

A Look at our People with a Purpose

Have you ever wondered how a non-profit agency is run? How your local United Way of Gaston County is structured? I know that many of you have thought about this, especially in the past year as news stories broke about non-profit employees' salary and retirement packages, board of director's oversight and excessive staff expense accounts. I assure you that United Way of Gaston County has strong volunteer Board leadership, a committed and dedicated staff and great financial accountability. We are transparent and welcome questions and comments from you, our community investors. For the next two weeks, we will take a look at who we are and what we do.

United Way of Gaston County's Board of Directors' is comprised of local community leaders who volunteer to provide executive oversight to our agency. Currently led by BF Beasley, they are responsible for providing the overall policy and direction and are legally accountable for our operations. Key responsibilities include: policy administration, evaluation, public and community relations, personnel, finance and involvement. Members of our Board commit to attend regular monthly board meetings, attend all major events and participate in committee assignments. The Board does not manage day-to-day operations, provide direct services, hire and supervise staff or assign work to staff. The Board is there for guidance, leadership and support of the work that we do here in the Gaston community.

The President of United Way of Gaston County reports to the Board of Directors. Our President, Deborah Ally, provides leadership and manages all activities of the United Way staff. She develops systems to implement United Way policies and the day-to-day operations of the organization and advises the Board of Directors and its Committees on policy matters. Deborah is the chief representative of United Way of Gaston County to our partner agencies, community investors, the business community, representatives of government and regulatory agencies, the media and the general public. She is also responsible for achieving annual campaign and other resource objectives. In addition to providing a clear direction and leadership for us, she is charged with developing and improving partner and community relationships, increasing financial resources and development and executing our strategic plan.

Our Finance and Administration Department is comprised of three staff led by our Director of Finance and Administration, Karen Bowman. This department provides strategic financial leadership and exceptional quality customer service, to ensure financial and operating transparency within our organization. Bowman is also responsible for effective management and reporting of our financial resources, including monitoring of disbursements of all funds, managing budget process, overseeing the annual independent audit and ensuring that required tax documents are filed annually. Bowman also administers employee benefits, oversees personnel records and maintains building operations. The Finance and

Administrative Department also includes providing administrative support to our managerial staff and the management of front desk operations and Information Systems and Technology Support which handles our IT systems including the maintenance of our software and hardware, maintaining all volunteer and donor account data and processing of all financial transactions. Karen is perhaps one of my favorites because she also cuts our paychecks!

This is simply a brief snapshot of some of the responsibilities that rests with our Governance and Oversight – Board of Directors and our President and with our Finance and Administration Department. There are many minor details left out, but this gives you an idea of the importance that all of these positions bring to our organization's success. Next week we will look at our departments that serve and work in our community – Resource Development and Community Resources and Planning. I invite you to visit our website at www.unitedwaygaston.org. There, you can view a complete Staff listing, Board of Director names and view our latest tax form 990. Please do not hesitate to contact us at anytime with questions, concerns or comments; our door is always an open one!