



Newsletter

March 2009

Allocations

The United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties would like to invite you to participate in our annual allocations process, where panels of community volunteers listen to agency presentations, ask questions and make recommendations as to whether United Way should fund them and if so at what level.

One of the most important responsibilities United Way has each year is to determine agency funding and your involvement would certainly be appreciated. This year's funding is more critical than ever, as many of our partner agencies are feeling the direct impact of the economic crisis.

The first three Mondays and Tuesdays in April, the United Way will be conducting 2 separate Citizen Review panels from 12:30 to 4 p.m. and 5:30 to 9 p.m.

If you are interested in volunteering please email the following information to united-1@rea-alp.com: Name, Address, Daytime Phone, Email, and Place of Work (for delivery of materials). If you serve on the Board of Directors or volunteer with any Douglas or Pope County agency that United Way has funded, please list the agency or agencies

For more information please call the United Way office at 763-4840. This will definitely be one of the most rewarding evenings that you will have the opportunity to experience.

Beer & Wine Tasting Gala

Over 400 attended the first United Way Beer and Wine Tasting Gala Friday February 20. The event, held at the Arrowwood Resort and Conference Center was sponsored by Michelob, H. Boyd Nelson and Arrowwood

The event was a huge success, raising over \$4,000. Plans are already underway for next year. The date will be determined soon.

Thanks to the following beverage vendors:

- Carlos Creek Winery
- H. Boyd Nelson
- Viking Coca-Cola
- Phillips Wine & Spirits
- Quality Wine and Spirits
- Salud America
- Summit Brewing
- Beverage Wholesalers

Thanks to the following food vendors:

- Arrowwood
- Bistro to Go
- Butler's Pantry
- Elden's Food Fair
- Fat Daddy's
- Pete's County Market

Thanks to the Terry Kennedy and Al Leiffort for providing the music and to Echo Press, KXRA, KIKV and KSAX for their advertising support.

Thanks to everyone who attended the event and made it so much fun. We look forward to next year when we hope it will grow into a bigger and better event.

Activities & Events Calendar

March 14

All-Community Breakfast
Second Saturday of every month.
United Methodist Church,
2210 6th Avenue East, 9-10:30 a.m.
Call 846-1275 to volunteer

March 12, 3-6 pm

Someplace Safe's Open House
Celebrating their 2nd Anniversary
700 Cedar St., Ste. 237. Alexandria

April 30

Someplace Safe's Annual Award
Banquet at Broadway Ballroom 5:30
p.m. reception and cash bar, dinner
at 6 p.m. Jill Blashack Strahan, key
note speaker. Silent Auction, music
by Jeitz Family. Tickets \$20.

March - April 15

Free Tax Clinic to help low income
individuals and families claim EITC
(Earned Income Tax Credit)

See page 3 for details.

April 3-4

Windmill Project - Parent Retreat call
320-763-9228 for parents of children
with special needs and disabilities.

April

United Way Allocations

June 15- UW Golf Classic

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A message from Brian Gallagher
 President and CEO, United Way of America

Early learning is the foundation of a strong economy. It prepares tomorrow's workforce for global competition while ensuring that the children of today's workers enter school ready to learn.

Studies show that a child who comes to school with the social, emotional and cognitive skills needed for success is more likely to do well in school, graduate, go on to college – and become the kind of worker that helps America compete for the world-class jobs of tomorrow.

Lagging Behind

But today, almost half of U.S. kindergarteners come to school behind. By this we mean at risk for failure because they're lacking developmentally-appropriate language and literacy skills. Children from low-wage families are 1-2 years further behind. Unfortunately, most never catch up.

We're seeing the impact now. This year, almost 4 million freshmen will enter high school but more than 25 percent will not graduate. More than half of all students of color will not graduate.

Invest Early

We're undercutting our children and our future: as global competition demands ever higher workforce skills, the U.S. economy is producing fewer educated workers. That's why top economists and business leaders are calling for a new approach: advising policymakers to invest in young children, where the return on investment is stronger before they become low-skill adults.

We need to confront this issue head on, and engage leaders from all sectors at the national, state and local level. There is no time to waste, and no community that can ignore this issue.

That's why our vision is to build a national network of business leaders who will be "champions for children" -- who can stand up together to help build public will for legislation, programs and budgets that support young children.

Over the last year, we have been working at the grassroots level to enlist and enroll these business leaders to advocate for early learning. We've created tools to help local United Ways and partners identify, educate, persuade and activate business leaders around the issue of early learning. United Ways are already reporting success.

Looking for Leaders

This is part of our national public engagement campaign, Born Learning, which is designed to help parents, caregivers and communities support early learning.

We hope that you as a leader in your community will come and join our partnership as we work on this initiative to secure the future of learning for our children and their families.

Dolly Parton Registrations Grow



Dolly Parton Imagination Library Program continues to register children

Each registered child up to the age of 5 receives an age-appropriate book, free of charge, mailed to them each and every month. Dollywood Foundation provides the books and United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties donations pays the \$30 annual postage.

This program has been a wonderful way to introduce children to the wonderful world of books. Early exposure to reading increases a child's vocabulary threefold by the age of 5, better preparing them to enter kindergarten. The interaction of parents reading to their children is also beneficial.

As the popularity of this program increases, we continue to look to area residents, businesses, and service organizations for support. A number of service organizations have committed their support for 2008.

For more information on this program or if you are interested in sponsoring a child, call the United Way office at 763-4840. Details can be found on our web at www.uwdp.org.

- Some 46% of kindergarteners come to school at risk for failure, with low-income children another 1-2 years behind. ¹
- Early learning programs can generate 12% public rate of return, according to the Federal Reserve Bank in Minneapolis. ²



- Of 50 children who are having trouble learning to read in kindergarten, 44 will still have trouble in 3rd grade – and children without reading skills by 3rd grade are unlikely to graduate. ³
- Investing \$1 in a child's success early on saves \$17 down the road with tangible results measured in lower crime, fewer single parents, and higher individual earnings and education levels. ⁴

Volunteers Needed

United Way is seeking volunteers for the following:

Allocations- April 6, 7, 13, 14, 20 & 21.

Golf Classic - June 15

Silent Auction & Chili Feed - October 6

If you are willing to help with any of these events, call the United Way office at 763-4840.

Wings has a fundraiser scheduled for April. They need volunteers to help put pin wheels together that will be sold for gardens. They also need volunteers to help with child care at the Transitional Housing unit every Monday from 4:15-5:30 p.m. and at Plus kids from 6:30-7:45 p.m. for the Men's Group which is starting March 2. Call WINGS at 763-6638 to volunteer.

Douglas County Hospital is in need of volunteers to help in the Joint Replacement Center on weekends. Please contact Vickie Olmschenk at 762-1511 for more information.

Let's Go Fishing with Seniors. If you like to fish and enjoy being outdoors, Let's Go Fishing with Seniors is devoted to enriching the lives of individuals age 55 years and greater through fishing and boating excursions that build relationships and create memories. No fishing experience required. For more information contact Mary at (320) 762-3047.

Someplace Safe would like volunteers to help move furniture, paint offices, sit in on court hearings, work in the office, help with fundraising, help with scrap booking, mailings and more. Contact Susie at 320-762-1995.

West Central Minnesota Communities Action still needs volunteers to help with the tax clinics. There are many opportunities for making coffee, helping with food, and printing forms. Call Randi at 218-685-4486 or call the United Way Office at 320-763-4840.

School District 206 has an immediate need for a 5th grade math tutor after school. For more information, please contact Ruth at 320-762-5397 or email at rturner@alexandria.k12.mn.us.

Honoring Friends and Family with Special Gifts

Memorial Gifts

Some things do last forever. By making a memorial gift you can honor a friend or loved one even after they are gone. Their community was important to them. By giving to United Way, you honor them by supporting people who need it most in their home community. Memorial Gifts to the United Way are listed in our monthly newsletter.

Gifts Honor Special Person or Event

Honor a special event such as a birthday, baptism, or anniversary with a gift that will help others. A great idea for that "hard to buy for" person! These will also be listed in our newsletter.

Leave a Legacy

Gifts can take many forms. It can be as basic as designating the United Way as a beneficiary in a will or life insurance policy. It can also be more complex, such as designating funds from a trust account. Often times, there can be tax advantages as well, depending on the asset donated. An experienced financial planner or tax advisor can play a valuable role in determining the appropriate plan.

Please contact our office at 763-4840 for additional information.

United Way Golf Classic

Mark your calendars! Warm weather and green grass will be here before we know it.

June 15 is the date for the 2009 Golf Classic at the Geneva Golf Course. It is time to start lining up golf teams. If you have golfed in the past and will be golfing again this year just let us know and we will get your name on the list.

The committee will be looking for items to be given away at the tournament so if you have any items or ideas we would appreciate a call.

Anyone interested in volunteering to be part of the planning committee can call Corliss at the United Way office at 763-4840. Additional information will be on our website in March.

Volunteer Spotlight



Terry Kennedy

This month's featured volunteer is Terry Kennedy. Terry is a retired surgeon and currently has taken his love of music to a new level by building and selling handmade guitars. Terry is currently a United Way board member and past Campaign Chair. This year he chaired the Leadership in Giving program. This past year Terry has performed in two United Way Irish Music Fun Fests and he and his friend Al Leiffort provided the music at the Beer & Wine Tasting. Terry's willingness to share his time and talents have been so important and helpful at the United Way. Thanks, Terry for all you do!

Local Events

Diversity Resource Action Alliance presents "My Journey" by George Odio at the ATC on March 11 at 4:15 p.m. in room 205. George was born in Cuba prior to Castro's overthrow and knows the importance of freedom and through various life experiences, understands that we can be held in captivity not only physically but also spiritually. Our reaction to the "curve balls" in life determines our growth.

George's life confirms who is really in control. He has lived in Alexandria for the past 21 years with his wife and three children and runs businesses in Alexandria, Morris, Glenwood, Wadena, Melrose and Sauk Centre. He is an avid cyclist and Nordic skier and has assisted in coaching the high school cross-country ski team for the past several years. Hear this informative talk on March 11 at the ATC.

Board of Directors

Board President: Lisa DeKrey	Tastefully Simple
Vice President: Don Kleine	American Foods Group
Secretary: David Kent	3-M
Treasurer: Carol Juul	Bremer Bank, Alexandria
Board Members: Susan Boerhave	Viking Savings Association
Dale Erickson	Henry's Foods
Bill Finley	Unicel
David Gray	Douglas County Hospital
Jennifer Haugen	Pope County
Marc Illies	Alexandria Extrusion
Terry Kennedy	Retired Surgeon
Shelia Marciniak	American Family Insurance
Carol Meissner	Douglas County Public Health
Tom Peterman	Douglas Machine, Inc.
Terry Quist	School District #206
Chris Schroeder	Merrill Lynch
Karin Tank	City of Alexandria
John Wosepka	Douglas County

Campaign Cabinet

Campaign Chair: Don Kleine	American Foods Group
Leadership in Giving: Terry Kennedy	Retired Surgeon
Pat Kennedy	
Annual Golf Classic: Dale Erickson	Henry's Foods, Inc.
Chili Feed: Marcia Gae Schmitt	Brophy Bay, Inc.
Silent Auction: Kelly Janssen	Glenwood State Bank

United Way Staff

Linda Roles	Executive Director
Jessica Boyer	Community Impact Director
Randy Bredeson	Technology & Financial Assistant
Corliss Stark	Special Events and Volunteer Coordinator

Mission Statement

Mobilizing Douglas and Pope County resources to create sustained changes in community conditions to improve lives.

2008/09 United Way Partner Agencies and Programs

211 - First Call
 Alexandria Family School
 Alexandria Literacy Project
 Alexandria Senior Center
 Boy Scouts, Northern Lights Council
 Brandon, Evansville, Ashby ECFE
 Catholic Charities Club 1
 Confidence Learning Center
 Douglas County Jail Elder Network
 Girl Scouts, MN & WI Lakes & Pines
 Lakes & Prairies Community Childcare Resource & Referral
 Lakes Area Recreation
 Legal Services of NW Minnesota
 Lutheran Social Service
 Minnewaska Area ECFE/School Readiness
 Miracle Horse Riders

North Country Food Bank
 Pope County Family Collaborative
 Salvation Army
 School District #206-
 Someplace Safe
 TePPAC (*Teen Pregnancy Prevention Action Council*)
 Teen Court
 UCAN (*United Communities Advocating Non-Violence*)
 The Village Family Service Center
 Windmill Project
 WINGS *Child Abuse, PLUS Kids, & Transitional Housing*
 Young People's Place
 Youth as Resources

Community Impact Programs:

- Free Tax Clinics
- Coat Distribution
- Stuff the Bus (School Supplies)
- Back Pack Attack (Pilot program providing food for children over the weekend)
- Dolly Parton Imagination Library

**Underneath everything we are,
 Underneath everything we do.
 We are all people.
 Connected, interdependent, united.
 And when we reach out a hand to one,
 We influence the condition of all.
 That's what it means to
 LIVE UNITED.**

United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties

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GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.

LIVE UNITED 