

I am a nametag – Nonprofits First

I have a magnetic back and while it's great that I don't put holes in your clothes, I do get caught on the seat belt sometimes.

While only a small thing, I get to be a part of some pretty big things at Nonprofits First.

What do I hear?

The struggling young nonprofit who has fought so hard to become the realization of dreams. I hear the requests for help with funding, board governance, finance rules and government regulations.

I listen to them ask for guidance and support.

What do I see?

I'm staring at the steering wheel, thumbs drumming nervously? Or is that excitedly?

I am heading into Rising Leaders, where I watch nonprofit leaders push themselves to be better. Where they learn to work with other nonprofits, identify their own strengths and then apply them back at their organizations.

What do I feel?

I feel hugged by Sue Mann at Bright Minds Processing as she shared the story of a young boy in Delray who was legally blind, his mother terrified he would become a burden on the state. Elijah now can see, can read, will drive to work someday and contribute back to the community that served him.

I remember when a year ago Bright Minds lost their nonprofit status and we helped them get reinstated.

What do I smell? That's just silly, I don't have a nose.

So, what do I see?

I see the once struggling young nonprofit find new life and structure after attending our free 101 for the 501 program.

I see the smiles of success when a grant is won, a partnership forged, a family in need served.

What do I feel?

The pride watching our Rising Leaders graduate after completing service projects and exercising self-growth. Pride in our interns as they help other nonprofits with projects who lack the time and expertise. Pride in our Advancing Leaders as they become mentors and nonprofit CEOs who know how to lead with compassion.

So yeah, sometimes I sit in the bottom of a bag, stuck to paperclips or jammed in the center console with a pair of sunglasses and ink pens.

But mostly, I share in the joy of your mission.

The beloved Mr. Fred Rogers talked about when he was scared, how his mother said to, "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping."

But who will help the helpers when they are tired or scared, when they need support and guidance, and y'know – funding?

We do.

We serve every cause.

We help anyone who asks.

We even help many that didn't know how to ask.

So, what do I know?

That I am so much more than just a name tag.