

Be a champion for getting involved

Advocate. It's the middle child in United Way's call to action: give, advocate, volunteer. I like to think of advocate as what we do with our voice. We are all walking radio stations. We are each a disc jockey. We choose our own programming.

I encourage you to tune in to an action oriented station. Think about what you do to help the community, to help your neighbors, and to help those you have not even met. Share your story. Make some noise.



**Amanda
Burt**

Maybe you received help. You volunteered. You invested in the greater good. Make your impact larger and tell a friend. We all win when a child succeeds in school, when families' basic needs are met, and when people have good health. Be an advocate for action in our community.

United Way of Northwest Georgia, with more than 10,600 donors and 3,500 volunteers in Whitfield and Murray counties, is creating the building blocks of a good life.

Last year, through our 211 Information & Referral hotline, United Way connected 34,300 individuals to community services such as basic needs resources, physical and mental health services, domestic violence shelters, childcare, counseling, and tutoring.

Over the past month, many community superheroes have stepped up to the plate and saved the day. Our local TJmaxx employees, Murray PEPPA Club, Dalton State students, Boy Scout Troop 65, Mohawk Industries' employees, Starbucks Employees, Dalton Chiropractic Clinic, AmeriCorps VISTA members, and Second Mile Church all rolled up their sleeves and volunteered with United Way's Volunteer Center. By reaching out a hand to one, you can influence the condition of all. That's what it means to live united.

Our spring season of service continues to connect volunteers with meaningful opportunities to create change and improve lives. Registration is now open for projects in May.

On Saturday, May 14, artists are needed at Looper Speech and Hearing Center, a United Way funded program. The beautification project will take place from 9 a.m. to noon. Volunteers will repaint lines for parking spaces, repair the agency sign, landscape the area, and stain picnic tables.

Join us at Friendship House, a United Way agency that provides nationally accredited childcare, and volunteer for Music Appreciation Week, May 16-20. Volunteers are needed from 9-11 a.m. each day to share musical talents and help with craft activities.

Also the week of May 14 we are celebrating Spruce It Up Week, with outdoor landscaping projects at Carter Hope Center, Oakhaven and The Family Crisis Center. Projects are scheduled for Tuesday and Thursday, May 10 and 12, from 9-11 a.m. and 3-5 p.m., and for Saturday, May 14, from 9-11 a.m. This is a great opportunity to learn more about three United Way agencies that provide residential services for people rebuilding their lives and coping with drug addiction, teen pregnancy or domestic violence.

Join a project by registering at ourunitedway.org and clicking on "volunteer." Or "like" our Facebook page, join the project events, and from there you can easily be an advocate and invite your friends.

Amanda Burt is the president of the United Way of Northwest Georgia