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United Way Brisbane

Give, Advocate, Volunteer

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Piloting Corporate Collect

United Way, Fuji Xerox Australia Pty Ltd and the Endeavour Foundation are currently working together to run a trial on a new type of Corporate Social Responsibility program called Corporate Collect. Corporate Collect is an innovative way in which our partners can contribute to charities and also promote the benefits of recycling with their staff. It is so simple. A white wheelie bin is placed inside a business and staff are encouraged to donate their pre-loved clothes and accessories into it. When the bin is almost full Endeavour are notified and they come and empty the bin - it's just like the confidential document bin in most print rooms. The donated goods are then sorted and sold through the Endeavour Recycled Clothing Shops. The corporate partner can really make this a team building exercise because they are kept informed about how much their bin is raising for United Way and Endeavour. The General Manager for United Way in Queensland, Michael McDade, says: "Fuji Xerox Australia Pty Ltd and the Endeavour Foundation have been great in getting this trial off the ground. It's a fantastic example of getting together, looking at each other's resources and collaborating in a way to create value for each other. Imagine what else is possible if we continue this collaborative approach".

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When would you give more?

Think about it for a moment... I suspect you would say that you would give more when you can afford to. However based on some new research it looks like our driver to give is not increased wealth but something altogether different.

A recent global survey by Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), which covered 95% of the world's population, measures three different types of charitable behaviour - giving money, volunteering time and helping a stranger. It might surprise you to know that Australia and New Zealand came out on top with the highest ranking. The survey showed Australians have the highest incidence of giving money (70% of the population), highest for volunteering time (38% of the population), and the second highest for helping a stranger (64% of the population).

Our ranking was followed by Ireland and Canada with the United States tied for fifth place with Switzerland.

These are all very interesting facts and figures but CAF have drawn from this research that giving is not necessarily the result of our wealth but more often our personal happiness. So for Australians we can deduce that a good number of us are happy and this is no doubt the result of a range of factors including general quality of life.

So, if we assume that happiness will lead to giving time, money or assistance, can we also assume the reverse; that giving will lead to happiness. At face value it sounds plausible and many of us will know from personal experience the happiness we get from helping others. So what about the rest of the population who don't give as outlined in the survey (65%)? We all want to be happy but perhaps they have not experienced it for themselves or had a bad experience?

Those of us who have experienced the great feeling from giving should encourage others to do the same, not out of guilt but to experience more happiness. For those of you interested, I would recommend you read Peter Singer's book 'The life you can save.' It refers to the fact that the best way to increase giving as a society is for givers to talk about why they give. If we each did this we could change expectations and ultimately have a significant collective impact. Check out Singer's book and if you have any thoughts that you would like to share on this topic please email us at



CEOs dine with Australian of the Year- Simon McKeon

A group of 20 CEOs and Executives recently dined at an event hosted by Brian Long (United Way Australia Board Chair) at which Simon McKeon (2011 Australian of the Year) spoke about the opportunity for corporations to explore a new paradigm focused on Shared Value. This event provided a great platform for United Way to brief corporate leaders on the opportunity for them with their organisations to create a Community Impact by strategically engaging their people in the community. A number of these corporate leaders shared their own experiences including Philip Coleman (UBS COO) who spoke about his work in leading the Homeless Coalition (outlined above) to a tangible outcome for homeless people.

We look forward to continuing these senior leadership discussions in the future.

Introducing United Way Brisbane's Regional Council Chair...

Brisbane's volunteer leadership council is charged to develop and execute business development to support United Way's Community Impact strategies. It is also responsible for the development of local Community Impact strategies and overseeing local grant making.

Murray Graham is responsible for chairing the council in Brisbane and talked to us about why he got involved...

Tell me a little about yourself. What do you do when you are not volunteering for United Way?

As a Partner in Ernst & Young, specialising in taxation matters for global and domestic clients, I'm busy working with talented individuals to solve complex issues to achieve positive commercial outcomes for our clients. When I get home, my lovely wife and our

beautiful three year old daughter keep me grounded and focused on what's really important in life. With a second baby not too far off, there are going to be some short term challenges ahead I'm sure - but challenges that we are both very excited about!

How did you hear about United Way and why did you want to get involved in the regional council?

I first heard about United Way through the Ernst & Young Foundation's workplace giving program that is administered by United Way. And of course United Way Australia's Chairman of the Board, Brian Long, was the former Chairman of Ernst & Young for many years.

Where does your interest/passion in helping communities come from?

Seeing firsthand the poverty cycle and despair of people living within local communities through participation in volunteering programs was a major culture shock to me. I realised just how sheltered and disconnected I was from these people after spending time developing my career in what is a privileged environment. I believe it is the responsibility of each of us to make a difference and positive impact in the broader community in which we live.

What do you enjoy most about the role and what is the biggest opportunity for United Way in the future ?

I'm enjoying the challenge of rallying the support and engaging business, government, institutions, thought leaders and the community at large to act collaboratively to achieve real and measurable impact in our local communities. I believe United Way's Community Impact model is an excellent platform to achieve real and lasting change. I'm particularly excited about the Queensland Regional Council's new Early Childhood Education Impact Strategy and I'm looking forward to implementing that strategy and seeing positive results in those communities.

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Queensland's flood recovery update

Finally the office at West End is now complete. It's been a very long road but slowly all the pieces have fallen into place thanks to some very generous donations from our supporters.

However it is important to not forget that many parts of Queensland

are still recovering from the floods and cyclones and that it will be a slow rebuild. In response, United Way and our partners have directed valuable resources into some innovative work to help the local families build personal connections with each other e.g. in Goodna, one of the areas severely affected by the floods.

The Mother's Day project was designed to build stronger social connections between the families engaged in the GIFS program in post-flood Goodna.

In the absence of strong social bonds, families would become more dependent on local service providers for post flood support. The concept was to have the mothers plan, organise and participate in 12 'mother's days' which would create the platform for them to not only get to know each other but also develop personal and interpersonal skills in the process.

The first of these days was conducted on the 28 July and was used as a planning day. A group of mothers gathered in the morning for a cup of tea and brainstormed ideas for future events. The group then went onto Jamie Oliver's kitchen in Ipswich where they participated in a cooking demonstration. From this 8 of the mums decided that they would like to enrol in a further 10 week course and we have received great feedback about the program from the mothers involved.

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Team Volunteering events

Since the last newsletter you received, we have been busy engaging with our volunteers to improve conditions in the local community.

Genworth and Family Support Group Australia (FSG)

On Monday 30 May we held a sports and music day to bring together various groups of people through activities in order to recognise and reward FSG's carers, staff, teenagers and young adults. Thank you to our Genworth volunteers for making this day so memorable.



Commonwealth Bank Australia and Family Support Group Australia (FSG)

On Wednesday 6 July a group of Commonwealth Bank Australia volunteers created a day of entertainment for children with a disability and their staff and carers. Activities included a farm animal nursery, gardening, face painting, music, balloon tying and of a beautiful lunch. As you can imagine there was a lot of work setting up and cleaning up. It's hard work keeping up with the kids! Thank you to the Commonwealth Bank Australia volunteers.

EMC and Noahs Ark

Noahs Ark is a toy library in Woolloongabba which loans families educational and therapeutic toys to help their children develop vital learning skills. All of the toys (more than 20,000) needed to be bar coded so it was a case of all hands on deck for the EMC volunteers involved in July. The EMC team worked tirelessly all day and managed to code approximately a third of all the stock. As part of the day, one mother who uses the library shared her story and stressed how important the toys are for early learning and development and how valuable organisations like Noahs Ark are to the community.

Fuji Xerox Australia Pty Ltd and Goodna Special School

The Goodna area was severely affected by the January floods and many of the families with children at the school were flooded. Volunteers from Fuji Xerox Australia Pty Ltd went along to the school in July to do some painting and re-mulch all of the garden beds which involved moving a huge amount of mulch around the school grounds. A fantastic morning tea and lunch was provided by the Goodna Special School's Home Economics class as a thank you.



AMP and Brisbane Youth Services (BYS)

On Thursday 11 August AMP volunteers went along to the BYS Centre for Young Families in Newstead for an afternoon of hard work and team building in the garden. Several of the families that attend the centre worked alongside the volunteers which proved a great engagement opportunity. One of the parent's whose child attended BYs, presented on the benefits her family has received as a result of BYs' work to give the volunteers a greater understanding of the importance of early intervention and youth work. Thanks to all the AMP volunteers who helped on the day.



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United Way Sydney has moved!

As some of you may be aware, United Way moved Sydney offices in June. We have been very fortunate to reside at Zurich's North Sydney office for the past 4 years which we would like to say a huge thank you to Zurich for. Due to their customer service expansion however, we needed to find a new home - one which has been generously offered by Rodgers Reidy.

Rodgers Reidy specialises in turnaround and recovery strategies, corporate and personal insolvency, forensic accounting and litigation support services, operating in Australia and New Zealand. Rodgers

Reidy enjoys giving back to the community and as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility program, is acting as caretaker of United Way Australia and supporting our work in addressing the key social issues in Australia - Education, Income and Health.

We would like to say a very big thank you to Rodgers Reidy for taking us under their wing and we look forward to working and residing with them.

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