MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

In the past year, much has happened here at United Way of Monmouth County.

First, our 14th Annual Spring Tee-Off was a huge success. This year’s outing brought in over $35,000, an increase of almost $15,000 over last year. Thank you to the Golf Committee, sponsors, golfers and volunteers for making this year’s outing so successful.

Second, we are excited about “Stuff the Bus”, sponsored by J.F. Kiely Construction Co., which is an expanded version of the “Schooltime Wishes” drive. For years, “Schooltime Wishes” was very successful in helping collection back-packs filled with school supplies for needy low-income children. “Stuff The Bus” is a new and exciting community-wide event that will raise awareness and help reach more needy children of Monmouth County. On Saturdays throughout the months of July and August, we will be at various locations in Monmouth County asking members of the community to help “Stuff The Bus” with back-packs, pens, pencils, notebooks, paper and all the other items needed by children in school.

I want to thank First Student Inc. for donating the buses and Targets of Manalapan and Middletown, Kmart of Wall and Shoprite of Neptune for partnering with us on this new event.

Next, I want to thank all the generous donors of Monmouth County. Though this year we raised less money, we had some great news from companies and individuals who have increased their giving. Special thanks go out to the managers and staff at Nordstrom for doubling their campaign, to the volunteers at the Lakewood BlueClaws and many other great goods and services right here in our county.”

Although only in its second year, there was a marked increase in the number of returns completed. A total of 107 tax returns were completed this year for area residents resulting in an average refund of $1,130 for working families. In all, the program created a total of $124,738 in refunds to the area.

Monmouth County Freeholder Amy Malin says “I applaud UWMC, its partners and the many volunteers who are helping residents access money they are entitled to. This money is that likely be spent on goods and services right here in our county.”

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How Do You LIVE UNITED?

“How Do You LIVE UNITED?” A feature story where we will be spotlighting donors and volunteers of United Way of Monmouth County.

This month, we asked John Kiely, of J.F. Kiely Construction Co., how he LIVES UNITED. John has been a loyal and generous supporter of United Way of Monmouth County, and his company is the title sponsor of United Way of Monmouth County’s Stuff the Bus program (formerly SchoolTime Wishes, see article on Stuff the Bus for more information) and SnowFlake Wishes.

How long have you been supporting United Way of Monmouth County?

I have supported United Way of Monmouth County ever since graduating from Boston University and beginning work for my family business over twenty years ago.

With all the choices in giving, what drew you to United Way?

United Way has always focused on improving the lives of human beings. I believe that the concepts of caring for each other, maintaining self-respect, and getting an education can ultimately change our world for the better.

You have been a loyal Tocqueville Society member and sponsor of the Wishes Drives for many years. If you had the opportunity to ask others to give, what would you say is a compelling reason to support United Way?

United Way focuses every day on human services. When I donate money to them, I feel assured that they are investing my contribution in a way that makes sense and has a strong impact on the community in which I work and live. My mother and father taught me at an early age that each of us has a right and a responsibility to help those in need. United Way helps me fulfill that duty.

Of the three impact areas of Education, Income and Health, which one speaks to you the most and why?

I have always taken a special interest in health, especially among senior citizens. The seniors are the ones that made this country great, overcoming challenges of World Wars and economic collapse. In today’s environment, senior citizens have different types of challenges, and they need our help. United Way recognizes that need.

I.F. Kiely Construction Co. is a family owned utility construction company established in Long Branch, N.J. in 1952. Providing underground construction services for gas, water, electric, and telecommunication companies. Our clients include New Jersey Natural Gas Company, South Jersey Industries, Public Service Electric and Gas, and New Jersey American Water Company. J.F. Kiely Construction Co. operates throughout New Jersey from four locations and employs over two hundred unionized employees. For more information about the company please visit www.jfkiely.com.

Letter from The Chairman of the Board

Over 1,000 strong, United Way staff and their volunteer leaders presented a compelling focus and endorsement for support of the 2-1-1 National Call Help Line. This monumental task was accomplished by group visits to every legislative leader in Washington, DC who both pledged to support the bill and more importantly, the ones who had yet to sign endorsement of the pending bill. The objective for the day was to get more legislators to co-sponsor H.R. 211 so that Congress could move closer to passing this important piece of legislation.

This experience was one of many that I had the privilege of participating in during our United Way Worldwide Community Leaders Conference, which took place at the National Harbor in our nation’s capital. Give, Advocate and Volunteer was in full glory. The energy, the collaboration, the debated issues and problem-solving environment was exceptional. I continue to learn and be amazed by the broad reach United Way has throughout our nation. We discussed short term tactics and long term strategies with an emphasis on Community Impact. The need is everywhere and Monmouth County is no exception!

The concept of creating lasting and permanent change has transitioned us from reactionary to preventive mode. It will surely take time for results to present themselves, at which point the short term impact will be felt. Although finances are understandably important, it is when we expend effort and leadership that we find great success.

We encourage you to visit our website at www.uwmontmouth.org to see our efforts and involvement in the community, develop a sense of understanding and give us feedback. We ask that you continue your engagements with UWMC in the manner that suits you best—but most importantly, please refer us to those who are willing to participate and help serve those in need!

- Brian Massey

Brian Massey is the former Interim President/CEO and current Board Chair of United Way of Monmouth County’s Board of Directors.

Did You Know?

In Monmouth County, 80.2% of high school students report that they have used alcohol at least once in their lifetime.

According to the High School Risk and Protective Factor survey conducted in 2008 by the NJ Department of Human Services, Division of Addiction Services, Monmouth County students had the highest rate of alcohol use compared to other county residents within the past 30 days of the survey, with 59.2% of students responding positively to questions of use. In addition, Monmouth County high school students reported attending high school while under the influence of alcohol at a prevalence rate of 20.5%. Marijuana use was also measured in this study, whereby Monmouth County high school students reported the highest rate of lifetime use (39.6%) and the highest rate of usage for the period of 30 days before the study at a rate of 23.4% as compared to other counties.

These numbers are overwhelming and clearly indicate that there is an issue of drug and alcohol use that must be addressed in a county-wide effort.

United Way of Monmouth County is investing significant resources towards fighting high risk behaviors, such as drug and alcohol abuse, which will have a direct impact on reducing use among teens here in Monmouth County.

Members of the county government, community schools, nonprofit organizations and local businesses have become involved in our community impact plan affecting education, income and health; for information on participating with United Way of Monmouth County contact 732-938-5988 or visit us at www.uwmontmouth.org.

Project EAT

Project EAT recently caught the attention of USI Affinity, a national insurance provider with area offices located in Matawan, NJ. The group leaders originally sought a volunteer opportunity to engage employees in local corporate offices. After hearing about the need for food at their local food pantry, they created a 3-week engagement that included both a food collection and a hunger awareness campaign.

In 2009, 37 million Americans used local food pantries or soup kitchens for emergency food assistance. According to Feeding America, 1.7 million Americans use food pantries or soup kitchens for emergency food assistance just to provide basic meals to their family members or themselves. This growing need for food provided by local food pantries is a strain on pantries who cannot afford to purchase supplies from their area Foodbank or who do not receive regular funding and donations to maintain supplies.

USI Affinity had a great time participating in Project EAT. In the end, the company collected an amazing 1,586 pounds of food and baby supplies—bottled water, peanut butter, soup, pasta, ready-to-eat dinners, and rice. A group of employees even delivered the huge collection to the designee— St. Mark’s Food Pantry and Soup Kitchen in Keansburg, NJ.

USI Affinity employee Denise Cartiglia said, “All of us, by contributing, even one can of food, made a difference in someone’s life. We often get so wrapped up in our own lives and our own problems that we forget there are others significantly less fortunate. There are people—perhaps our neighbors—who have so little to eat that they cannot feed their own children.”

Thanks to the generous employees at USI Affinity, families will have access to food for their children this summer.

If you have a group who may be interested in participating with Project EAT, contact United Way of Monmouth County Volunteer Center at 732-938-5988 or email tmaffei@uwmontmouth.org.

Stuff the Bus

United Way of Monmouth County will be kicking off a new and exciting campaign this summer called “Stuff the Bus”, which is designed to collect school supplies for area children. Stuff the Bus has been used by organizations like the NBA to generate donations for families around the country, and United Way offices have found that it’s a fun way to engage community partners around a great cause.

A school bus donated by First Student, Inc. will be parked at local school shopping venues where UWMC staff and volunteers will hand out lists of suggested items to shoppers. The items are then placed on the school bus, and by the end of the season, we hope to have the bus filled to capacity for our kids!

There are four dates and locations listed for Stuff the Bus events around Monmouth County.

- July 10, 2010 - Kmart – 1825 Rt. 35, Wall, NJ 07719 11 am – 3 pm
- July 17, 2010 - Target – 55 Rt. 9, Manalapan, NJ 07726 11 am – 3 pm
- July 24, 2010 - ShopRite – 2200 Rt. 9, Neptune, NJ 07753 11 am – 3 pm
- Aug 7, 2010 - Target – 2105 Rt. 35, Middletown, NJ 07748 11 am – 3 pm

Volunteers are needed to help at each site to greet shoppers, hand out lists and help load the bus. We would welcome donations of refreshments for the events.

If your organization would like to participate, or you would like to sponsor a collection of backpacks and other supplies at your own location, please call our office to make arrangements and become part of the county-wide Stuff the Bus event for 2010! Call Tara Maaffei at 732-938-5988 x 21 or email tmaffei@uwmontmouth.org.