

Kim Harper making a difference

Having just wrapped up our 2016 Make a Difference Day and graduating another class of ready and able volunteers prepared to actively engage on nonprofits boards through our Boardwalk program, it gives me pause to reflect on just how special our community is.

How many communities our size have the support of thousands of businesses and individuals who give \$3.8 million a year and mobilize 4,000 volunteers for an additional \$1 million in impact? We have so many great things we can say about Whitfield and Murray counties, but sometimes we forget that we are home to special people who care deeply about others.

To borrow from Winston Churchill, "You make a living by what you get. You make a life by what you give." In my role at United Way, I have the honor and privilege of working with some of the kindest, most generous and caring people you will ever meet. One of these special people is Kim Harper, a human resources professional at Beaulieu of America. I was introduced to Kim Harper by Ralph Boe, then CEO of Beaulieu. We were

looking for someone to join our United Way Board of Directors from the company.



Amanda Burt

Kim answered the call with passion. She was an active member of the United Way Board of Directors from 2008-2014

and has been volunteering with United Way for almost 20 years. Kim made it her mission to become educated about the work of United Way in our focus areas of education, basic needs, and health and share that message with others. She has been instrumental in many successful employee campaigns and leads the associates on impact tours to see how each and every dollar is put to the highest and best use to improve lives.

Great things happen through involvement and impact! When asked about her dedication to United Way, Kim shared,

"Through the years, I've been able to see first-hand how United Way puts my funds to good use. United Way is an awesome way to become involved in the community and to be a part of the great things happening in Whitfield and Murray counties."

Kim has a personal connection to United Way. She added, "My niece is a long-time client of Murray County Developmental Center, a United Way Community Partner, which serves adults with developmental disabilities. This organization is instrumental in providing one-on-one interaction with her. Through the center's outreach program, she is given the opportunity to have normal experiences, and her family is able to balance work and home life."

Kim's family is also impacted by RossWoods Adult Day Services, another United Way Community Partner.

"My aunt had a stroke several years ago which left her incapacitated. She spends a couple of days each week at RossWoods. This time enables her husband, who is her full-time caregiver, to go to work.

Because of your gift to United Way, my aunt has the opportunity to socially interact and experience the joy of being with others."

Great things start with you! Thanks to your gift to United Way last year, 51 adults with developmental disabilities were provided job coaching to find or maintain employment. Another 301 elderly and disabled adults were provided with nursing care, bathing, nutrition, therapeutic activities or job support.

As Campaign Chairman Tom Bundros and his team enter the home stretch of the campaign, please think about how you can be a part of making a difference, like Kim Harper, and help us reach our \$3.8 million goal. Last year alone, the lives of 60,000 people were impacted by United Way. It takes everyone working together to create a better community.

Give today at ourunit.edway.org/give or mail a check to United Way of NWGA, P.O. Box 566, Dalton, GA 30722.

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