

# Volunteer of the Week

## Disabled aunt KANDU Industries volunteer to get involved

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JANESVILLE — The Gazette's local volunteer of the week is Kim Hesgard, internal communications manager at Exact Sciences Research Lab, who has been volunteering for six years as secretary of KANDU Industries' board of directors.

Hesgard was introduced to KANDU as a young girl. Her aunt, Adeline, was one of KANDU's first clients 60 years ago.

"I remember as a teenager how proud she was of her job and how she would talk about her goals at work," Hesgard said. "It was fun to hear her talk about work, like how

many kits she wanted to make in a day or who likes who and who's a good boss, the everyday things in our life. It made me realize that she found her purpose, she found her value."

After watching her aunt become successful with the help of KANDU, Hesgard wanted to spend her time with their clients and says she carries a piece of her aunt with her every time she helps out.

"Each time I do something, I think about how I'm doing this for KANDU and how it's helping another family member feel like I did."

Hesgard doesn't recall what kind of disability her aunt had, she just remembers Adeline being "very special to the



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Kim Hesgard helps set up the stage for KANDU's 'Cheers with the Steers' event at Dyer Farm on Friday, Sept. 29.

family."

Before her larger commitment to the board, Hesgard had been volunteering at KANDU for twenty years, from being a server at a wine event to assisting at a walk event. She said she enjoys being around the clients.

"These clients are so unconditional when it comes to sharing their appreciation," she said. "I may be selling raffle tickets or doing another task, but really, I'm trying to infuse myself around them because

they're just lovely."

Her favorite part of the organization, besides the clients, is how "everyone has the same inner drive to support the clients. There's no stray from devotion and there's this incredible energy and positivity that makes you want to give more."

"Everybody has skills that are needed to help a cause, you just need to find what works for you and give them some of your time."

a tax rate in mid to late November.

Budget documents shared by the city indicate that costs are going up in part due to increases in health insurance premiums. The city is building into the 2024 budget a 26.8% increase in its health insurance premiums, to the tune of \$84,906 more than 2023.

Two of the larger spending increases in the proposed budget are in the areas of public safety, with \$2.1 million in spending, an 8.46% increase from \$1.94 million in 2023, and in parks, recreation and celebration, proposed to see about \$270,000 in spending, an 8.6% increase from around \$250,000 in 2023.

The city is proposing to increase wages by 5% for all city employees to help offset rising worker insurance costs.

The city is also building into its 2024 budget an 8% increase in energy and fuel costs, or \$12,498 more than it spent in 2023.

The proposed budget will be published on Oct. 16. A public hearing has been set for Nov. 7 and the city council expects to approve the budget on Nov. 21.