

Faces of HOPE: Julie Smith



After retiring from a career as an elementary school teacher, Julie Smith has found a new way to help young people. She's creating hope for those who need it most.

"It's knowing there is a possibility of making everyday life better, despite the challenges and circumstances," Julie said. "HOPE 4 Youth offers that."

Julie first found a place at HOPE 4 Youth volunteering at [Hope's Closet](#), our resale boutique which is currently closed until a bigger space is found.

"I think this is a great way to raise money and awareness for HOPE 4 Youth," Julie explained. "The fact that all items are donated and all workers are volunteers really speaks to something I want to be a part of."

Julie has been a great supporter of other HOPE 4 Youth fundraising efforts, participating in [The Darkest Night of Your Life 4K](#) and working at the [annual gala](#). But her most memorable experience was a conversation she had while volunteering at the [HOPE 4 Youth Drop-In Center](#) in Anoka.

"I had a chance to visit with a young person who was just finishing her schooling at Anoka-Ramsey Community College," Julie explained. "She was living at [HOPE Place](#) and preparing to get her own apartment that weekend. She had a good job working as a nurse. I was so proud of her and all that she had overcome with the help of HOPE 4 Youth."

Julie enjoys seeing, first-hand, the positive impact HOPE 4 Youth's services can have on a young person's life and future. It's what motivates her to continue helping young people with day-to-day basic necessities as well as long-term solutions.

Julie says she defines hope as a light at the end of the tunnel and she wants to help create a path there.

"It is important for every human being to have hope," she added.

This story is part of a series profiling people who've come together to support HOPE 4 Youth's mission to offer young people pathways out of homelessness. [Read more profiles.](#)

