

Volunteer Center Newsletter

JUNE 2011

UNITED WAY...TOGETHER WE CAN DO MORE

The United Way Volunteer Center is focused on advancing the common good in Utah County by promoting effective service and connecting community members to volunteer opportunities that will have the greatest impact.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

June

- 4—**Utah Festival of Books** at BYU, visit www.utahfestivalofbooks.com.
- 4—**Springville Art City Days** begins, Springville Museum of Art, call 801-489-2727.
- 6—**Around the World in 80 Days** starts at the Springville Family Learning Center, call 801-489-2810.
- 7—**"In Her Shoes"** Women in Philanthropy, register at www.unitedwayuc.org.
- 9—**Summer of Service** weekly projects begin, visit www.unitedwayuc.org.
- 10-11—**Orem Summerfest**, visit www.summerfest.orem.org.
- 10-11—**Springville Balloon Festival**, call 801-491-7811.

July

- 1—**Rooftop Concert Series**, visit www.rooftopconcertseries.com.
- 1, 2 & 4—**Freedom Festival / Milestones of Freedom Festival**, visit www.freedomfestival.org.

DONATION REQUESTS

- Medical Reserve Corps**—Medical supplies. Call 801-851-7085.
 - Clear Horizons Academy**—Small refrigerator. Call 801-437-0490.
 - Women, Infants & Children (WIC)**—New or gently used baby blankets and burp cloths. Call 801-851-7360.
 - Project Read**—Projector, DVD player, and tickets or gift certificates to give as prizes. Call 801-852-6654.
 - Welcome Baby**—Baby blankets and/or receiving blankets. Call 801-691-5304.
- Also see Gifts In Kind at unitedwayuc.org.*

DO IT YOURSELF!

Use your free time this summer to raise money for a local nonprofit of your choice. You can hold a car wash or lemonade stand, mow lawns, babysit, etc. Be creative!



LIVE UNITED!

HOW I LIVE UNITED: VITA, Deborah Jacobson

Being a mother of three and working towards a masters degree in taxation hasn't stopped Deborah Jacobson from volunteering with Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) for the past two years.

"Being a part of this program has connected me with the community," said Jacobson. "I like meeting the different people that come in. I've been to their stores, seen them around town and it's nice to know I helped. Volunteering with VITA is fun, and I plan on volunteering next year."

VITA is part of United Way of Utah County's Income focus area that helps families become financially stable. Every tax season, United Way of Utah County provides income tax assistance for individuals and families with an annual income of \$49,000 or less. Volunteers like Jacobson are essential to the success of this program and strengthening the Utah County community.

Jacobson worked twice a week at Utah County VITA sites preparing taxes for others. She had to coordinate her schedule with her husband or a babysitter to make sure her children had someone to watch them while she volunteered.

"Being a part of VITA is always a happy story, people are so grateful and that's why I love volunteering," Jacobson said. "Whenever I got done doing someone's taxes, they are so thankful, saying they don't know what they would do without my help."

Jacobson first learned of VITA when she attended Snow College and used the program herself. Jacobson remembers

the girl who first did her taxes as being kind and quick. She continued to use VITA after moving and eventually decided to become a volunteer.

"During my first few days, I was a bit nervous but after the first week, I had it down," Jacobson said.

This year, VITA had 230 volunteers in Utah County. Jacobson said that the volunteers do not need to be tax professionals, many volunteers are simply community members who want to help. Each volunteer is required to pass an IRS certification exam to prepare taxes.

"Doing someone's taxes at VITA is much simpler than people think," Jacobson said. "There's a calculator, and that's as complicated as it gets. Anyone can volunteer; you don't have to be a tax expert. Plus it's a lot of fun."

This year, volunteers prepared more than 3,806 tax returns bringing more than \$6.5 million back into Utah County families' pockets. United Way of Utah County calculated that for every hour volunteers devoted to VITA, approximately \$1,504 was brought back into the community.

"It's about helping people get the return they deserve," Jacobson said. "I love volunteering for VITA, I love seeing the other volunteers and helping my community."

For more information on the VITA program or to find ideas for volunteer opportunities, dial 2-1-1 or visit www.unitedwayuc.org.



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United Way Night at the Orem Owlz



As a thank you to the many supporters and volunteers working with United Way of Utah County, the Orem Owlz baseball team is hosting United Way Volunteer Night on June 28. The game starts at 7:05 p.m.

The idea to partner with United Way of Utah County came when the team heard about the Sub for Santa program.

“The Owlz heard about the hundreds of volunteers who helped with Sub for Santa and wanted to do something to recognize them,” said Scott Miller, resource development director with United Way of Utah County. “They thought it would be fun to offer tickets to a game as a way to thank the many community members who are LIVING UNITED.”

Free tickets to that night’s game against the Ogden Raptors are available to Utah County residents who give, advocate and/or volunteer with United Way of Utah County.

“We’re offering tickets to 2,500 United Way fans to come out and enjoy a baseball game for all of their service and time they donate,” said Jason Badell, Orem Owlz general manager. “We like to be involved in the community. We wanted to give back and contribute to a great organization. This is something we can do to support people who support a great cause.”

Miller encourages anyone who is involved with a United Way program such as Summer of Service, Welcome Baby, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program or Help Me Grow to put the event on their calendar.

“This is going to be a great opportunity to see how many people care about the community and be a part of a fun event with an organization like the Orem Owlz that cares,” Miller said. “Throw on your LIVE UNITED shirts and come out to enjoy an evening with family and friends.”

For more information or to receive tickets, contact Brian Wayment at brianw@unitedwayuc.org or 801-691-5325.

“Thank you to all of the many community volunteers,” Badell said. “Continue to serve and to do good things.”

Safety Net Mentoring

Safety Net Mentoring provides mentors for children referred by the Department of Child and Family Services. These mentees are often foster children or the children of incarcerated parents who can greatly benefit by spending time with a caring and consistent adult mentor. At Safety Net, mentoring is the development of a long-term relationship between the mentee and the mentor, in which the mentee feels a sense of trust, respect and security. **Currently, Safety Net is in great need of volunteers and also donations** to help the program run. Become a volunteer or donate to this worthy cause by contacting Karla at 801-362-0413.



Volunteer Opportunities

Center for Women & Children in Crisis—Help interview women who arrive for assistance, tell them about available services, answer the hotline and/or help with other office tasks. For more information, call 801-227-5038.

Letters to Soldiers—Support our troops by writing letters, putting together care packages, etc. Visit www.letterstosoldiers.org or call 801-225-6491 for details.

Family Support and Treatment Center—Run a food booth at the Freedom Festival on July 1, 2, or 4, to raise money for the center. To sign up or for more information, call 801-229-1181.

American Red Cross—Help staff health fairs and information booths at community and school events. Learn more by calling 801-373-8580.

Courage Reins Therapeutic Riding Center—Work with horses and people with disabilities. Interns from all different fields are especially needed. Call 801-362-0082 to find out how you can get involved.

National Kidney Foundation of Utah & Idaho—Volunteers are needed to help with anything from taking vitals to filling out paperwork. Learn more by calling 801-226-5111.

Center for Cultural Interchange—Open your doors to exchange students from Asia, Europe or Latin America. For details, call 801-802-0728.

SMART Utah County—Hold a Prescription Drug Take Back Event to help reduce drug abuse. Learn step-by-step instructions for holding an event by calling 801-851-7181.

For more volunteer opportunities, dial 2-1-1 or visit www.unitedwayuc.org.