

United Way Fox Cities awards grants

Post-Crescent Media 9:50 a.m. CDT April 28, 2015



(Photo: Photo illustration)

APPLETON – United Way Fox Cities has awarded Community Investment Grants for programs that will support a range of community issues, including early childhood education and school readiness.

Diana Buechel, board chairwoman, made the announcement at the recent United Way Fox Cities Report to the Community:

The grants include:

- \$150,000 to support the first four years of programming costs for a new Boys & Girls Club in Menasha.
- \$150,000 for the creation of the Community Early Learning Center at Catholic Central Elementary School at St. Mary's Parish in Appleton. The renovated facility will focus on young children preparing for kindergarten.
- \$50,000 for Reach Out and Read, a program piloted by St. Elizabeth Hospital. Through the program, school readiness is encouraged by giving new books to children and guidance to parents in the exam rooms of pediatricians and family practitioners. The goal is to implement the program regionally, reaching an estimated 15,000 children
- \$90,000 to the Fox Valley Memory Project. It was launched in 2012 to reduce isolation and make the quality of life better for those with dementia. The Project serves both persons with dementia and their caregivers, and provides education on creating a dementia-friendly community.
- \$100,000 to assist disabled and other disadvantaged workers in obtaining employment through Thrive Academy at Valley Packaging Inc. The goal is to help people achieve self-sufficiency through soft skills and job training.

The United Way also announced its Wes Urch Volunteer Service Award recipients. The award is named in honor of Wes Urch, the first executive director of United Way of Neenah/Menasha. Recipients are:

Mary Jo Buchberger, retired from Integrity Mutual Insurance Co. She has been a United Way volunteer since 2004, leading the strengthening families impact area. She guides the community development efforts of the organization.

Liesl Britzke, Bergstrom Automotive. Britzke has been an integral member of the emerging leaders group, taking the lead as organizer for the annual Valentine Festival.

New board members were announced: Mike Carini, USW Local 2-482, Kimberly-Clark; Pam Henson, Post Crescent Media; Dave Morton, Morton Long Term Care; and Tom Riordan, Neenah Enterprises.

Nominated for a one-year special appointment: Tim Bergstrom, Bergstrom Automotive, and Mark Westphal, Fox Valley Area Labor Council.

Nominated for a second three-year term: Shannon Full, Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Jim Kotek, Menasha Corp.; and Melanie Miller, Bemis Co.

Officers and committee chairs: chairman, Tim Bergstrom, Bergstrom Automotive; vice chairman, Jim Kotek, Menasha Corp.; treasurer, Melanie Miller, Bemis Co.; Community Impact, Mike Hochholzer, Associated Bank, and Dave Morton, Morton Long Term Care; campaign, Tom Riordan, Neenah Enterprises; marketing and communications, Bob Thibault, retired, Kimberly-Clark; personnel, Peggy Ament, Kimberly-Clark; and audit, Tom Palmer, GLK Foods.

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