

News Release

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Please note – Client testimonials are on page 2

Quad Cities Live United *Campaign Raises \$9.6 million*

DAVENPORT, Iowa –Through the generosity of the Quad-City community, United Way raised \$9.6 million during the 2009 campaign, exceeding goal. The announcement was made by 2009 Campaign Chair Julie Bechtel at the Community Appreciation Event.

This year, raising donations took creativity and innovation. There were several new marketing and fundraising programs launched to increase participation in the campaign. Also, there was an additional investment by the John Deere and Hubbell-Waterman Foundations to help individuals and families in crisis as a result of the economic downturn.

“The contributions will improve lives by supporting immediate needs and creating long-lasting changes that prevent problems from happening in the first place,” said Julie Bechtel. “In a time of great need, donors created a brighter future for people across our community.”

Donations raised during this year’s campaign will change lives and build the strength of our community with initiatives including:

- **Community Programs:** In 2009, we facilitated investments in 56 nonprofits in the Quad-City area.
- **Crisis Assistance:** United Way provided rapid response to laid off workers, explaining the community services available to them. Also, United Way hosted a three-day seminar to educate unemployed and underemployed individuals about community resources.
- **There are several other United Way initiatives helping thousands of Quad Citizens:**
 - **2-1-1:** Individuals can call 2-1-1 24/7 to get connected to services in our community (e.g., finding childcare or rent assistance). In 2009, specialists responded to 10,025 calls.
 - **Free Tax Preparation:** Families with a household income not exceeding \$49,000 can access free tax preparation at locations throughout the Quad Cities. Currently, services are booked through mid-March.
 - **Imagination Library:** Children 0-5 living in Scott or Rock Island county are eligible to receive one free book per month to promote literacy and a passion for learning. To date, over 12,000 children have participated in this program.
 - **Achieve Quad Cities:** This initiative is a community-wide partnership designed to reduce dropout rates. Right now, the pilot program is active in eight locations.

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Tens of thousands of Quad Citians have been affected by programs supported by United Way donors. Four of those individuals agreed to share their stories to communicate the power of what our community has accomplished through the campaign.

“My son is a single father and his hot water heater went out the week of Christmas. He has two small children, and his wife quit her job and moved out in August. They are a young struggling family, and there was simply no money for a new hot water heater. My husband has been out of work for a year, so we weren’t able to purchase one for them.

My friend told me to call 2-1-1 to see if United Way could help. I spoke to a very nice woman that put us in touch with a plumber, but he had no funds. However, he found a plumber that could help because of emergency dollars United Way distributed. That gentleman came to my son's house Christmas Eve morning and installed a used water heater at no charge. For Christmas, my son received a turkey from his workplace. He tried to give it to the gentleman that helped, but the nice man would not take the turkey as payment for his good deed.

United Way truly blessed our family this holiday season.”

-Debi

Debi is available for comment. She can be reached at 309-781-2864.

“Our son Christopher is almost 4 years old and requires special education services. He started a preschool program last summer. When he started, he was at least one year behind his classmates – he couldn’t count to ten, use a spoon or ride a tricycle.

Within 6 months of starting the program, he was a different child. He learned to ride a tricycle so well that he jumped on one at Kmart and chased his grandma around the store. He can write his name, use utensils and has become more social. When he walks into the program, everyone yells ‘Hi Chris!’

We never thought it would be possible – but now he is on track to enter Kindergarten on time with other children his age and is prepared for success in school.”

-Samantha and Chris

Samantha and Chris are available for comment. They can be reached at 563.428.2031.

“My husband and I both have medical problems. As a result, he can no longer work. We have been waiting for disability to kick in, but it has taken awhile. So, right now, we are living month to month and are always afraid we’ll be kicked out in the streets. Receiving rent assistance was a life-saver – it allowed us to know we could stay in our apartment and would be safe for another month.”

-Jennifer

Jennifer wishes to remain anonymous, so cannot be reached for further comment

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