

We've Got A Lot to be Thankful for

A message from 2009 Volunteer Campaign Chair, Keith Stover

This is a time of year to reflect on all that we have to be grateful for in our lives. As the 2009 United Way Campaign Chair, I have been humbled by the commitment that this community has shown throughout the campaign. Due to the tough economic times that we are facing and the increasing needs United Way Partner Agencies are seeing, companies and individuals continue to stretch to help stabilize the programs impacting our community.



Our campaign has reached 72% of goal. This is an important milestone; however, this is also a time to make sure we make a strong final push towards our campaign goal of \$1,876,151. Each and every pledge makes a direct impact in our community. Thank you to the hundreds of volunteers who have already spent countless hours on the campaign. Let's continue to work hard towards our goal! Our community truly understands what it means to "LIVE United."



On our way to our 2009 Campaign Goal of \$1,876,151:

72.7% to goal

\$1,363,237.27

Campaign Success Stories

Ridley Inc / Hubbard Feeds



RIDLEY Inc.

With an astounding 30.1% increase in employee gifts and a 10% increase in the corporate gift, Ridley Inc /Hubbard Feeds significantly increased their campaign levels.

Ridley/Hubbard's campaign committee generated enthusiasm with a rally week filled with fun activities and fund-raisers, which ultimately led to employee giving totalling \$26,082! Some of the activities and fund-raisers included Jeans Day stickers, "Hotel Stay" raffle tickets, a Book Sale (donated books, games, movies, etc.), silent auction, \$25 gift cards (for employees who turned in their pledge cards) and Walking Taco's drawing and a "Build your own Sundae" bar.

Thanks to the personal commitment of CEO Steve VanRoekel, Ridley/Hubbard gained 7 new Heart Club members, and more than doubled their leadership dollars! Steve invited all employees to consider giving at the \$500+ Heart Club level, and treated all Heart Club givers to a special luncheon.

Thanks for your generosity, Ridley/Hubbard! Way to go!

Give.

Since our last eNewsletter, the following businesses dug deep with new 2009 Corporate Heart Club pledges:



All American Foods

Brennan Construction

First National Bank

HickoryTech

Horizon Milling

onsite energy (formerly Katolight)

Robert W. Carlstrom

Schwicker's of Mankato

Snell Motors

Tav on the Ave

The Thro Company

Tire Associates Warehouse

Blue Earth County



Each year, Blue Earth County employees have continued to grow their campaign giving to United Way. This year, their commitment was more than evident: Blue Earth County employees surpassed their own campaign goal of \$16,000 with a final pledge amount of \$17,007! To put that in perspective, this is a 10% increase over their

campaign last year!

How were they able to be so successful despite the tough economic times? ECL Jessica Beyer shared with us what happened. BEC's employee rally this year had a "Harvest Celebration" theme where employees enjoyed fall treats including pumpkin bars, apple cider, kettle corn, fall themed candies and apples (yum!). Employees also registered for great prizes such as local gift cards, paid time off and some special grand prize items thanks to Commissioners and Department Heads. But following the rally, they still hadn't reached their goal of raising \$16,000, so Jessica sent out an email to all employees, letting them know that they were just \$800 short of their pledge goal. It truly shows Blue Earth County employees' commitment to dig a little deeper because after the message was sent out, they then went on to surpass their goal by over \$1000!

By regularly communicating United Way's message to employees through emails, presentations by a United Way program partner (who is also fellow County co-worker, Al Roehm), access to United Way's website, and a welcome/introduction letter regarding United Way activities to new employees, all BEC employees got the message of how important a role we all play in ensuring local programs are in place to ensure self sufficiency, successful youth and healthy people in our community.

Congratulations to Blue Earth County on an outstanding campaign and thanks for all you do for our community!

Agency Spotlight:

Expressing the Need: The Salvation Army

How is the economy affecting our community? In talking with the local Salvation Army this morning, they are seeing more people than they've ever seen before. People are finding themselves in need of help because all of a sudden, their hours have been cut, or they've lost their job. Many of the people they are seeing have never been in this situation before and some of them are embarrassed; for 10 years they've been a giver and all of a sudden they need to ask for help themselves.



The Salvation Army is able to help people with gas vouchers to job hunt or to get to their jobs. They also provide vouchers for a couple of nights in a motel for families that suddenly find themselves homeless. They're also already

Advocate.

As you enjoy the warmth of friends this holiday season, let them know how much it means to you to **LIVE UNITED**.

Volunteer.

What can I do to volunteer in the community? How about helping the American Red Cross with their [Blood Drive](#) or [Snow Shoveling for older home owners](#) with VINE.

Check out these & lots more volunteer opportunities at our [community Volunteer database!](#)

Campaign Tip

Thank you to the thousands of individuals and corporations who have already pledged so generously to United Way. We remain optimistic that we will reach our campaign goal, but the effects of the economy are felt here in our community too and it will take every one of us to get there.

Even as we move into December and look to wrap things up, **it's definitely not too late** for an organization to run a **rally** or for individuals or corporations to **make a pledge**. United Way staff will gladly come to your organization to help set up a rally that makes the most sense for you, or to speak to your employees about the current needs in our community.

It is during these times that United Way's partner agencies need the crucial financial support the most, as they see the needs for their services increase.

seeing an increased number of families who are applying for Christmas help this year. But another crucial part of what Salvation Army does is to help make people aware of what services are available to them, especially for people who've never been in this situation before, it is so vital to have a resource to guide them through these tough times and help refer them to who can help them.

Your donation to United Way supports the Salvation Army's Emergency & Social Services programs, their Noon Feeding Program and Mobile Outreach Meals. We never know when we might find ourselves in need of help, so when you see someone who's down & out, don't just walk by; give them a good morning or good day. Give what you can.

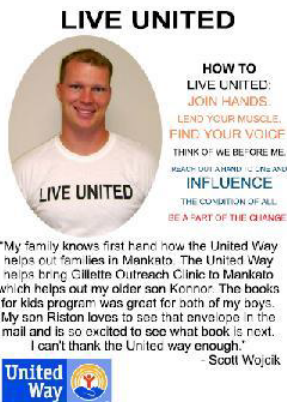
Learn more about [The Salvation Army](#)

LIVE UNITED

Why HickoryTech LIVES UNITED:

With yet another 14% increase in employee giving this year (\$51,059- wow!), HickoryTech employees continue to show tremendous support to United Way. ECL Christi Bones talked about the LIVE UNITED posters which featured 22 of HickoryTech's local employees and the reason why each of them LIVE UNITED, "we really wanted HickoryTech employees to recognize the number of people the United Way affects. There are so many stories of employees who benefit from the United Way, but other employees are not aware of their stories. We wanted this to be a way to connect employees together to help them realize they are helping not only their community, but also their co-workers, friends, etc."

Want to see what a couple of these folks had to say? [Click here](#) to read Al Kies' or Steve Wojcik's poster.



Community Impact

Corner *Update from Katie Boone, GMAUW's Community Impact Director:*

In the last eNewsletter I mentioned how our Success by 6 team worked to implement an identification and referral system for at-risk families to connect these families to resources and home-visiting support. The Success by 6 team focuses on Early Childhood efforts in our community to ensure that all children are ready to succeed once they start school and throughout life. Success by 6 has created a taskforce to explore the childcare issues and needs in our community and to help Greater Mankato Area United Way strategize on how to be most efficient and impactful in ensuring that all children have access to quality early learning environments. Updates on the progress of this taskforce will be ongoing.

I've also been busy working on the Funding Application which all agencies will submit next year in order to apply for United Way funding in 2010. March will be here before we know it and the funding process will begin all over again.

I look forward to updating you all again next month!
-Katie Boone



Thank You for Living United in the greater Mankato area by supporting the Greater Mankato Area United Way!

OPEN YOUR HEART. Reach out your hand and influence a young person. Volunteer for one hour; for a day. Use your voice for someone less fortunate. **GIVE TO THE UNITED WAY.**