

## United Way Transitions to New Leadership

During 2009, United Way of Gaston County was honored to have BF Beasley serve as our Board Chair. BF, along with his wife Eleanor and son Ben served as the first family campaign chairs for the 2007 United Way Community-wide Campaign. BF has served as a volunteer with us for many years, primarily in Campaign activities. He is also an active Gaston County Family YMCA member and serves on various committees with the organization. He has served as chairman of both the Central YMCA and the Metropolitan Y boards and was twice voted "Board Member of the Year". In 2008, BF served as a national YMCA Conference Delegate. He has also been involved over the years in youth programs such as Big Brothers and Junior Achievement, various textile and community organizations. He is an active member of First Presbyterian Church in Gastonia and is a licensed lay reader.

In 2008, BF was instrumental in the task of finding and hiring our President, Deborah Ally. Though 2009 proved to be a challenging year for us all, with BF's strong leadership, your United Way of Gaston County is thriving and is forging ahead with positive energy and a great vision for years to come.

As we begin a new year, we are pleased to welcome our 2010 Board Chair, Rusty Harris. Rusty has a Bachelors of Science Degree in Electrical Engineering from Clemson University and a Masters of Business Administration from the University of South Carolina. After holding various positions in Electric Operations with PSNC Energy, Rusty was named President and Chief Operating Officer in January of 2006. He currently serves on the Board of Directors Gaston Chamber of Commerce; the North Carolina Chamber Board of Directors; Gaston County's Economic Development Division (EDD) Board (Chairman); Gaston County's Economic Development Commission Board; The Schiele Museum of Natural History; Cancer Services of Gaston County, Inc.; and the Gaston County Educational Foundation Board.

Rusty has already been hard at work with us in recruiting Pacesetter companies for the 2009 Campaign, meeting regularly with our President, recruiting new Board members and sharing our message with all he meets. He brings a strong skill set to us and will be an excellent leader going forth. Rusty's passion for people and for life is contagious. He is a strong advocate for United Way of Gaston County and will continue to be an inspiration to us all throughout the year.

This Friday, February 19<sup>th</sup>, we will be hosting our 2010 Annual Meeting and Campaign Celebration from 11:30 am – 1:00 pm at the Gaston Country Club. We will celebrate the 2009 Community-wide Campaign and its wonderful volunteers; we will say goodbye to our 2009 Board Chair and retiring Board members; install our new Board members and we will officially welcome Rusty as our 2010 Board Chair. We invite you to join us as space is still available. Tickets are \$20 and includes lunch. For more information and to RSVP, please contact Heather Martin at 704.864.4554 ext. 19 or email [hmartin@unitedwaygaston.org](mailto:hmartin@unitedwaygaston.org).

United Way of Gaston County is committed to serving our community in 2010 and beyond. We will be transparent, open and honest. If you have questions or concerns, we welcome you to contact us at 704.864.4554 or visit our website at [www.unitedwaygaston.org](http://www.unitedwaygaston.org). We invite all of you to join with us in our quest to LIVE UNITED through giving, advocating and volunteering. It is our goal and mission to serve our community and it takes all of us to make that happen. Thank you for your generous support; I know that this will be a stellar year for Gaston County.