

Nine thank yous

As I reflect on the Thanksgiving season, I am thankful for a group of committed heroes.

I would like to thank the United Way board, Campaign Cabinet, other volunteers, our staff and partner agencies for the success of the 2013 United Way campaign so far. We have spent the past several months visiting with CEOs asking for their support, touring United Way partner agencies, leading volunteer projects, and hosting campaign presentations. To date, our team has completed 120 United Way campaign presentations and more than 50 tours.

Thank you to our campaign chair, Bob Ringer. Bob is definitely a superhero. He has spent countless hours on the campaign trail thanking donors, looking for new opportunities and organizing meetings. Bob announced to the United Way Campaign Cabinet last week that he has raised 70 percent of this year's \$3.5 million goal. Go team!

I am thankful for a caring and philanthropic community. It takes an army of everyday superheroes to achieve United Way's mission: to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of our communities in Northwest Georgia. I would like to extend a thank you to a few of our biggest supporters that have run their company's campaign and reported their results to United Way:

■ BB&T

BB&T's campaign was up this year. The campaign coordinator was Chris Pierce, who attended employee presentation across the community. Bill Davies continues to be a United Way advocate and serves on our board of directors.

■ Brown Industries

Brown Industries ran an early, pacesetter campaign, which included a management campaign. They posted positive results because of Lynn Whitworth and Stewart Nelson's personal participation in the employee campaign presentations. Lynn also serves as a United Way board member and co-chair of the Women's Leadership Council.

■ Dalton Public Schools

Teachers and employees began their campaigns in September and continued through October. The individual schools have been having fun and also getting their students involved by allowing them to be creative with their own ideas about fundraising. Nancy Zahn was the campaign coordinator.

■ Dalton Utilities

Dalton Utilities runs a strong campaign year after year. They held a targeted leadership campaign this year. Russell Witherow was the campaign coordinator and worked closely with United Way in planning. The utilities campaign was successful due to presentations where all employees were encouraged to grow their gift.

■ Dorsett Industries

Dorsett's United Way campaign is highly supported by the company and its management team. Bob Goodroe coordinated the campaign. This year, 16 employees attended agency tours. Dorsett employees participate in United

Way volunteer projects throughout the year. Dorsett's United Way investment is up 12 percent over last year.

■ Hamilton Health Care System

Mike Stein led volunteers in designing and running their campaign. Thank you to our board member, Shawn Molsberger, who champions the United Way campaign each year.

■ J+J Flooring Group

Thank you to J+J for running a very successful campaign which had numerous presentations led by Cathy Swiney and Pat McCoy. An outstanding 82 percent of J+J employees gave to United Way this year, up 2 percent over last year. This year, J+J employees went on United Way tours, seeing their investment at work in our community.

■ Marketing Alliance Group

Employees enjoyed United Way tours in September so that they could share what they learned in the campaign presentations. Campaign coordinator Sandy Puckett worked closely with United Way to ensure great presentations.

■ Shaw Industries

Shaw Industries allows employees to participate in United Way tours and hosted the LIVE UNITED Week of Service which mobilized more than 400 volunteers to serve by completing hands on projects. Shaw's campaign was very successful this year. They hosted Leadership, Young Leaders Society and Women's Leadership Council meetings, as well as employee meetings in all facilities. United Way values Shaw Industries' strategic partnership. Thanks to Brenda Knowles for her leadership as Shaw's campaign chair.

As more campaigns report, I will share with you the impact of our other corporate partners.

I would like to recognize Mohawk Industries for sponsoring Make A Difference Day for the past 14 years. This year, 938 people volunteered for a total of 3,154 hours, making a \$70,504 impact to the community. We look forward to Mohawk's continued support as they run their campaign this month. Thank you to Joey Faircloth and team for leading the Mohawk campaign this year.

With a gift to United Way, you don't have to choose between a hot meal for a homebound elderly person and afterschool care for youth. Your one gift can do it all. United Way investments are impacting education, basic needs and health right here in our community.

I invite you to join me in giving to United Way. If you have not had a chance to give, please visit ourunitedway.org/give to pledge online, stop by United Way at 816 S. Thornton Ave. to pick up your pledge card, or give through payroll deduction at your employer.

Thank you for being a hero. Thank you for giving to United Way. And as always, thank you for living united.

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



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