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Activism



My first thing would be to go into any area that you were planning to provide services and do an assessment. You need to come up with programs, activities, that's tailor-made specifically for that area. I've found that working in areas - what's necessarily good for one area is not going to be good for the other areas. So you go in and you make an assessment. If you need programs for youth, you look toward that. If you need to work with where there's a high unemployment rate, it might be something you need to do in there. Medical needs. Criminal activity. So you need to assess what's going on in the community. Then what I do, I look for the highly vocal, the most boisterous, biggest troublemaker in the area, and those are the ones I begin to pull in and begin to work with - to show the significance of using that type of energy in the community to make social change or change that's geared toward that community. I also explain that maybe it's not a paying job in the beginning, but volunteers are our biggest heroes and "sheroes" in a community. If they really dig in and do the job that is designed for them to do, it brings about significant changes.

-Gloria Thompson-Brown

An excerpt from the *Danville Community Encyclopedia* by Anna Callahan. For more information visit www.anna-callahan.com.