

## Ellie Fund office gets a facelift



Photo by Kate Flock

Julie Nations, executive director of the Ellie Fund that assists patients with breast cancer, works in her newly refurbished office. The space was made over by GoodDeeds, a lifestyle management company.

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GateHouse News Service  
Wed Sep 05, 2007, 01:23 PM EDT

Needham -

Someone walking into the Ellie Fund's Hillside Avenue office would find a warm, comfortable environment with beige and pink walls — a far cry from what the office looked like in the spring.

“There were big, old clunky desks, with electric blue paint on the wall,” said Jennifer Conley, director of client services at GoodDeeds LLC, a life management company that volunteered to fix up the Ellie Fund office. “It was this horrible, glow-in-the-dark paint.”

Jeff Popkin co-founded the Ellie Fund, which assists women with breast cancer, with his brother, Eliot, in honor of their late mother. Popkin, who also runs Boston Event Guide, lent the Ellie Fund space in his offices two years ago, which was a walk-in closet.

As the Ellie Fund expanded, Julie Nations, its executive director, needed the larger space to bring in more staff. Before, she was almost a one-woman show. So after recently restructuring Boston Event Guide, Jeff Popkin gave the Ellie Fund more office space, but it wasn't quite suited for the Ellie Fund's work.

“It had a completely different paint color, vibe, usage,” Nations said about the space when it was first handed over to her. “It was not the serene, calm place it is now. It was frenetic.”

In May, there was an Ellie Fund event at the Boston Harbor Hotel, Kelley for Ellie, in reference to WCVB-TV Channel 5 anchor Kelley Tuthill, who is battling breast cancer. GoodDeeds was one of the companies donating its services in an auction at the event.

“We felt we wanted to do more,” said Beth Miller, president and founder of GoodDeeds. “Julie told us they were moving into a new space and if we were willing to, we could do an office makeover.”

GoodDeeds jumped on the opportunity. Jennifer Conley, along with GoodDeeds associate Deb Lowe, spearheaded the work on the office space, given the task of making order out of controlled chaos — but chaos nonetheless. They spent between 38-40 hours on the makeover.

“She wanted something calming, almost a spa-like feel to it,” Conley said.

In the new layout, Nations’ desk is clearly delineated, with a small conference table behind her desk for additional workspace. A mini-fridge and a coffee maker were also brought in to make a break room. And a waiting area was put together, with two upholstered chairs and coffee tables.

“We wanted those spaces to be clear and separate and build around it,” Conley said.

Beige was picked as a color for its earth tone quality, while a subdued shade of pink — the color representing breast cancer research efforts — was used as a nod to the Ellie Fund’s objectives.

GoodDeeds was able to get other companies, such as Benezra Boxes, to donate its services — including moving furniture and painting — to the project. The only services the Ellie Fund needed to pay for were for furniture assembly and carpet cleaning.

Miller was glad her company could help the Ellie Fund, especially considering her family’s background with cancer. Her sister is a breast cancer survivor, while her father died of cancer.

“Cancer is near and dear to me,” Miller said. “We are helping an organization that did a lot for me. When patients come in, they’ll be in a beautiful, relaxing place.”

Nations was thrilled with the work GoodDeeds did in her office, noting what it means for the organization’s future.

“GoodDeeds is a busy company, and for them to take time to do a pro bono job for us is mind blowing,” Nations said. “GoodDeeds gave us a space we can grow in.”

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