

GUEST COLUMN

Community proves the power of we

The power of we is alive and well in Whitfield and Murray counties. The fabric of our community is rich with a history of caring individuals who are purposeful in helping neighbors and friends. Let me share with you two powerful statistics:

- 4,724 donors stretched to meet our goal of \$3.35 million during the 2012 United Way of Northwest Georgia campaign.
- 2,945 people gave 57,562 hours of service to the community through United Way of Northwest Georgia in 2012.

At our campaign kick-off back in September, we gave out hundreds of bracelets that said, “Think of we before me.” As we reflect on the level of volunteerism and philanthropy of our community, it is clear: the power of we is strong.

I would like to thank Delyn Ellis of Shaw Industries for a super year as board chair. Celeste Creswell, an attorney with Miller and Martin, PLLC, is the new 2013 board chair. Celeste is a seasoned United Way volunteer, serving on our board of directors since 2010. Celeste was the 2011 community investment chair, has been active in the Young Leaders Society, and is a junior Alexis de Tocqueville Society member.

We are fortunate to have an awesome bunch of new board members. I would like to welcome to the United Way Board of Directors: Kasey Carpenter, The Oakwood; Oliver Cobb, Oliver Cobb and Associates; Bob Ringer, Shaw Industries; Doug Schneller, J&J Industries; Karen Townsend, community volunteer; and Joe Yarbrough, Mohawk Industries.

The 2013 United Way officers are: Celeste Creswell, board chair; Tim Ausmus, Corporate volunteer council chair; Delyn Ellis, immediate past chair; Haley Fletcher, finance chair; Brenda Knowles, board chair-elect; Lori McDaniel, marketing chair; Bob Ringer, campaign chair; Pat Sain, community investment chair; and Audrey Williams, community solutions chair.

We are fortunate to have community-minded local companies who generously support the United Way campaign year in and year out. Kevin Sanders, our 2012 campaign chairman, presented several corporate awards at our recent annual meeting.

Americhem received the Employee Participation Award. Americhem had 82 percent participation in the United Way campaign, which is the highest for any company with fewer than 100 employees. Gary Dale and Carra McGuire did an awesome job leading this campaign.

J&J Industries received the Employee Participation

Award. Eighty percent of their employees contributed during the United Way campaign, which is the highest for any company with more than 100 employees.

CEO David Jolly and team ran a stellar campaign with leadership and Young Leaders presentations. Randy Foster was the 2012 campaign coordinator and led the J&J employees in participating in United Way agency tours. The already strong leadership campaign grew by 9 percent.

Brown Industries received an Impact Award. Brown’s campaign was a pacesetter and posted an increase of 47 percent in the number of donors. Their overall campaign grew by 10 percent in pledges. The positive results could be attributed to the leadership of Lynn Whitworth and Stuart Nelson and their personal participation in the employee campaign presentations.

Marketing Alliance received an Impact Award. Marketing Alliance’s overall campaign grew by 15 percent which was the result of a 52 percent growth in the number of donors. Bryan Hair provided solid leadership to the campaign along with Sandi Puckett, the campaign coordinator, who delivered powerful stories during employee presentations.

Dalton Public Schools received a Growth Award; their campaign nearly doubled this year, ending with \$23,601. Campaign coordinator Nancy Zahn led the campaign with creativity

across all the Dalton Public Schools facilities.

Mohawk Industries received a Growth Award for having the largest growth in dollars. The company posted a 17 percent increase over last year, representing \$60,533. Joe Yarbrough led the campaign this year and did an awesome job. Mohawk Industries also sponsors Make a Difference Day annually, providing funding for service projects in which over 700 volunteers participate.

Dorsett Industries received the Leadership Giving Award. The United Way campaign at Dorsett is highly supported by Bryan Macon and the company’s management staff. Bob Goodroe was the campaign coordinator this year and helped the company post an unbelievable 136 percent growth in their employee giving and 95 percent growth in their total overall.

Engineered Floors received the New Campaign Award. Zac Adamson led the campaign with the support of James Lesslie and Bob Shaw. This first year employee campaign raised \$33,016.

Hamilton Health Care System received the Teamwork Award. Hamilton Health Care System’s campaign grew by 29 percent this year. Hamilton has a large campaign team, made of representatives from every department at the hospital. With the support of Shawn Molsberger, Westcott Center Director Mike Stein led the campaign with help from Amber Frick and Melanie Turner. Their team had lots of creativity and enthusiasm.

IVC US Inc. received the Innovation Award. With the support of CEO Xavier Steyaert, Micah Riggle has been instrumental in getting the IVC-United Way cam-

paign off to a great start. IVC was innovative by allowing their employees time off to attend United Way agency tours. The shift and department managers who attended the tours were able to testify during the campaign presentations. IVC posted a 25 percent increase in their total campaign.

Vance Bell, CEO, accepted the The Extra Degree award on behalf of Shaw Industries. Shaw’s 2012 campaign for United Way of Northwest Georgia totaled \$1,427,191. Shaw Industries’ campaign team was led by Clay Osborn who ran an outstanding campaign with 3,995 donors to United Way of Northwest Georgia. Employees had the opportunity to tour United Way programs over the summer and were able to share with fellow employees the impact of United Way on local citizens.

Shaw’s Extra Degree: Shaw Industries is a huge contributor to local volunteer efforts with their employees contributing 56,195 hours of service in 2012. During the summer, Shaw Industries hosted “LIVE UNITED” Week of Service, mobilizing over 400 employees to participate in 12 different volunteer projects. What is truly

amazing about Shaw Industries’ campaign is that even though the employee base was smaller, Shaw employees gave \$60,274 more than last year, representing a 4 percent increase. Thank you to CEO Vance Bell and the executive team for speaking at United Way presentations and promoting a company-wide culture of philanthropy.

The Shaw Industries campaign team of Clay Osborn, Season Chapman, Susan Bramblett and Vicky Williams were recognized as Campaign Coordinators of the Year.

Media awards were presented to the following individuals for helping us share the United Way story: Curtis Callaway, William Bronson, Judy Elliott, Chester Greene, Jim Lansing, Lori McDaniel and Monica Palacios.

Thank you to everyone who gives, advocates, and volunteers on behalf of United Way. The power of we makes us a strong, vibrant community — one we all can be proud to call home.

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



Amanda Burt

SUNDAY, MARCH 31, 2013
THE DAILY CITIZEN
is presenting
Bunny Babies
... a special section
for our area Easter babies
Deadline is Noon, Thursday, March 28, 2013

You may submit your photo along with the following form to:
(no iphone photos accepted)

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P.O. Box 1167
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Asher Stokes - 3 years
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