



Greater Milwaukee
& Waukesha County

For Immediate Release

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Do-Good & Volunteer Awards Recognize Local Volunteer Leaders

[05/02/2016]MILWAUKEE – United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County is happy to announce the winners of their Do-Good & Volunteer Awards. Winners will be awarded on Sunday, May 29 at Miller Park at a special tailgate award ceremony.

Winners were nominated for four individual/group awards and three business awards.



Rudy Willis

Education Volunteer of the Year: Rudy Willis

Presented to an individual or group who has provided exemplary volunteer service in education. United Way invests in the building block of education to ensure that every child has a chance for success in school, work, and life.

“Volunteering is like harvesting a field. It takes many hours of hard labor before you see any fruit.” says Rudy Willis. “Although I do not have a ‘field’ to harvest, as a retiree, I have many hours of time and energy that I am not harvesting fully.”

Rudy has taken that time and energy and turned it into valuable volunteer hours mentoring and reading to students.

He holds a special place in the hearts of the students he works with according to Horning Elementary School teacher, Nancy Roncke. “Mr Willis is a mild-mannered man with a wealth of knowledge that the students respect. He consistently reaches out to teachers with emails and ideas as well as searching for just the right thing that is going to inspire the students.”

Income Volunteer of the Year: Jay Miller

Presented to an individual or group who has provided exemplary volunteer service in the issue area of income. United Way invests in the building block of income to help adults create a more financially secure future for themselves and their families.

Jay Miller is a volunteer attorney at Legal Action’s Low Income Taxpayer Clinic. Since 2013 he has volunteered for over 840 hours and represented over 87 clients. “Jay’s work is crucial to the livelihood and income of our clients who are often surviving on



Jay Miller



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meager disability or Social Security payments.” said Margaret Niebler-Brown, attorney – coordinator at Legal Action of Wisconsin.

Jay commits yearly to managing a pro bono caseload and negotiates with the IRS and State of Wisconsin Department of Revenue to forgive debts and prevent liens and garnishments against clients with low incomes who struggle to make ends meet.

Niebler-Brown stated that, “Jay carries a caseload similar to a staff attorney, but is a volunteer. He handles incredibly complicated tax controversy cases and his years of experience and expertise greatly benefit the agency and our clients.”



Elizabeth “Libby”
Sinclair

Health Volunteer of the Year: Elizabeth “Libby” Sinclair

Presented to an individual or group who has provided exemplary volunteer service in the issue area of health. United Way invests in the building block of health to help those without health insurance, seniors in need of home health care, survivors of abuse and individuals struggling with mental illness or addiction.

Since becoming a board member and volunteer at the National Alliance on Mental Illness Waukesha, Inc. in 2011, Libby Sinclair has committed herself to the success of the Stories of Hope Program – a program that is designed to create open dialogue regarding mental

illness, stigma and recovery.

Libby has spent countless hours coordinating schedules, contacting participants, communicating efficiently with the Stories of Hope team and providing ongoing mentoring and leadership.

“Libby is the epitome of what an advocate and volunteer should look like.” said Andrea Grittner of NAMI Waukesha. “She has worked tirelessly for years as an advocate for individuals and families affected by mental illness.”

The Visionary Volunteerism Award: Gary Mueller

The Visionary Volunteerism Award was created to honor a bold, visionary, and creative volunteer effort by someone who is dedicated to being a catalyst for change.

“Gary Mueller is arguably the public health field’s most innovative and provocative advertising pitchman.” says Heidi Halperin, employee of Serve Marketing. “As Executive Creative Director at Milwaukee ad agency, BVK, and the founder of Serve, the country’s only all-volunteer non-profit ad agency, Gary has devoted his career to help improve minority and adolescent health issues.”



Gary Mueller



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Gary has been working with United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County for the last 10 years, developing provocative teen pregnancy prevention campaigns that have stimulated positive healthy behavior changes and have changed the way non-profits tell their story and raise awareness for their issues.

In addition to the work Serve has done for United Way, Gary gets approached by other organizations, for example, the Coalition for Children, Youth and Families (CCYF) approached Gary to help children across the state of Wisconsin by recruiting new foster care families to help bring in children and teens living without a stable home.



Corporate Volunteer of the Year: Rockwell Automation

Presented to a for-profit business with 250+ employees that encourages select employee volunteerism as a core business strategy.

Rockwell Automation is dedicated to a Corporate Social Responsibility platform that ensures their financial support and employee volunteer efforts are making an impact on key issues that are important to their organization. Volunteer efforts and financial investments are focused on education (STEM), environmental stewardship and human services.

Rockwell has a robust volunteer involvement with United Way through their sponsorship of United Way's Season of Caring that unifies thousands of local volunteers to impact the region's most critical needs.

"Rockwell Automation continues to show us what doing good looks like." says Stephen A. Roell, former board chairman for United Way and retired chairman and CEO at Johnson Controls, Inc. "They are an organization that models by example and inspires the larger business community to join them in making our community a better place to live, work and play."

Medium-Size Business Volunteer of the Year: Ruekert & Mielke, Inc

Presented to a for-profit business that employs 50-249 individuals and exemplifies employee volunteer engagement as a core business strategy.



Ruekert & Mielke, Inc. inspires its employees to do good not only at work but in the community too. "Leaders of Ruekert & Mielke set the tone for the rest of the staff when it comes to community involvement and engagement." says employee, Steven Wurster.

The company employs 'teams' to ensure they reach their professional and community goals. The Employee Wellness and Appreciation team invigorates staff to get involved in



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the community outside of work. Team leader, Jerad Wagner, describes the team as “implementing a culture of service to ourselves, our employees, and our community.”

The company dedicates time, money resources to causes that impact community development and growth while employees are encouraged and supported in their pursuits of personally enriching volunteer opportunities.

THE SCHROEDER GROUP, S.C., **Small Business Volunteer of the Year: The**
ATTORNEYS AT LAW **Schroeder Group, S.C., Attorneys at Law**

Presented to a for-profit business with less than 50 employees that encourages employee volunteerism as a core business strategy.

The Schroeder Group, S.C., Attorneys at Law is committed to volunteerism and encourages its employees to spend time volunteering with organizations that are important to them. Several attorneys serve on local non-profit boards and the company runs an annual United Way campaign.

The company also encourages employees to participate in group volunteer activities and holds monthly jeans days where money is raised for different organizations that employees select.

A signature project the company focuses on is donating turkeys to the Food Pantry of Waukesha each November. Recently the firm’s leadership also provided legal expertise in the restructuring of Waukesha County’s Housing Action Coalition.

About United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County: *United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County improves our community by mobilizing people and resources to drive strategic impact in Education, Income and Health – the building blocks for a good quality of life. Learn more at:*
<http://www.unitedwayGMWC.org>

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