

## Fingerprints

We leave fingerprints on whatever our hands touch:  
on walls, furniture, doorknobs, dishes and books.

There's no escape! As we touch we leave evidence of our presence.

What have you touched today? A wheelchair, a chart, papers for orientations, guidelines, reports for the administration? Files to be ready for JACHO, letters to congressmen and senators on behalf of Healthcare issues that will affect our hospitals? How about the computer as you entered volunteer hours and statistics? Have you rocked a baby, held a hand, delivered juice?

Everyday we leave our fingerprints all over the hospital and healthcare facilities.

Have you stopped to think about how we, as volunteers, are perceived by the people whose lives we touch?

In most hospitals the first and last person a patient or visitor comes in contact with is a volunteer. Whether that is at the Information Desk, in Registration, as we wheel them to their destination or when we escort them to their car as they leave. We are the ones who give the first and last impressions of our hospital. Are we friendly, knowledgeable? Are our uniforms neat and clean? It's time we, as members of the auxiliary and volunteer departments, take a good look at ourselves. Have we kept up with the hospital changes? Have we reviewed our mission, policies and bylaws and changed them to reflect the changes not only in our hospital but also in our community? Are we inclusive and do we mirror the community we serve?

Many times fingerprints are not visible. What kind are you leaving? Are they the kind that don't show or the kind that inform the patients, families, staff and community of all that you do and plan to do in the future? Lastly, are you encouraging others to join hands and leave their fingerprints next to yours?

Let those who come behind us find us faithful.

~ May Stuart, Chair AHA Committee on Volunteers.