



GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.

SPRING 2009

A Community Newsletter
for Middlesex United Way

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written by United Way
volunteer Chris Fahey

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Middlesex United Way

DON'T JUST WEAR THE SHIRT, LIVE IT!

On a cold and icy morning Middlesex United Way held its Annual Meeting, and those invited were asked to put the spirit of LIVE UNITED into action by giving, advocating, and volunteering to help those in need. Specifically, everyone was encouraged to run food or diaper drives, hold a fundraising event in their company on a special LIVE UNITED Day, and/or become a United Way 2-1-1 champion. The response was simply overwhelming as many groups stepped up to the plate to make a difference.

The event itself served as an example of what can be accomplished when working together. Everyone

was asked to bring a package of disposable diapers to the Annual Meeting which resulted in more than 5,300 diapers being collected, with a value of about \$1,600. The diapers were provided to the WIC office in Middletown for

distribution. Special thanks to Comcast for lending two trucks and drivers to collect and deliver the diapers that morning.

We love that so many of our friends have embraced the idea of Living United. Not

only are you wearing "the shirt," but you are taking action in support of the issues you care about and inspiring others to do so.

Everyone has something to give, and when we all give a little then collectively it adds up to a lot. Take for example, Give 5 Now. Consider donating just \$5 to United Way and then tell five friends about it and it goes on and builds from

there. It's easy and online. By each giving just \$5, we can all make a big impact together. Find out more about it, watch a short video, and donate online. Go to middlesexunitedway.org to learn more.

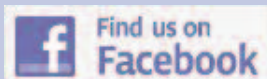


Kelly G. Smith, far right, received the Community Service Award at United Way's Annual Meeting. Here she is pictured with Rochelle and Donna from KGS Insurance when they participated in fundraising activities leading up to LIVE UNITED Day. Simply by donating their loose change they collected more than \$50!

Visit us online at
middlesexunitedway.org.

Read the LIVE UNITED blog at
mxunitedway.blogspot.com

Become our fan



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



FAITH M. JACKSON

MIDDLESEX UNITED WAY BOARD PRESIDENT

I'm stepping into the role of Board President at one of the most interesting times in our country. At United Way, we are continually thinking of ways to help during these times of need while staying focused on our long term goals.

At the Annual Meeting we announced a LIVE UNITED Day on Friday, February 13th. What an amazing response! You enthusiastically ran food and diaper drives, held fundraisers in addition to what you had already done to support the annual campaign, and became 2-1-1 champions. And now we are beginning the Give 5 Now campaign—encouraging everyone to donate just \$5 online and then forward the message to five friends. Visit middlesexunitedway.org to learn more about it...and then pass it on.

I'm energized by our five-year goals for the common good in Middlesex County (on page 4). Our dedicated group of Community Impact volunteers are leading us on a journey to create real change, and to measure that change along the way. All of our work requires collaboration. Working together, we can accomplish things that no organization, no individual, and no government can accomplish on its own.

The landscape of communication is changing. For those of you who have entered into the world of social media, become our fan on Facebook. And I encourage you to read Kevin Wilhelm's weekly blog at mxunited-way.blogspot.com and visit our website regularly. These are the best ways to stay informed about what's going on at United Way and in Middlesex County. And by all means, please share what you're thinking about so that we can have an ongoing conversation with you.

Finally, it's critical now that we keep a watchful eye on our own expenses. Our Finance Committee is making important decisions as we set the budget for next fiscal year. We're seeking ways to always remain as efficient as possible. We are ever-mindful of our mission to strengthen lives and help people, and we're committed to providing as many resources as possible to achieve it.

MANY THANKS TO OUR 2008/09 CORPORATE SPONSORS

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MIDDLESEX UNITED WAY GOES TO WASHINGTON

By Chris Fahey, School Readiness Coordinator for Middletown Public Schools

In February, Ed Bonilla, Andy Rapp and I ventured off to our nation's capitol for a two-day advocacy and lobbying session hosted by the United Way of America. Capitol Hill Day was designed to bring people together from across the country involved in the United Way movement to improve lives by influencing national public policy.

We arrived on Pennsylvania Avenue and joined 200 energized United Way advocates—staff, volunteers, board members, 2-1-1 workers—from 30 states. And yes, we were the ONLY representatives from Connecticut! The afternoon began with break-out sessions facilitated by the United Way of America's terrific Policy Team. They brought everyone up to speed on the issues, bills, and related budget items in the areas of education, health, and income. The remainder of the afternoon was devoted to The Calling for 2-1-1 Act, complete with a humorous skit by the Policy Team on the proper way to conduct a meeting with your legislator.

United Way of America scheduled a series of advocacy meetings with each participant's congressional members for the following day. In the afternoon we mapped out our game plan for those meetings and developed a list of important points to leave with congressional staff. That evening's reception gave us an opportunity to connect with others from around the country and to hear about the great local work that they are doing.

Early the next morning, we arrived at the west side of the Capitol where we

posed for a group photo. Behind us, workers still continued the task of dismantling the staging from the historic inauguration that had taken place just three weeks earlier.

Photos were finished and we were off to the Hart Senate Office Building for breakfast and remarks from each of the lead sponsors of the 2-1-1 Bill—Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), Senator Richard Burr (R-NC) and Representative Ana Eshoo (D-CA). After, everyone went their separate ways to hold meetings with their own legislators. Our first appointment was with Senator Joe Lieberman's staff.

Imagine my surprise when we walked into his office and saw four of my early childhood colleagues from Meriden and Hartford waiting to meet with staff.

They were in Washington to participate in the National Association for the Education of Young Children's Advocacy Day....small world!

We conducted our meetings as planned. Ed Bonilla opened up with his support of the 2-1-1 Bill and the invitation to legislators to use United Way to connect to their constituents. I followed with points about each of the federal early childhood, health, and nutrition programs and Andy Rapp closed with our affordable housing issues. We spent the day going from one meeting to the next, delivering our messages and engaging in conversation with legislative staff members.

Walking from office building to office building in the warm 70-degree weather without overcoats, we enjoyed being plucked from the depths of a tough New England winter and dropped into springtime, even if for only one day. We held meetings each hour with staff in John Larson, Joe Courtney, Rosa DeLauro, Jim Himes, and Chris Murphy's offices. The day concluded with Senator Dodd's staff. Patrick Jackson, Manager of Public Policy for United Way of America, joined us for that meeting so that he could make his own connection with Senator Dodd.

“It was a wonderful experience to engage in the democratic process and realize that you can have an impact.”

The Day on the Hill was a huge success. Overall, participants visited more than 350 House and Senate offices to enlist Congressional cosponsors for the 2-1-1 legislation and to advocate for state and local issues. One huge take-

away for us was the realization that we in Connecticut are very well represented in Congress. In every office that we visited, staff was knowledgeable about, up-to-date on, and responsive to our issues. Now home, we've already had the opportunity and the reason to connect with our newly-made contacts in Washington as we continue to follow federal bills, the federal budget, and the stimulus funds.

It was a wonderful experience to engage in the democratic process and realize that you can have an impact on federal policy and spending. It's important that United Way continue this far-reaching advocacy effort.

FIVE YEAR GOALS

FOR THE COMMON GOOD IN MIDDLESEX COUNTY: EDUCATION, INCOME, HEALTH & HOUSING

Middlesex United Way believes that education, income, health, and housing are the building blocks for a good life. Remove any one of them, and the others topple. Education is essential to getting and keeping a job with a livable wage and health benefits. An income adequate to pay for today's necessities and save for the future provides families a sense of financial stability. Access to quality health care and safe, decent, and affordable housing are critical to everyone's success.

Working with many partners, United Way continually looks for the most effective ways to help people gain access to educational, economic, health-related, and housing opportunities. To achieve further progress, we must measure where we stand in these areas and look ahead to where we need to be as a community because *what gets measured, gets done*.

Therefore, we are launching an effort to track results that are consistent and demonstrate success on a local and regional level. The important work our funding partners are doing remains the same. Our careful tracking of data and outcomes will align with the goals we are setting forth for the next five years:



EDUCATION

Increase children's readiness to learn by school entry.

INCOME

Increase economic self-sufficiency of individuals and families.

HEALTH

Reduce rate of risky behaviors among youth and adults.

Improve the health and increase the safety of individuals and families.

HOUSING

Increase the ability of individuals and families to attain affordable housing.

Many thanks to the companies and organizations that agreed to participate in activities on and leading up to LIVE UNITED Day on Friday, February 13th:

Liberty Bank
City of Middletown
Town of Durham
Town of Essex
Regional School District #13
Corporate Benefit Consultants LLC
Westbrook Middle School
Middletown Schools
Old Saybrook Schools
Wesleyan Student Athletic Advisory Committee
Webster Bank
PrimePay
Colebrook Financial
Rice, Davis, Daley & Krenz
Middlesex United Way
Kuhn Employment Opportunities
Godiva
McCutcheon Burr & Sons
Pratt & Whitney
Tower Laboratories
Standard-Knapp
Middlesex Hospital
Middlesex Community College
Northeast Utilities
Oddfellows Playhouse
Mahoney Sabol & Company
Estuary Council of Seniors
Garden Club of Old Saybrook
Wright-Pierce
KGS Insurance Services/
Ameriben Alliance
Companions & Homemakers
First Congregational Church
in Middletown



Pictured from Liberty Bank in the front row are: Judy Dockery; Michele Mazzotta; Deb Bochain; and Shelia Mason. In the back row are: Dave Carlson; Barry Abramowitz; Guhan Kumar; and Bob Steele .

HOW LIBERTY BANK LIVES UNITED:

192 EMPLOYEES WHO VOLUNTEER. 35 LEADERSHIP GIVERS.
 MORE THAN 7,000 THANKSGIVING DINNERS.
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Liberty Bank's Community Development Activity includes Individual Development Savings Accounts, partnering with non-profits to offer Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, Home Ownership counseling, and sponsoring the Credit for Life Fair at Middletown High School. The 2008/09 Liberty Bank United Way Campaign set an all-time high for the company and its employees, raising more than \$200,000.

LIVE UNITED



Middlesex United Way

Want to make a difference? Find out how at middlesexunitedway.org/liveunited.

The ad above appeared in The Middletown Press on behalf of Liberty Bank's 2008/09 Platinum sponsorship.



Visit our website to learn more about **GIVE 5 NOW**, watch a short video, and donate online. Go to middlesexunitedway.org.



The Power of the Purse!

June 25, 2009

Power of the Purse Wine Tasting & Silent Auction
Women's Initiative of Middlesex United Way

Save the Date:

National Association of
Letter Carriers Food Drive
Saturday, May 9

Middlesex United Way
Food Stamp Challenge
Begins Monday, June 15

Power of the Purse
Thursday, June 25

Day of Action
Sunday, June 21

LEAVE A LEGACY

Make the generous decision to designate Middlesex United Way in your will, and you will create a lasting change for generations to come.

Your attorney may include a statement in your will such as: "I give and bequeath to Middlesex United Way, 100 Riverview Center, Suite 230, Middletown, CT 06457

- (a) _____% of my estate, (or)
- (b) The sum of \$ _____, (or)
- (c) The following assets or property (describe here), (or)
- (d) All the rest and residue of my estate for its endowment."

For more information about making a planned gift, call Kevin Wilhelm, Executive Director, 860.346.8695 or kevin.wilhelm@ctunitedway.org.

Need help? Dial 2-1-1, the free, 24-hour helpline in Connecticut. United Way 2-1-1 is an easy-to-remember, 3-digit phone number that connects people who need or want to give help with vital resources in their community. 2-1-1 is funded by the State of Connecticut and United Way.