Kendra Stearns Drozd Reflects on the Changing Role of Community Service in Everyday Life

The former marketing professional and executive recruiter shares how volunteer work, personal experiences, and community involvement have shaped her life beyond the corporate world.



Bluffton, South Carolina Nov 12, 2026 (Issuewire.com) - Kendra Stearns Drozd, a former brand management professional and executive recruiter, is highlighting the importance of community involvement and the many ways individuals can contribute their time and experience outside traditional professional roles.

After building a career in advertising, consumer packaged goods marketing, and executive recruiting, Drozd shifted her focus toward raising her four daughters and becoming more involved in volunteer work. Today, she continues to support others through Stephen Ministry, a program that trains individuals to provide confidential, one-to-one emotional and spiritual care to people navigating difficult life circumstances.

Her involvement reflects a broader understanding of how professional experience, personal challenges,

and everyday relationships can contribute to meaningful community engagement.

From Corporate Marketing to Community Involvement

Drozd began her professional career in Chicago, working in advertising before earning her MBA from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management.

She later joined Kraft Foods as a Senior Associate Brand Manager, working on products including Kraft Singles and FreshPrep. Her responsibilities involved consumer research, product development, and understanding the needs of families through direct observation and market research.

She eventually transitioned into executive recruiting at Bloom, Gross & Associates, a boutique firm specializing in consumer packaged goods marketing. The position allowed her to apply her industry knowledge while working within a flexible schedule that accommodated her growing family.

After the birth of her third daughter, Drozd stepped away from full-time employment to concentrate on family responsibilities and community involvement.

Although her professional direction changed, she continued drawing on the communication, organizational, and interpersonal skills developed throughout her career.

A Personal Connection to Stephen Ministry

One of Drozd's most significant volunteer commitments began in 2012, when she was commissioned as a Stephen Minister.

Her decision to become involved followed several difficult personal experiences, including multiple miscarriages and unsuccessful fertility treatments. During those periods, she received support from people who helped her navigate grief and uncertainty.

Those experiences contributed to her desire to provide similar support to others.

Stephen Ministry prepares trained laypeople to offer confidential emotional and spiritual care to individuals experiencing challenges such as illness, grief, divorce, loneliness, and other forms of loss.

The ministry emphasizes active listening, compassion, and consistent personal support rather than attempting to resolve another person's circumstances.

For Drozd, the work has involved developing meaningful relationships with people experiencing some of the most challenging periods of their lives. One of her caring relationships lasted approximately five years, an experience she considers among the most important personal connections she has developed.

Her continued involvement reflects a commitment to making emotional support and personal connection part of everyday community life.

Recognizing the Value of Different Life Experiences

Throughout her life, Drozd has been involved in activities that require collaboration, personal responsibility, and service to others.

At Williams College, where she earned her undergraduate degree, she played four years of varsity tennis and helped lead a student group that made monthly visits to the Berkshire Home for Boys.

During her MBA studies at Kellogg, she co-led a trip to Japan that combined cultural learning with a business consulting project.

These experiences introduced her to different communities and reinforced the importance of understanding people whose backgrounds and circumstances differ from her own.

Her later involvement in school volunteering and Stephen Ministry provided additional opportunities to contribute outside a professional setting.

Now based in Bluffton, South Carolina, Drozd continues to place importance on family, faith, and service. She views happiness, contentment, and meaningful relationships as important measures of a fulfilling life.

Encouraging Greater Participation in Community Life

Drozd's experiences illustrate how volunteer work can become a meaningful part of life at different stages, whether someone is beginning a career, raising a family, or transitioning away from full-time employment.

Her involvement in Stephen Ministry also draws attention to forms of community service that take place privately, through conversations and ongoing personal relationships rather than public events or large fundraising campaigns.

While her early career centered on business objectives and professional development, her more recent commitments have focused on personal relationships and providing support to individuals facing difficult circumstances.

For Kendra Drozd, those experiences demonstrate that community involvement does not have to follow a particular career path or require a formal leadership position. It can develop naturally from personal experiences, a willingness to listen, and a commitment to making time for others.

As she continues her service work in South Carolina, Drozd remains focused on the relationships and responsibilities that have become central to her understanding of a meaningful life.

About Kendra Stearns Drozd

Kendra Stearns Drozd is a former advertising professional, Senior Associate Brand Manager, and executive recruiter based in Bluffton, South Carolina. She holds a bachelor's degree from Williams College and an MBA from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management. Her professional background includes positions at Kraft Foods and Bloom, Gross & Associates. A commissioned Stephen Minister since 2012, Drozd has dedicated much of her time to community volunteering, family life, and providing emotional and spiritual support to individuals experiencing personal challenges. She is married to Tim Drozd and is the mother of four daughters.

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