

## UNITED WAY OF NORTHWEST GEORGIA

# Let's get engaged

Community leadership has always been strong in Whitfield and Murray counties. The caliber of passion and expertise that volunteers bring to area non-profits makes the fabric of our community unique and the quality of life high.

Steve Pound, the 2011 United Way Chairman of the Board of Directors, is one of the best examples of servant leadership in our community. With whatever Steve becomes engaged — Chamber of Commerce, First Methodist



**Amanda Burt**

Church, or United Way — he always brings his heart, his calm voice of reason and his keen insight on how to make an organization better. Steve and his sweet family will be moving to Savannah this month and their absence will be felt across the

community in many organizations.

Not only does United Way of Northwest Georgia need dedicated board members like Steve Pound, but our partner agencies and other non-profits are always seeking active community members who can lend their time and expertise by joining a board of directors. If you are interested in helping shape the future of our community, I urge you to register for Boardwalk. This one-day program identifies, recruits, and connects volunteers to leadership and policy making positions in nonprofit organizations in the Northwest Georgia area.

Topics covered at Boardwalk include: board roles and responsibilities, legal and fiduciary obligations, non-profit marketing, fundraising, finance and community building.

This year's class will be on Wednesday, Aug. 24 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at United Way of Northwest Georgia, 816 S.Thornton Ave., Dalton, GA. You can apply online at [www.ourunitedway.org](http://www.ourunitedway.org).

Being a board member is just one way to be engaged — volunteers at all levels are needed. One

way to learn more about area agencies is to visit [ourunitedway.org](http://ourunitedway.org) and click on "volunteer" and then take the time to visit organizations personally.

The best volunteers and the happiest donors are those who are given the time to explore the inner workings and impact of the charities they support. Shaw Industries runs a very effective United Way Campaign, mobilizing thousands of local employees to give, advocate, and volunteer in Northwest Georgia.

More than 163 employees on Shaw teams from local facilities recently toured United Way partner agencies to learn more about the impact of their donations.

Carol Cook, Shaw Plant 98, was impressed by the level of service provided by RossWoods, a United Way funded program. "I learned that RossWoods is wonderful for Dalton, especially for people who have parents who need special care during the day. It is a secure, safe place with beautiful surroundings. You know your loved ones are taken care of," said Ms. Cook.

In addition to learning about United Way's community funded programs, employees also learned that more than 3,500 volunteers are part of United Way's annual impact. Maria G. Garcia, also from Shaw Plant 98, was amazed by "the sheer power of volunteerism in our community."

Other companies are choosing this model to educate their employees about United Way and the services that are available. If your company would like to schedule employee tours to learn more about the work of United Way and our community partners, I invite you to contact John Relaford at [john.relaford@ourunitedway.org](mailto:john.relaford@ourunitedway.org).

Whether you want to give of your financial resources, advocate by becoming a board member of a community organization, or get involved in a hands-on volunteer experience, United Way is here to help.

*Amanda Burt is the executive director of Dalton-based United Way of Northwest Georgia*