

Lake Area United Way

The Colby Building
221 W. Ridge Road
Griffith, IN 46319-1097
Phone: (219) 923-2302
Fax: (219) 923-8601
www.lauw.org



Contact: Robert K. Scott, Jr.
Vice President, Marketing &
Communications
(219) 923-2302, Ext. 307

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bscott@lauw.org

2009 Loaned Executive Team Hits Campaign Trail for United Way

*Trained volunteers ready to assist companies plan & conduct
workplace campaigns*

(Griffith) - On September 18, Lake Area United Way (LAUW) celebrated the launch of its 2009 annual campaign to raise at least \$5 million and with it the local community planning and fundraising organization deployed its 2009 Loaned Executive (L.E.) Team to help lead the charge.

"It truly takes a small army to plan and coordinate this annual fundraising effort that involves 1,000-plus volunteers and over 25,000 donors which ultimately touched more than 280,000 lives in Lake County last year alone," said Aria Mazer, LAUW's 2009 Campaign Co-Chair. "L.E.'s are critical to our success."

Members of LAUW's 2009 Loaned Executive team include:

- Leona Bachan - Community volunteer, sponsored by First Midwest Bank
- Warren Blackmon - Community volunteer, sponsored by Construction Advancement Foundation
- Tiffany Csizma - Box office clerk, the Venue at Horseshoe Casino
- Cheryl Keller - Community volunteer, sponsored by Community Hospital
- Jennifer Kljajich - Table games supervisor, Horseshoe Casino
- Mary Panas - First Vice President, Senior Relations Manager, Citizens Financial Bank
- Carolyn Wiley - Community volunteer, sponsored by BP

The L.E. team will dedicate their time and expertise during the coming months to assist LAUW to raise the needed funds used by its agencies in providing vital health and human-service programs to help people in need all across the Lake area, explained Mazer.

"Many people are surprised to learn that Lake Area United Way only has a small campaign staff of four. More than 400 companies and organizations are expected to participate in this year's fund drive," said Mazer.

"We simply could not do this without the L.E.'s and our many community and workplace campaign volunteers. They, along with our donors, are the lifeblood of the annual drive."

LAUW's 2009 campaign goal is at least \$5 million to support 33 local Member Agencies as well as 3 community initiatives. The target is \$200,000 less than what was raised in 2008. In announcing the goal, Mazer said the recession will make this a difficult year. "We're hoping to do better than that," she said.

"United Way's Board and Campaign Cabinet understand the challenges ahead, but we're also mindful of the grave problems that will confront our community's quality of life if our agencies which provide these critical services do not have the funds they so desperately need," Mazer explained.

"It's a tribute to the community spirit they all possess. The L.E. Team and campaign volunteers should be applauded for their community service."

LE's are assigned to a select portfolio of corporate accounts, with the responsibility of assisting chief executive officers, volunteer employee campaign managers and their in-house campaign teams in planning, organizing and conducting successful workplace campaigns for United Way.

Mazer said that one of the main goals in this year's campaign is to expand the number of companies that run United Way-led workplace campaigns. "We will work to set up a voluntary, educational and fun employee campaign that is conducive to any organization's corporate culture and operations," she said.

Loaned Executives are provided to United Way by their employer on a full or part-time basis for the 13-week campaign. Participants continue to receive their regular salary and job benefits paid to them directly by their employer. Companies may also choose to sponsor a L.E.

Noting that this donation is on top of the company's annual contribution to LAUW, Mazer said, "We are grateful not only to this year's Loaned Executives who each have such a huge heart for wanting to help others, but also to their employers and sponsors for giving them an opportunity to participate."

Carolyn Wiley is a returning veteran to the program. Wiley said she has really enjoyed the experience, finding it both rewarding and educational.

She became involved as a volunteer largely due to her brother Ron Logsdon, who was born with downs syndrome. He is a client of Arc BRIDGES, a LAUW member agency that helps people with developmental disabilities. A former

Board Chair for the agency, Wiley is still very active with the organization.

"I enjoy working with so many caring and giving people that are working to make Lake County a better place for everyone to enjoy a good life," she added. "When I go out and talk about our community's needs, I've found most people want to help others in need get through some pretty tough times."

"Everyone has something to give whether it's by giving, by advocating and championing the cause, or by volunteering. Those gifts will change people's lives for the better," Wiley said. "That's a pretty satisfying and wonderful thing to be part of."

The 2009 Lake Area United Way campaigns will run officially through November 20. Contributions generated will help fund 33 local health and human-service non-profit organizations, which last year provided help to 281,123 Lake County residents, according to 2008 agency reports.

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PHOTO ATTACHED

(Left to Right): Jennifer Kljajich, Mary Panas, Leona Bachan, Tiffany Csizma, Warren Blackmon, Carolyn Wiley, and Cheryl Keller.