

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

Lake Area United Way Gears Up For Fall Fund Drive - Announces Ray Kasmark as 2010-11 Campaign Chair

NWI Labor Leader is Deeply Committed to Improving Community & United Way's Mission

(Griffith, Indiana) – Ray Kasmark, Business Manager of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local #697, will serve as the Lake Area United Way (LAUW) Community Campaign Chair for 2010-11.



Ray Kasmark
Business Manager
IBEW #697
2010 United Way
Campaign Chair

With over 200,000 area residents each year benefitting from a program, agency or initiative funded by Lake Area United Way, local leaders say Kasmark is the right person at the right time to lead this year's community campaign.

"Ray is deeply committed to Northwest Indiana and to United Way's mission of creating opportunities for a better life for all," said Dan Lowery, Vice President of Academic Affairs at Calumet College of St. Joseph and President of LAUW's Board of Trustees. "He has a long history of volunteerism which goes beyond United Way."

Mr. Kasmark has actively volunteered on United Way's Board of Trustees and Allocations Committee and has served as Labor Chair. In 2006-07, he was elected Board Chair.

In addition, Mr. Kasmark is currently serving as Board Chair of Parents as Teachers of Lake County, a United Way member agency, which instructs new parents how to be their child's first and most important teacher. He is a member of the Munster Adult Booster Club.

He recently finished his second and final term on the Board of Tradewinds Services, Inc., another United Way member agency, which serves people with mental and physical disabilities as well as actively volunteering with Rebuilding Together.

Mr. Kasmark has also served as the Vice President of the Northwest Indiana Building and Construction Trades and the Indiana Plan Statewide Board. The 52-year old labor leader is also a member of the Indiana State AFL-CIO Executive Board.

A native and graduate of Griffith High School, Mr. Kasmark earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Utah. He and his wife Teri have four children: Chauncey, Chelsy, Sam and Taylor. The family resides in Munster.

"We're fortunate to have Ray at the helm during these challenging economic times. He has the skills, vision and drive to strengthen our community. Our campaign is in very competent hands," said Lou Martinez, LAUW's president.

As Campaign Chair, Mr. Kasmark will work with businesses, labor unions, and organizations to get them involved in the annual fundraising campaign.

"I strongly believe in United Way's goal to create long-lasting change by addressing the underlying causes of the social and economic problems that confront us," Kasmark said. "No other organization is as well equipped to advance the common good in our community."

"I'm very excited to be chairing this year's campaign," said Kasmark. "I've been a United Way volunteer and leadership giver for many years and know firsthand how critical the annual campaign is to the community. The needs are even greater this year."

"As the economy continues to struggle, more and more people are hurting. People who once donated are now using United Way-funded services," Mr. Kasmark said. "We all know someone who is using some kind of service. That's why it's important that everyone gives."

This spring, Lake Area United Way announced it had surpassed its 2009-10 goal of \$5 million. While this year's goal won't be announced until later this month, Mr. Kasmark says it's easier than ever to support United Way.

"Most donors give through payroll deduction within their employer's workplace campaign," he said. "For those retired, self-employed, or who just want to make a one-time gift, we also offer credit card and online giving, or by making a cash or check contribution."

The United Ways serving Lake and Porter Counties will announce their campaign goals for their respective communities and the region as a whole during *The Big Schmooze*, a special event to be held on September 16th hosted by *Building Indiana* magazine at Avalon Manor.

At the event, attendees will have an opportunity to bid on original works of art created by local leaders who are being recognized by the publication as the 'Who's Who of Northwest Indiana'. Proceeds from the event will benefit both United Ways. For reservations, call (219) 226-0300.

For more information on how to get involved with the United Way campaign, call LAUW's president Lou Martinez at (219) 923-2302, extension 312 or visit: www.lauw.org.

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