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**2016 CORPORATE PARTNER GUIDE**



United Way  
of Champaign County

## Not many companies

can say they've been giving to United Way from Day One. Martin Hood Friese & Associates is one of them.

"Ever since the beginning of the firm's career, with just three people and a secretary, we started supporting United Way. Now we have 45-50 people and we want to instill that same spirit in our employees. We love what United Way does and we want to continue to support it" said Kim Martin, Partner at Martin Hood Friese & Associates (MHFA).

MHFA has earned United Way's 100% Participation award for many years. Mary Fortune, Employee Campaign Coordinator, credits that success to the partners' generous example and a little bit of persistence. "A lot of times it's not so much that the employee wasn't going to give, they just put the form in the corner of their desk and don't get to it. So staying on top of the campaign is so important. Sometimes I'll say, 'The first person in my office with their pledge form today will get a gift card!' Incentives definitely help motivate people to turn in their forms."

Mr. Martin credits their employees' generosity to a corporate culture that fosters a spirit of community service. "Our firm is pretty community service oriented, and what better way to contribute back to the community than United Way? New employees come on board and see that all the other employees are giving, so they feel like they should get on board as well—it's kind of contagious after a while! When you see so many people supporting, it's easy to join in." Mr. Martin noted the importance of company leadership in building a great campaign, saying "It can go the other way too—if your firm leadership isn't supportive or doesn't communicate the impact of United Way, you can see the participation fall."

Recently, United Way began soliciting

sponsorships for the Leadership Giving program, Pillars. MHFA signed on almost immediately in the first year. They have also sent nearly a dozen young employees through the Emerging Community Leaders program. "ECL helps our young employees build relationships in the community. It not only helps their development in terms of community involvement, it helps in building personal relationships too."

*"When you give to the community, it seems like you get back double what you give"*

Kim Martin

Ms. Fortune noted that many employees are long-time members of the Champaign county community. "I think people give because everyone who works at this firm is familiar with the services provided, and the people who work here are embedded in this community. Many of us know people who needed services." Mr. Martin echoed her comments. "Many of our people grew up in this community and the surrounding areas, so it's an easy sell to ask them to give back to the community," he stated.

When asked what he would say to a leader considering United Way for their company, Mr. Martin spoke passionately. "I really encourage the leaders of other companies to get familiar with all the lives that United Way touches and all the different nonprofits that are affiliated with United Way. Once the key leaders in a company understand the impact of United Way, it's easy to bring that message back to their company and start to get more people on board."

Ms. Fortune noted that running a United Way workplace giving campaign is fairly simple. "As the coordinator I stay on top of the campaign over the two week period, keeping track of who has contributed and sending reminders to those who

haven't encouraging them to get their forms turned in. The partners offer a few incentives, which helps too. Everyone who contributes gets an entry into a raffle for every \$25 they contribute. At the end of the campaign our partners raffle off three big prizes, and that has been a big motivator and shows how committed our partners are to the success of the campaign."

MHFA's community involvement doesn't stop at United Way. Mr. Martin said, "We try and support lots of different nonprofits. Many of our staff and partners are on Boards around the community. Our firm does nonprofit work at fair rates to make it workable for those folks. We really encourage our people to get on nonprofit boards. We encourage volunteering." In addition to the personal interests of employees, the firm has been involved recently with the Chamber of Commerce and CU Cradle to Career.

Martin Hood Friese & Associates understands that giving back to the community is just the right thing to do. "When you give to the community, it seems like you get back double what you give. We see a lot of new clients and meet new friends through being involved in community service. It's definitely a huge part of our culture."



*45 Employees*

*100% United Way campaign participation*

*\$32,692 raised last year*

*14 Pillar leadership donors (annual gift of*

*\$500 or more)*

*Leadership Giving Sponsor*

# MARTIN HOOD FRIESE & ASSOCIATES: A CULTURE OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

