

The LIVE UNITED Challenge

Kathy Drenkler, 2011 United Way Campaign Chair

Several years ago United Ways across the country launched the LIVE UNITED campaign. Many people now recognize the white t-shirts with the black lettering and simple message and connect it to the work of United Way.

But, the t-shirt is only a symbol—an icon. LIVE UNITED is really about engaging with United Way in three different ways. Today, as the 2011 United Way Campaign Chair, I would like to do two things. First, I want to share how you can get involved and secondly, I want to issue a challenge.

The first part of LIVE UNITED is to GIVE. It's important. It doesn't take a lot—it just takes a lot of us doing what we can. When we all work together we accomplish so much more than we can individually. By focusing our resources on the areas of education, income and health, the building blocks of a strong community, we can make real impact.

Another way to be engaged with United Way is to ADVOCATE. That sounds a little like marching on Washington, but in this case, it really means that you spread the word about the issues, what United Way and others are doing to find solutions and how people can get involved.

And last, but most importantly, you can VOLUNTEER. An hour of volunteer time is valued at \$17.79. Think about the tremendous resource we have in our dedicated community volunteers. Most non-profit organizations, schools, hospitals and others depend on volunteers to assist their staff and to achieve their goals. Volunteers truly do LIVE UNITED.

So, here's the challenge part-- I challenge each and every resident in Marathon County to LIVE UNITED this fall. You can GIVE, you can ADVOCATE, or you can VOLUNTEER. I encourage you to tell us about your efforts by e-mailing uway@unitedwaymc.org or posting and sharing your experiences on the United Way of Marathon County Facebook page.

When we LIVE UNITED, we make our community a better place for all of us.