatment, coping skills, and self-care. They've also had multiple family members and friends face challenging mental health conditions. When adults struggle with mental health it is so hard to know how to support them. This is often a challenge for friends and family of those struggling. Trillium has provided a welcome place to give support to the mental health community for both Dennis and Shanin.

Through Shanin's experience with SAD, she learned how important making time for self-care was in maintaining her mental health. Wanting to share this experience inspired her to launch regular self-care days for in-patient clients at Parry Center Campus in 2017. Each self-care day incorporates a variety of stations that provide soothing, uplifting, or fun experiences so clients can try different things and discover what works best for them. Over the years, she has gotten many college students and community members involved to make these self-care days possible. The COVID pandemic made holding this day challenging so she adjusted to recruiting more donations and creating self-care kits to hand out to clients instead.

Dennis has been volunteering for Trillium Family Services since 2016. There have been several years where snow and ice made delivering gifts to PCC impossible for donors. Dennis drove through these challenging conditions to pick up donated gifts from all over Portland and the greater Portland Metro area to make sure the holiday season was great for clients. He's volunteered at Trillium Halloween parties, fundraising events, Farmer's Market, and self-care days. In recent years he joined Foresters and started writing grants to fund not only helpful self-care items for clients but much-needed items clients need like PJs, shoes, socks, and other clothing items. His most recent grant is providing new garden boxes for the Healing Garden at Parry Center Campus. During Oregon's last big snow and ice storm, Dennis drove in with Shanin and helped create self-care kits that included warm blankets to provide warmth and comfort during the outage to Parry Center Clients.

Volunteering, serving and giving are important values for both Dennis and Shanin. They love the many opportunities Trillium and Keep Oregon Well have provided for them to get involved in meaningful work that supports mental health in the community.

