

# UNITED WAY OF THE OZARKS

United Way of the Ozarks is about improving lives...

by unfolding the critical issues and finding innovative solutions for individuals who live in 14 counties. By funding and initiating new programs, we work alongside our partner agencies to create safer, more stable communities.

But we can't do it without you.

You have the Power to...

Provide Basic Needs

Build Safe Neighborhoods

Promote Healthy Lifestyles

Nurture Young Children

Foster Successful Youth

You have the Power to Give Hope to All!

You donate. You care. You volunteer. You are the United Way.

The Power of Caring. The Power of You. The Power of United Way.



# CARLA'S STORY

Carla's story with United Way of the Ozarks began a few years back when she fled from an abusive husband. She took her three children and sought shelter and safety at the Family Violence Center. She stayed there for nearly a year trying to get her life back on track – recovering mentally and physically and gaining independence.

When Female Leaders in Philanthropy (FLIP), United Way's Women's Initiative, came to the Family Violence Center to participate in Day of Caring, Carla saw this group's dedication. She developed a friendship with one of the volunteers who painted her room and who continued to come back throughout the week following the event to complete other little projects.

Carla was also given the opportunity as a part of United Way Day of Caring to participate in FLIP's project, Suit Yourself. This was an amazing opportunity for Carla to get new professional clothes for an interview. The FLIP ladies who assisted Carla with her shopping gave her not only new clothes but also the confidence which would make a good impression as she was attempting to re-enter the workforce.

The FLIP member who had befriended Carla during the painting project at the Family Violence Center contacted her a few weeks later with an extraordinary opportunity. She gave her a hand up and offered her an interview at the company she managed. And now, 3 years later, Carla is a well-established part of that company.

To Carla, United Way is a team...a team of agencies that offer a full range of assistance....a team of volunteers who care...a team that all can join. She sees the full circle, and now is a United Way volunteer and donor.

The Power of Caring. The Power of You. The Power of United



## DOMINIQUE'S STORY

In Dominique's young life, she has had many struggles. She is a single mother trying to make ends meet in an economic environment that has challenged many dual income homes. Dominique's also challenged because of her physical limitations – she has only a left arm.

Dominique contacted Habitat for Humanity in hopes of being selected as a good candidate to receive a home. It had been a dream for her and her son to have a house they could call their own rather than perpetually renting. When a Habitat for Humanity staff person contacted her to begin the process of becoming a homeowner, the future became brighter.

While Dominique worked on completing the necessary pre-build hours, it became clear she needed assistance in looking after her son. That's when she enrolled him in programs at Boys & Girls Club of Springfield. This gave Dominique the security she needed that he was being cared for while she performed the necessary work and completed the homeowner readiness classes with Habitat. This also provided her son with sports, art, music, mentoring and lots of fun!

Construction on Dominique's home began in June 2008, and she hopes it will be completed by early Fall. She utilizes the help of her enthusiastic son whenever she can to help build not only a house, but also to build pride in him and teach him new skills.

Dominique often refers to her son as her right arm, and United Way's partnership with all of their community agencies reflects this same relationship. Each agency is working for the betterment of the whole community.

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## JAY'S STORY

For years, Jay has been the principal at Campbell Elementary School in Springfield. In a district with over 42% of students being considered economically disadvantaged, Campbell statistics have skyrocketed to nearly 90%. Studies show this correlates with poor attendance, test scores, grades and increased levels of frustration, exhaustion and aggressiveness.

As a caring man and responsible principal, Jay began utilizing community resources to improve the lives of the students at Campbell elementary. To promote literacy, he engaged the RSVP Reading Buddies program with his first graders. Besides being a tutor, these volunteers act as mentors and friends to the students.

The Backpack Program has also been instituted rigorously at Campbell. This program distributes a backpack full of nutritious, non-perishable, easy-to-open meals and snacks to children for the weekends. It is one of Ozarks Food Harvest's (OFH) direct services which feeds nearly 700 children in 28 elementary schools across the Ozarks every weekend of the school year. This is a collaborative effort between OFH and Springfield Public Schools which is sponsored by Female Leaders in Philanthropy (FLIP), the Women's Initiative of United Way of the Ozarks.

In Jay's school, he sees children in need of help and a community of volunteers supporting them in various ways. The impact United Way agencies make on his population is immeasurable.

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