

profile

SPECIAL ISSUE—United Way

October 20, 1995

1995-96
Campaign team

Chairman:
Walter Liptak

Co-chairmen:
Ken Sellers
W. Charles Scott
Paul Jennings
Pete Burchett
Nick Stam
Skip Housh
Don Van Dyke

Open your heart to make a difference

Reaching out to those in need has long been a commitment of BCBSF employees throughout the state. Over the years, through the United Way, we have fed the hungry, sheltered the homeless and rushed to the aid of families in crisis.

And though many of us have never witnessed the smiles our gifts have produced, we have all heard the stories of how our caring has truly made a difference in our communities.

Improving the quality of just one life is a contribution we can each be proud of. Yet, as a corporation of givers, we at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida have the opportunity to touch thousands of lives and spread our generosity across the peninsula.

This year's campaign theme "Open Your Heart" exemplifies that willingness to contribute, whether with dollars or time, and the desire to make a difference in other people's lives.

Often, the difference is dramatic, according to Walter Liptak, president of Florida Combined Life and chairman of BCBSF's 1995-96 United Way campaign. "As a team of givers, we are in the position to help where help is really needed. Opening your heart can mean the difference between people eating or not eating. Or the difference between young people in crisis finding meaningful lives or lives of crime. It can even mean the difference between life and death."

Joining us in this partnership of caring are people throughout the community. The United Way campaign is the one time each year that workers of all trades and professions join hands to make a better community.

Because of that community partnership, the United Way is able to conduct a single workplace campaign, which BCBSF believes is an efficient way to meet the needs of our community.

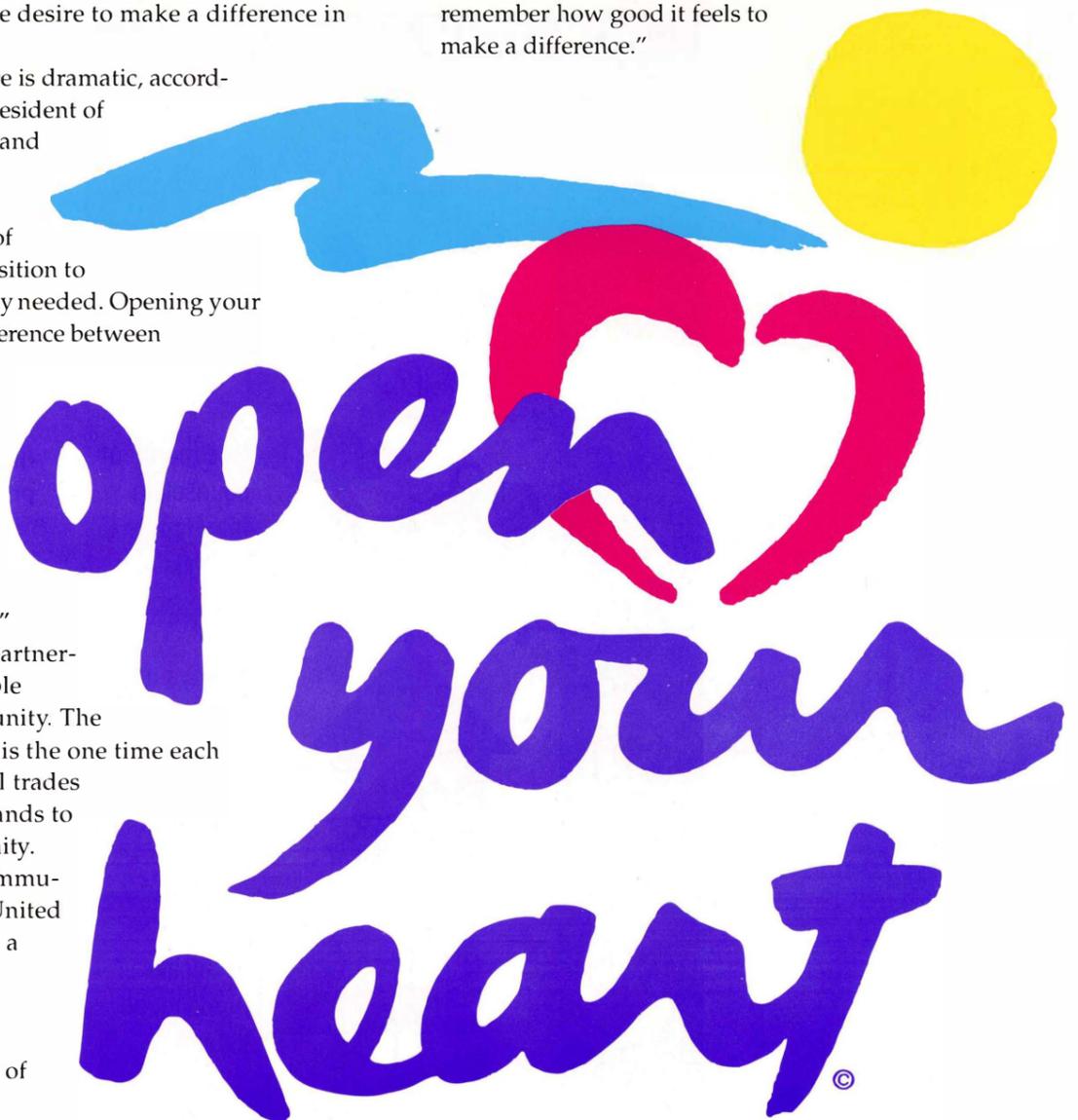
In addition, the United Way, as a non-profit agency with limited staff, is governed by local, unpaid volunteers. These knowledgeable volunteers oversee the campaign and evaluate eligible service programs to make sure

that every dime you contribute is well spent. In recent years, the volunteers have made organizational changes to provide contributors with more donation choices and greater accountability.

To Ken Sellers, vice president of product and market management and a co-chairman of our campaign, his choice to contribute does more than provide food, clothing, shelter and services to those less fortunate. When he gives to others, he gives himself the gift of happiness.

"Our contributions are crucial to those in need," Sellers said. "People of all ages in Florida count on every dollar we give to support the programs and services they need so desperately. And each time I give of myself, in return, I receive a great deal of happiness. So as you attend the rallies and make your pledges, remember how good it feels to make a difference."

"Our contributions are crucial to those in need" ...





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Opening their hearts Volunteers learn rewards of giving to community

When employee Laroda Barnes visited Jacksonville's Clara White Mission in early August, something magical happened. What had always been just statistics about people in need suddenly took on a human face.

He saw real people with real needs. And their faces opened his heart.

"After you see first-hand what these agencies are doing, it gives you a different perspective on the whole issue of charity and those agencies," Barnes said. "There are real people out there who need them... By God's grace that could be you or me on the other side who are in need."

Barnes, an internal auditor, was one of many BCBSF volunteers who participated in our fourth annual United Way Day of Caring. He and about 30 other Jacksonville employees offered their time and labor to clean, organize and paint two floors of the mission.

Other BCBSF employees visited various boys and girls clubs in the area, including Durkeville, Laurence Lee, Oceanway and Beaches. Executive secretary Gisele Brimo and seven other volunteers spent the day at Woodland Acres, playing basketball, running, doing exercises and sharing hugs with the children.

"The kids were starving for attention," Brimo said. "I think 'Open Your Heart' is such a perfect theme this year, especially for those of us who volunteered. The day of caring really did open our hearts and it opened our eyes to the needs of our community."

Though Brimo and the other volunteers gave of themselves that day, they received an emotional pay back. They were all touched by the experience, Brimo said. Interacting with children at the Beaches Boys & Girls Club had the same effect on Sam Abood, technical services. With three children of his own, Abood was able to quickly relate and enjoy the time with the kids.

"It was a great way for BCBSF to interface with the community," Abood said. "And also it's a good opportunity for us the employees to give something back. It gives you the opportunity to appreciate what you have in your own life."

For some participants, like Rick Kibler, director of internal audit, seeing was believing. After years of volunteering for the Day of Caring, Kibler has all the proof he needs that the United Way campaign really makes a difference in the community. "I didn't see where the money was going and I didn't really care," Kibler said. "Now that I've seen it, I not only have increased my contribution to the program, but I'm also trying to convince others to get involved."



HOW YOUR PLEDGE HELPS		
Your weekly pledge of:	Buy's:	
\$2		22 hot meals for the hungry and homeless
\$5		One month of counseling for a family in crisis
\$10		11 days of safe emergency shelter for a child in crisis
\$15		9 nurse visits to a terminally ill homebound patient
\$20		25 weeks of assistance for a teenager at risk

Letter to employees: Making a difference in your community

Last year, your contributions to the United Way improved the lives of many people who needed help. Your caring provided solutions and dreams of a brighter tomorrow.

Together we raised \$642,000 that we invested in our community, in its families, in its children.

As the 1995-96 United Way campaign unfolds, we again have the chance to touch others with our gifts. As before, the needs are great and our goals ambitious. This year, under the theme "Open Your Heart," our campaign focuses on how we can truly make a difference in the lives of those who often have no where else to turn.

By opening your heart, you can ease the burden of those less fortunate in the community. With your pledge, you can end the nightmare of abuse for hundreds of women and children. You can bring runaways in off the streets and provide them with a second chance. And you can provide adult day care and home meal delivery to the elderly.

When you open your heart, your giving will be strengthened by the thousands of other BCBSF employees who share your commitment.

We ask for your support for what we hope will be a truly successful campaign for a truly worthy cause. Together we really can make a difference.

Walter Liptak
Campaign Chairman