

# Community News

JULY 2008 NEWSLETTER

## United Way Surpasses Mentor Goal!



First Coast News Anchor Deanna Fené starts off United Way of Northeast Florida's Day of Action.

On June 21 in Hemming Plaza, United Way of Northeast Florida announced results of its mobilization effort to recruit new volunteer mentors for Northeast Florida's struggling students. As part of a national initiative, the local organization joined hundreds of United Ways across the country in hosting a Day of Action on this one day.

On the First Coast, United Way of Northeast Florida joined with the City of Jacksonville, the Jacksonville Children's Commission, Duval County Public Schools and the Mentor First Coast Task Force, to launch this community recruitment drive to expand the network of volunteer mentors in schools in Clay, Duval and Nassau counties. Together with corporate partners,

community and faith-based organizations, volunteers and government agencies, United Way is committed to improving the high school graduation rate in this community.

"On May 14, United Way and its community partners announced our commitment to recruit more mentors for our public school students," said Connie Hodges, president and CEO of United Way of Northeast Florida. "As of June 21, we had already recruited more than 800 new mentors, and to date have surpassed our goal of 1,000!"

The high school drop out rate is at a critical level in Northeast Florida, and in response to the call for mentors, First Coast residents have mobilized

to ensure better outcomes for area youth. With a current mentor network of 1,727, the number of mentors has increased by roughly 50 percent as a result of the recruitment drive.

Mentored students are 52 percent less likely to skip school, 46 percent less likely to become involved with drugs and 27 percent less likely to use alcohol. Research shows that one caring adult can have a positive, lasting impact in the life of a struggling student and can lead to improvements in attendance, behavior and academic performance in a relatively short period of time.

"We are so proud of our longstanding relationships with corporate, business and  
(story continued inside...)

# VOLUNTEER.



Sharon Hackney and family



Volunteer Jaynae Johnson and daughter at one of the t-shirt stations



The Hemming Plaza festival featured performers such as jugglers and stilt-walkers.

## Day of Action Partners

City of Jacksonville  
Mentor First Coast Task Force  
Duval County Public Schools  
Jacksonville Children's Commission  
United Way of Northeast Florida

## Day of Action Participating Programs & Agencies

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Florida, Inc.

Boy Scouts of America, North Florida Council

Communities In Schools of Nassau County, Inc.

daniel

Girl Scouts of Gateway Council, Inc.

Kesler Mentoring Connection

Take Stock in Children - Clay (YMCA of Florida's First Coast)

Take Stock in Children - Duval (Communities In Schools of Jacksonville)

Tipping the Scale - Baptist Health/The Bridge of Northeast Florida

United Way Achievers For Life

YMCA of Florida's First Coast

## Day of Action Champions

Acosta Sales & Marketing Company

Anheuser-Busch, Inc.

Bank of America

Baptist Health

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida

Citi

City of Jacksonville

Community Volunteers

Duval County Public Schools

DTU-AFT LU 3326

Enterprise Rent-A-Car

Florida Capital Bank

Florida Department of Health

Jacksonville Regional Chamber of Commerce

JEA/SJRPP/TEA

Mayo Clinic

PBS&J

Presser, Lahnen & Edelman

Public Defenders Office

Publix Super Markets, Inc.

Regency Centers

Regions Bank

Rogers Towers, P.A.

Shands Jacksonville

St. Vincent's

State Attorney's Office

State Farm Insurance Company

U.S. Navy

United Parcel Service

United Way of Northeast Florida

University of Florida Healthcare

University of North Florida

Wachovia

Wal-Mart

## Mobilizing Mentors (continued from front page)

community partners that have allowed us to rally together and achieve this incredible feat," said Hodges. "This is a giant step for Jacksonville and our surrounding communities as we work to keep students in school and on track for graduation. We are very excited to see how quickly our community rallied together in just six weeks."

Local Day of Action festivities also included a community rally and festival at Hemming Plaza with food, entertainment and family-friendly activities. More than 1,000 families

and children attended the event. In addition to June 21 sessions held in Jacksonville, training for new mentors took place at the Peck Center in Fernandina Beach and the Barco-Newton YMCA in Fleming Island.

Recruitment and registration for new mentors will continue through August 15. To learn more about United Way's Day of Action and mentor recruitment, contact Coretta Hill at 390-3200 or visit [www.aboutunitedway.org](http://www.aboutunitedway.org).

**Give. Advocate. Volunteer. Live United.**

# GIVE.



The "Pacesetter Parade" during the June 21 Day of Action

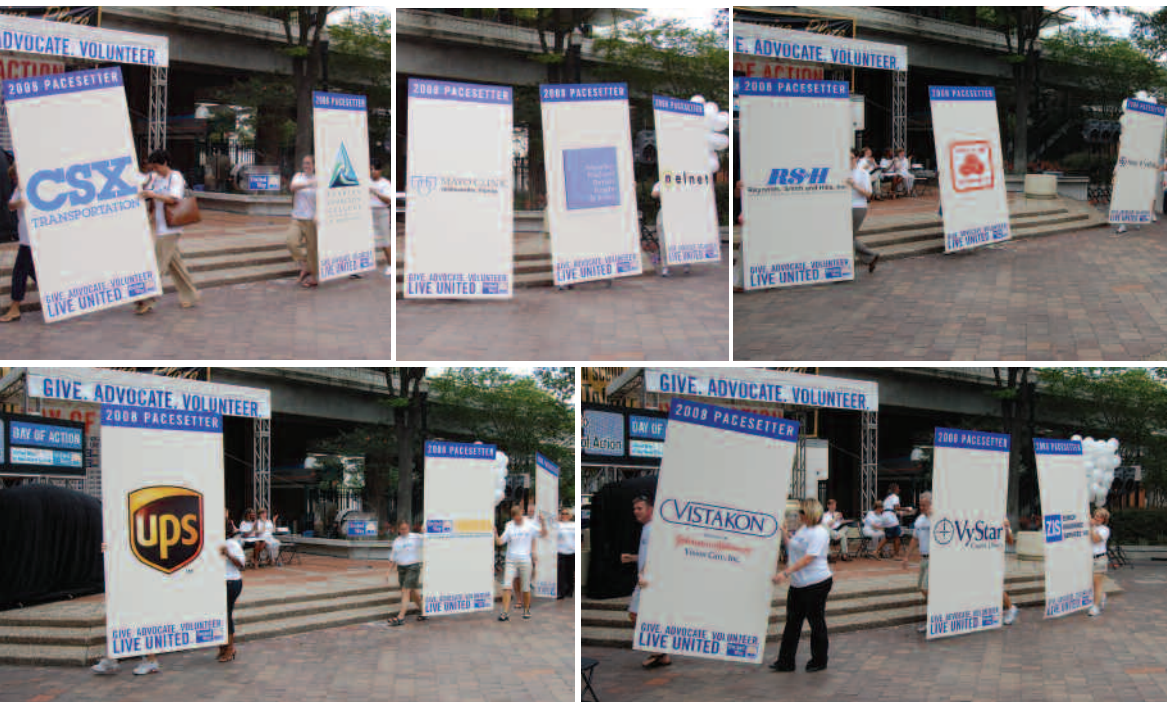
## Pacesetter Companies and Organizations

During United Way's Day of Action, Pacesetter companies joined the festivities in official LIVE UNITED t-shirts and were recognized for their outstanding efforts. As Pacesetters, these companies and organizations are responsible for launching and raising the campaign's first donations, setting the pace for donor giving.

There are 16 companies and 17 United Way partner agencies that are setting the pace for the United Way Community Campaign. In

2007, Pacesetter companies and other early company campaigns raised more than \$5.2 million and comprised 20% of the community campaign.

At the conclusion of the Pacesetter campaign, awards will be presented to the top two companies based on percent increase and dollar increase over the previous year. Pacesetter campaign results will be announced at the Community Kickoff in September.



## Pacesetter Companies and Organizations

CSX Transportation, Inc.

Florida Community College at Jacksonville

Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta,  
Jacksonville Branch

First Coast Community Bank

Florida Capital Bank

Henkels & McCoy

Mayo Clinic

Moseley Pritchard Parrish Knight & Jones

Nelnet

Reynolds Smith & Hills, Inc.

State Farm Insurance Company

Stop At Nothing, Inc.

UPS

Vistakon

VyStar Credit Union

Zurich Insurance Services

## Pacesetter Agencies

American Red Cross  
Northeast Florida Chapter

Boy Scouts of America -  
North Florida Council

Catholic Charities Bureau

Challenge Enterprise of North Florida

Communities in Schools  
of Nassau County

The dePaul School of Northeast Florida

Hope Haven Children's Clinic  
& Family Center

Jacksonville Community Council, Inc.

Jewish Family & Community Services

Kesler Mentoring Connection

Methodist Children's Village

PACE Center for Girls Jacksonville

Pine Castle

Quigley House, Inc.

The Salvation Army

Volunteer Jacksonville, Inc.

United Way of Northeast Florida

# ADVOCATE.



One of the pre-training orientations in City Hall



Connie Hodges, Warren Grimes, and Jan Morse



Kit Thomas, Jon Heymann, Skip Cramer, and Vicki Evans



A shot-putt was one of the sports activities at the Hemming Plaza festival



Children at the Day of Action festival getting their faces painted



A bird's eye view of Hemming Plaza during Day of Action



Carl Davidson and family with his mentee, Omar



Mayor Peyton speaking on the value of mentoring



Festival attendees were encouraged to sign the Investment in Mentoring piggy bank



Warren Grimes, Ed Pratt-Dannals, Mayor John Peyton, Connie Hodges, and Allison Lyons



Annanesa Hayes and family hand out free hot dogs



Future mentors register for their training sessions.



Alan Thomas, Diane Sanders, and Sergio Palacios



Children playing in the bouncy-house in Hemming Plaza



One of the mentor training sessions held in MOCA, Dalton Agency, and City Hall



Day of Action Champion companies drop "coins" into the Investment in Mentoring piggy bank, as the tally board behind it counts up the number of mentors.



Shamell Perry and family with her mentee Chantel



Employees from UPS show their support during Day of Action



Lakisha Frey, Allison Lyons, and Christian Lyons

**MORE ABOUT DAY OF ACTION AND MORE PHOTOS INSIDE...**



United Way of Northeast Florida  
1301 Riverplace Blvd. Suite 400  
P.O. Box 41428  
Jacksonville, Florida 32203-1428

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If you have any questions about your United Way, please call 390-3200.

## United Way Launches New LIVE UNITED Brand



In conjunction with Day of Action festivities on June 21, United Way also launched the new LIVE UNITED brand in Hemming Plaza. United Way is focused on advancing the common good, and creating opportunities for a better life for all. It takes everyone in the community working together to create a brighter future. The Day of Action grew out of that concept. LIVE UNITED is about engaging everyone around a common cause to give, advocate, and volunteer. By mobilizing more than 1,000 mentors for our youth, volunteers showed the power of our community and how we LIVE UNITED on the First Coast.



### Helping Students Achieve: Alfonso + Andy

Frequent misbehavior at school was earning Alfonso a reputation as a troublemaker. Afternoons found him primarily on his own while his mom worked. But when a United Way agency matched him with Andy, Alfonso's outlook began to improve. His mentor has "made my life better," says Alfonso. They meet faithfully for an hour each week to play interactive games, tackle tough school assignments, or just hang out. Alfonso has learned to trust Andy and depend on his advice. Together, they work on anger management strategies and study skills. With Andy's help, Alfonso has a brighter future.

## CHANGE A STUDENT'S LIFE. MENTOR.

Sign up to be a mentor! Mentor deadline has been extended to August 15.

### Upcoming Training Session Dates:

July 29 at 5:30 pm

August 9 at 9:00 am

August 13 at 5:30 pm

To learn more or to become a mentor, please visit our website,  
[www.aboutunitedway.org/mentor](http://www.aboutunitedway.org/mentor) or call Coretta Hill at 904.390.3231