



# Creating Connections for Remote Faculty Members

Marla Cartwright, Chief Virtual Difference Maker  
Faculty Developer, CTL

# Agenda:

- Difference Makers: Background
- Difference Makers: Mission Statement and Logo
- Virtual Difference Maker Team
- Year in Review
- Upcoming Events

# Background

- Launched by our CEO, Kaplan Higher and Professional Education (KHPE) in 2012
- Group of volunteers
- Named “Difference Makers” (DMs)
- Tasked with mission to build “great place”
- Chief DMs meet regularly with:
  - KHPE Chief Administrative Officer
  - KHPE Human Resources Manager

# Differenced Makers: Mission Statement

As a part of the Kaplan Way initiative to be a “Great Place” and guided by Kaplan’s five core values, the Difference Makers promote a positive and rewarding employee experience by creating a sustainable work culture, prioritizing transparent communication, nurturing employee development, and recognizing the great work done by valued employees throughout the organization.

# The Difference Makers: Role

The Difference Makers act as the conduit between our various teams, location, employees and managers to help transform our culture and recognize and celebrate the difference we make. We gain insight through the efforts of obtaining engagement ideas with a key focus of building a sense of community, promotion of recognition and the facilitation of development programs and communication.

# The Difference Makers: Logo



# Chief Difference Makers: Ground

19 Chiefs for locations:

- Chicago
- LaCrosse
- Plantation
- Cypress
- Orlando
- Campuses & Learning Center locations
- Various regions

Anyone can sign up to volunteer. All information is available on the employee-wide internal portal.

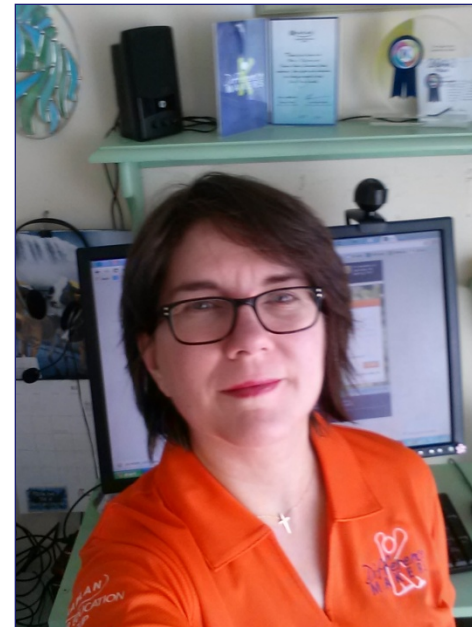
# The Virtual Team

- Began with 8 volunteers and 1 Chief
- Recently experienced explosive growth
  - nearly 200% increase
- Currently at 20+ volunteers and 3 Chiefs



# Chief Difference Maker: Virtual

Marla Cartwright,  
Faculty Developer  
Center for Teaching and Learning  
[mcartwright@kaplan.edu](mailto:mcartwright@kaplan.edu)



# Chief Difference Maker: Virtual

Erica Ellsworth,  
Faculty Developer  
Center for Teaching and Learning  
[eellsworth@kaplan.edu](mailto:eellsworth@kaplan.edu)



# Chief Difference Maker: Virtual

Peg Hohensee,  
Chair, Math Department  
[phohensee@kaplan.edu](mailto:phohensee@kaplan.edu)



# Recent Activities

- Wellness monthly events
- Creation of various VDM Communities
- Virtual Community Fair
- NCAA Brackets
- Basketball Shootout Competition: Virtual Version
- Recognition Hub
- Develop U
- Back to School
- Virtual Community Fair
- Recognition Padlet (Mother's Day, Veteran's Day, Valentine's, etc.)
- Holistic Holiday Handbook

# 2014 Accomplishments

- Increased communication
  - Multiple channels
  - Encouraging on-site participation
  - Email blasts
- Increased dialogue with corporate communications
- Launched the VDM Team Google Site (internal)
- Launched the VDM Google Site (external)
- Launched the VDM Google Community (external)
- Successful Membership Drive
- Focused on Virtual-Specific Issues

# Difference Makers Website: Team

**Virtual Difference Makers**

Search this site

**Home**  
Updates  
Article Ideas  
Brainstorming  
SOP Blog  
Documents  
DM Calendar: Virtual  
DM Calendar: Ground  
Charities  
Documents

▼ Contact Information  
Conference Line  
Sitemap

**1**  
day until  
VDM Meeting



## Welcome to the Virtual Difference Makers

**Virtual Difference Makers Blog**



**Share your ideas on the [Brainstorming Blog!](#)**

**Timing is Everything** Timing is Everything! We need to ensure that we follow a timeline that provides the required lead time to build up an activity, supports the ability for direct supervisors to ...  
Posted Jun 11, 2013, 10:11 AM by Linda Villareal

**Article Ideas** Hi all - I'm sure many of you want the basketball video to be the last time virtual is in a sidebar (though the chance to keep picking on Peg ...  
Posted Jun 10, 2013, 3:48 PM by Teresa Kelly

**Virtual Difference Makers Calendar**

Today

◀ ▶

April 2014

Print

Week

Month

Agenda

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	31	Apr 1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		1pm VDM				
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	May 1	2	3

Events shown in time zone: Eastern Time



# Difference Makers Website: Users

**KAPLAN**  
UNIVERSITY

Center for Teaching and Learning

Search this site

Home Training/Development Scholarship Community Faculty Resources Chair Resources About CTL Live Help KUVillage Virtual DM



**Our Mission:** As a part of the Kaplan Way initiative to be a "Great Place" and guided by Kaplan's five core values, the KHEG Difference Makers promote a positive and rewarding employee experience by creating a sustainable work culture, prioritizing transparent communication, nurturing employee development, and recognizing the great work done by valued employees throughout the organization.

Led by Co-Chief Difference Makers **Marla Cartwright** and **Teresa Kelly**, the Virtual Difference Maker Team is comprised of individuals from across KHEG who brainstorm, plan and create events and activities for our remote employees. See our "updates" link below to see our latest activities. And to learn more about becoming a Virtual Difference Maker Team member yourself, contact us as [DMVirtual@kaplan.edu](mailto:DMVirtual@kaplan.edu).

Co-Chief Difference Makers Teresa Kelly and Marla Cartwright were honored to be among those awarded **The Kaplan Way Leadership Award** for "A Great Place". We're proud to share this with our fellow Chief Difference Makers for the ground locations, as well as our virtual colleagues! And we look forward to an exciting 2014!



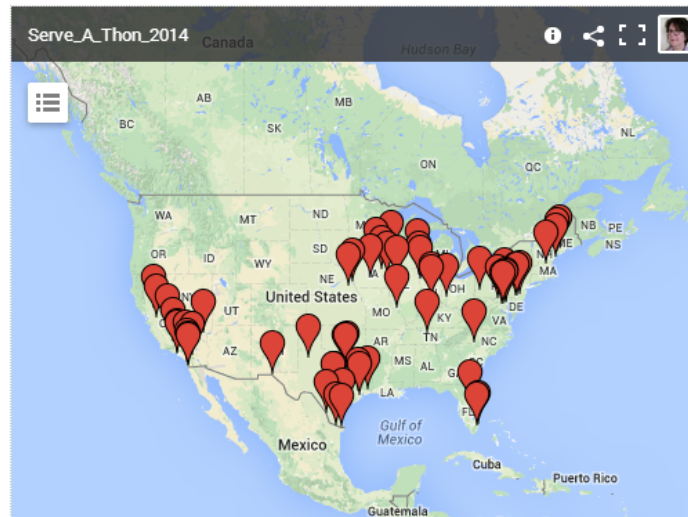
# Serve-A-Thon



## Virtual Difference Makers Sponsor October 24 Serve-A-Thon for Virtual Employees

How can you take part in the largest single day of community service in our history? It's easy!  
Choose an option below:

**1. Review the map to participate on-site.** Check below to see all the locations (offices, learning centers, colleges, etc.). If you're located within a convenient distance, feel free to contact organizer Beth Smith at [bsmith3@kaplan.edu](mailto:bsmith3@kaplan.edu) so she can assist with making plans to volunteer.





# United Way

## Virtual Difference Makers



Learn more about the  
[Virtual Difference Makers!](#)

## United Way Campaign, Sept 8-19: Virtual Challenge!

**Update:** Over \$6,000 in Virtual Donations -- Thank you!

Join KHEG's **Virtual Difference Makers** as we spotlight **United Way**, what they do and all the great ways you can get involved and help out!

First, you'll want to view a special message from [Lisa Gefen Sicilian](#), KHEG, Chief Administrative Officer.

Then, be on the lookout for a United Way email Monday, September 8th ("ePledge United Way"). Once you click the link in their specific email, it will automatically enter you into the site with your name and contact information pre-populated, if you choose to do so. And just by clicking on the link and entering the pledge site, you will automatically be entered into our weekly pledge prize contest! In fact, you can visit the online pledge site for a chance to WIN a Kindle Fire or iPad mini. ([Learn more](#) at KUNet) 📱  
Fast, quick and easy!

But that's not the only way to win prizes! In celebration of our United Way Campaign, we invite you to view each of these (very brief) videos below to learn more about **United Way** and then enter a trivia quiz for a **chance to win prizes** with our [United Way Trivia Game](#) -- good luck, everyone!

### 1. What Is United Way?

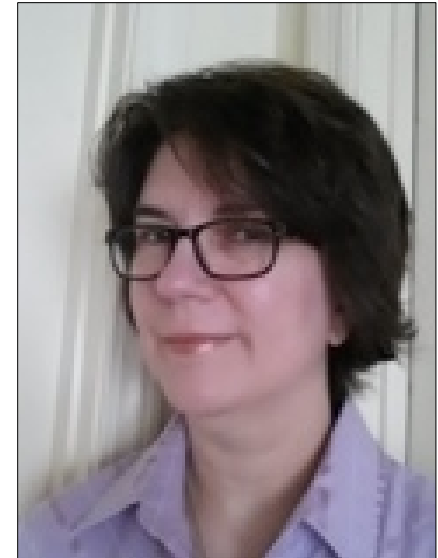


# 2015 Activities

- Spring Pedometer Challenge
- Continue Wellness programs
- United Way Campaign
- Serve-A-Thon Campaign
- KU Anniversary recognitions:
  - Personalized email sent to virtual
  - Includes signature line art to denote anniversary
  - Over 600 sent in 2015 to date

# Contact Information

If you would like to learn more or share ideas, please contact me:  
[mcartwright@kaplan.edu](mailto:mcartwright@kaplan.edu)



Thank  
you