

United Way Fox Cities Creates Lasting Change

Written by Cheryl Anderson Post-Crescent Media

Apr. 23, 2014 |

postcrescent.com



Thrivent Financial for Lutherans employees listen to instructions before packaging boxes of diapers as part of the United Way Fox Cities Diaper Bank at the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans operations center November 20, 2013 in Appleton, Wis. Wm.Glasheen/Post-Crescent Media / Wm.Glasheen/Post-Crescent Media

APPLETON —The United Way Fox Cities Community Campaign exceeded its \$7.7 million goal in 2013, raising more than \$8 million.

“This community really came together,” president and CEO Peter Kelly said. “We did very well in raising money, but ... we really need to keep focusing on and celebrating what we do with that money.”

Kelly spoke Tuesday during the agency’s annual meeting at the Radisson Paper Valley Hotel.

Three of United Way’s initiatives —PATH for Students, Fox Cities Diaper Bank and The Connector —excelled in 2013.

The PATH program, which provides mental health therapy in 10 Fox Cities school districts, served 284 new students

bringing the total to more than 700. Catalpa Health was added as a provider.

The Fox Cities Diaper Bank provided more than 400,000 diapers to partnering agencies for distribution, an increase of 33 percent over 2012. The diapers helped more than 2,000 babies.

The Connector, which provides transportation for second- and third-shift workers through Valley Transit, gave 17,000 rides to people with no other options, an increase of 18 percent.

Creating lasting change requires many partners, said Jon Stellmacher, retired Thrivent Financial for Lutherans executive and a member of United Way’s Community Impact Council, who was keynote speaker for the meeting.

“We invite the people and organizations from all across the community who share the passion, expertise and resources to get things done,” Stellmacher said. “And, how fortunate we are to have this kind of cooperation and collaboration.”

Kelly is looking forward to 2014.

“I think there’s more optimism ... in the community, and I think psychologically it just benefits all of us.”

—Cheryl Anderson: 920-993-1000, ext. 249, or canderson@postcrescent.com; on Twitter @chermanderson

Wes Urch Volunteer Service Award winners

• **Robert Abernathy**, group president of Europe, global nonwovens and continuous improvement and sustainability at Kimberly-Clark Corp. Abernathy has long pledged his financial support and personal desire to help K-C grow with United Way. He has served as the chair of the Leadership Giving Committee.

• **Dr. Dean Gruner**, president and CEO of ThedaCare. Gruner served on United Way’s board of directors from 2000 to 2006 and served on the Community Impact Council from 2006 to 2013. In 2009 and 2010, he was the campaign co-chairman. In 2009, Gruner joined the Leadership Giving Committee and will serve as chairman this year.