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LIVE UNITED



United Way of
Southwest Virginia

www.unitedwayswva.org

FROM OUR CEO



Travis W. Staton, CEO

Fall is my favorite time of year, and this year is no exception. It's a bonus time for new beginnings: new school year, new projects, new vigor after the heat of summer. I am so excited about some of United Way's new projects: Ignite, the Financial Stability Center and our Uniting for Play grantees. I recently visited the Teen Venture Center and also got to cut the ribbon at a new playground in Scott County. Without United Way, the only play option the children in the Whippoorwill community had was an old basketball hoop. Not a fun option for a three-year-old. The young people at the Teen Venture Center are participating in "Get Active, Stay Active", a program that provides them with mentoring to learn new physical activities. For any of you who have a project in mind to get kids playing, please visit www.unitedwayswva.org/grants and download the Uniting for Play RFP and Application we have available. We would love to help even more kids have fun places to play!

In our last issue we introduced you to some new staff members at United Way. This time we must say good-bye to a staff member who is retiring. After a career-long mission to make life better for children and families in our region, Buckey Boone is passing the baton to the next generation of advocates. From his early work with the Margaret Blair Preschool in Abingdon to his recent work with Smart Beginnings, he has been an impassioned advocate for children. He spent many years as a member of the Washington County Virginia School Board and the Appalachian Peace Education Center, volunteering his time and expertise to make our community better. As a father of four young children, I am grateful to Buckey for his love for all children and his work on their behalf. We will miss Buckey's hearty, joyful laugh in our office, and wish him all the best.

I see so much potential for United Way in 2017. I am so excited about the future. I'm counting on all of us to work together to make a positive impact in our community. If you don't want to miss out on playing your part, visit www.unitedwayswva.org and Give, so that 2017 exceeds even our highest expectations.

Benjamin Disraeli said, "The secret of success is constancy to purpose." Thank you for faithfully giving so that United Way can stay true to our constancy of purpose: to make Southwest Virginia a great place to live, work and raise a family.

RETIRING THIS YEAR



Buckey Boone
Regional Director, Smart Beginnings SWVA

FOOD CITY **United Way**

CELEBRITY BAGGING

Coming to a Food City location near YOU.

Tuesday, November 22nd • 10am - 6pm

A SUCCESSFUL 9/11 WEEK OF SERVICE

With so much work to be done by first responders, it's difficult to find time to do routine maintenance of facilities. Such is the case across the entire region of Southwest Virginia, which is why United Way of Southwest Virginia hosts a region-wide 9/11 Week of Service annually to show support and give back to first responders.

First responders were invited to submit projects which, in turn, volunteers helped to complete. Volunteers and companies from across the region showed their support and appreciation this year. Thanks to numerous volunteers and sponsors, it was a pretty amazing week.



Volunteers from Project Healing Waters, People, Inc., and Flatwoods Job Corp begin painting fire hydrants at the Hiltons Virginia Fire Department

fire hydrants. In Clintwood it was painting the front of the fire station. Volunteer and junior firefighters and Brad Robinson of New People's Bank joined the cause to get the bottom half of the building completed.

Tazewell County Sheriff's officers actually came in on their time off to install a flagpole and lighting to showcase their new Thin Blue Line flag to honor first responders. Thanks to a sponsorship from Carilion Tazewell Community Hospital and the Virginia Service Foundation, the project also included lovely landscaping and benches for seating.

Gate City United Methodist Church congregation came out in full force to show support for the Scott County Sheriff's Department; over 50 officers and staff of the Sheriff's office enjoyed a fine meal and fellowship.

Dispatchers were the recipients of the volunteer force at the Wise County Sheriff's office. Volunteers from Crutchfield Corporation came in to the dispatch area to move files and clean and organize the kitchen area.

The last project was with the Washington County Sheriff's Office. With sponsorships from The Clifton Companies and Farris Funeral Service, volunteers picked up trash and landscaped the county firing range.

It's an amazing region that we live in and we are proud to serve as a conduit for organizations and volunteers to come together for the common good. Thank you to everyone involved with our 9/11 Week of Service for 2016.

For more information on volunteer opportunities with United Way and its program partners, contact Debby Loggans at 276-628-2160 or dloggans@unitedwayswva.org.

"Participating in the 9/11 Week of Service is a really great way to give back with a simple act of service that makes a huge difference – not just with the first responders, but with the entire town," said Debby Loggans, Manager of the United Way of Southwest Virginia's Volunteer Center.

"A simple act of service that makes a huge difference – not just with the first responders, but with the entire town."

The week kicked off in Hiltons where volunteers from Project Healing Waters, People, Incorporated, Flatwoods Job Corp and several individuals began the task of painting



Volunteers from Farris Funeral Service are pictured spending time on a service project at the Washington County Sheriff's Office

IGNITING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SWVA YOUTH

As fall brings in a season of change, our Ignite program brings a season of opportunity to middle school students around the region. Middle school students from our three pilot schools (Chilhowie Middle School in Chilhowie, VA; E. B. Stanley Middle School in Abingdon, VA; J I Burton High School in Norton, VA) are diving into their studies and career options for their futures.



Of the students who have completed their student assessments, the top two careers are “Veterinarian” and “Criminal Lawyer”. From this same assessment, the top three career categories are: “Arts, A/V Technology, & Communications”, “Science, Technology, Engineering and Math”, and “Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources”. As more students take their assessments, these results will vary, but it’s amazing to see what exactly our students are interested in!

As students continue to participate with Ignite, it is crucial that we have not only our schools participating, but our local employers on board and ready to help spark interest in these potential future employees. Because of this need for partnership, the 2016 SWVA Careers Expo for Youth was created, and will take place on November 15 and 16, 2016. This Expo was developed to ignite students’ interests in career paths in our region. The Reality Store, a financial simulation where students identify with certain careers and make decisions about their budgets and lifestyles, will be conducted in collaboration with the local 4-H Extension Office. Career demonstrations, recruited and coordinated by Ignite, will allow students to see first-hand how their interests and abilities can influence their future career paths.

To learn more about Ignite and how to become a partner, contact Crystal Breeding at cbreeding@unitedwayswva.org or 276-628-2160 and also visit our website at www.unitedwayswva.org/ignite.

DEVELOPING PROFESSIONALLY AND CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMMON GOOD

Pam Pruitt (pictured on left), a teaching assistant with Scott County Public Schools Head Start, recently received her Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential. That’s a big deal. Why? Because even before she could apply, she had to fulfill 120 professional education hours and complete 480 hours working with children ages 3-5. In addition, Ms. Pruitt had to develop a professional portfolio of her work and her philosophy towards teaching, obtain questionnaires from families with whom she worked regarding her teaching practices, and pass an onsite observation and exam to obtain her CDA.



Pam Pruitt (left) and Kristy Worley (right)

Because her early childhood development program is a member of Virginia Quality, a partnership with United Way of Southwest Virginia, Pam was able to obtain her book (\$95) and take the exam (\$425) at no cost to her! She also received professional development training, help with her application, and technical assistance from Kristy Worley, Regional Specialist for Virginia Quality (pictured on right).

Community service and volunteerism are an important part of the CDA process for early childhood educators as they partner with United Way of Southwest Virginia and Virginia Quality to increase their professional credentials. Pam is the first participant to achieve (and exceed) our CDA volunteer goal of eight hours, by achieving over 22 hours of community service through the United Way of Southwest Virginia Volunteer Center! She was recognized at a recent gathering of child care providers across the region.

Congratulations to Pam and to all early childhood educators achieving their CDA credential across the Commonwealth! Job well done! To learn more about participating in Virginia Quality and about professional development opportunities for early childhood educators, contact Kristy Worley, kworley@unitedwayswva.org or 276-525-4103.

PACKIN' PARDNERS: RAISING MONEY TO FIGHT HUNGER

Thanks to Tammy Ammen and the members of the Leadership Giving planning team, Packin' Parners raised over \$40,000 for the Backpacks Unite program, which seeks to help impoverished children have food to eat on the weekends. Packin' Parners was sponsored by Marc & Tammy Ammen, Universal Fibers, Casey and Kendra McReynolds, Mountain States Health Alliance, Steve and Teresa Mercer, Appalachian Power, Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center, Virginia Highlands Community College, First Bank & Trust Company, Tom & Donna Fowlkes, and PennStuart.

The event saw nearly 200 people from the community come together for the western-themed fund-raiser, which included music by the band Time Sawyer, a silent and live auction and free stagecoach rides on the Wells Fargo Stagecoach.



Guests take a ride on the Wells Fargo stage coach



Backpacks Unite display



Becky Matney greets guests



Live Auction Bidding



Tammy & Marc Ammen



Time Sawyer



The Barns at Chip Ridge

The Backpacks Unite program, which helped more than 850 students last year, currently offers a matching agreement with local sponsors, putting up a maximum amount of \$2,200 per school and asking the sponsor to do the same. The food for the program is ordered from the Food City warehouse and shipped to the local Food City location for each school. The food provided comes from a menu that the United Way of Southwest Virginia developed with a Food City nutritionist to provide students with healthy meal option and includes such items as oatmeal, pasta, and granola bars. Sponsors are able to pick the items up, pack the bags, and deliver them to school staff members, who then provide food for the students in need every Friday.

The program currently has 19 sponsors for the 33 elementary and middle schools it supports. Schools wishing to join the program or individuals wanting to know more about the Backpacks Unite program are encouraged to visit backpacksunite.org or contact Director of Administration, Tina Camper, at 276-628-2160 or tcamper@unitedwayswva.org.

UNITING FOR PLAY GRANTS ENHANCE NEIGHBORHOODS

In the Spring of 2016, United Way of Southwest Virginia released a brand new Request for Proposals called Uniting for Play designed to get kids playing. On September 12, community members celebrated the first of the successful projects by opening the playground at the Whippoorwill Hills Public Housing Community in Duffield, VA. Before the playground was installed the only play option was a single basketball goal at the dead end of the development. United Way's partners in this project were Appalachian Community Action Agency, Scott County Housing and Redevelopment Authority and the LENOWISCO Planning District. The playground will turn this area into an inviting neighborhood park/playground area and help 108 low-income children in the neighborhood be active.

The second successful project was the creation of the "Get Active, Stay Active" physical activity program at the Teen Venture Center in Richlands, Virginia. This new program invites partnerships with community adult volunteers who spend time encouraging Teen Venture members as they participate in various physical fitness activities. The activities offered to the youth members under the supervision and mentorship of community volunteers include: skating, rock-climbing, basketball, volleyball, dodge ball, various exercises in the fitness room, ping pong, corn hole, and air hockey.

United Way is currently accepting applications for other Uniting for Play projects in our service area.

For more information on how to apply, visit unitedwayswva.org/grants or email grants@unitedwayswva.org.



Travis Staton, President and CEO of United Way of Southwest Virginia, and Tim Kitts, Executive Director of Scott County Redevelopment and Housing Authority, cut the ribbon on the new Whippoorwill Playground



A student skates at Teen Venture Center in Richlands, VA during a visit from United Way of Southwest Virginia

CAMPAIGN SPOTLIGHTS



Old Dominion



Vaughan-Bassett



Food City

VDOT EMPLOYEES SWING CLUBS FOR SMART BEGINNINGS

For the fourth year in a row, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) employees and their friends spent their Columbus Day holiday playing golf in order to raise funds for United Way's Smart Beginnings Southwest Virginia. Thirty-two teams of golfers from across Virginia competed in the annual golf tournament at Clear Creek Golf Course in Bristol, Virginia.



Robert Ratliff and Marty Halloway, two of the key organizers of the golf tournament

While the players spent a beautiful day on a wonderful golf course, they also had the satisfaction of knowing that their participation was buying books for young children - because this tournament will help our Smart Beginnings initiative buy books for 8,000 children throughout Southwest Virginia who participate in our Read Across America event early next year.

During the Read Across America celebration, hundreds of volunteers will visit pre-school classrooms, Kindergarten classrooms, and child care centers to read to children. This regional event will highlight the excitement and importance of reading to young children, and we are counting on that excitement to spread home to hundreds of families. If you would like to volunteer to read to a classroom during the Read Across America celebration

or help purchase books for young children, contact Smart Beginnings Coordinator, Carolyn Koesters at ckoesters@unitedwayswva.org.

A CAMPAIGN KICK-OFF TO PLEASE

Whether you are a Hokie or a Volunteer, local attorney Wayne Austin, Event Chairman, and his planning group organized a Kick-Off to please. The group, convened by United Way of Southwest Virginia, featured a joint keynote by legendary college football coaches Phillip Fulmer of the University of Tennessee and Frank Beamer of Virginia Tech. The purpose of the event was to launch the 2016 Campaign. United Way of Southwest Virginia's goal this year is \$1.5 million.

Cathy Bolling, a volunteer with United Way of Southwest Virginia's Backpacks Unite program at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Tazewell, VA, won an opportunity to attend the Kick-Off.



Frank Beamer, Randy Bolling, Cathy Bolling, and Phillip Fulmer



Frank Beamer, Wayne Austin, Caroline Reddersen, Phillip Fulmer, and Jeannie Austin

The contest was open to individuals who volunteer and make a difference in United Way of Southwest Virginia's service area. Randy Bolling, Cathy's husband, told us, "Cathy works on backpacks in some fashion or another three and four days a week. I think it is a fair statement to say that she is simply known as the 'backpack lady' in our town, and this in and of itself is something to be proud of."

As the 2016 campaign begins to wind down, can we count on you to help us cross the goal line? You can, by visiting www.unitedwayswva.org/give and making a donation. Help Wayne and his team finish off a great Kick-Off with a win for our whole community.

LIVE UNITED



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Southwest Virginia**

www.unitedwayswva.org

P.O. BOX 644
ABINGDON, VA 24212

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We are so appreciative of our corporate partners and media sponsors!



United Way of Southwest Virginia | 1096 Ole Berry Drive, Abingdon, VA 24210
PO Box 644, Abingdon, VA 24212 | 276.628.2160 | www.unitedwayswva.org

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