

Campaign Chronicle



The weekly newsletter of the Cincinnati Metro Area CFC

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Even small pledges make a difference, CFC leaders say

By Rebecca Neal

Federal Times

Small donations matter, say leaders of some of the smaller Combined Federal Campaign chapters, where the poor economy has dampened hopes for significant increases in charitable pledges this year.

"The United Way told us that \$1 can provide a full meal for a person. So I tell people, 'Know someone who could use a meal? Give \$1,' " said Craig Metzel, chairman of the CFC of Central Iowa's Local Federal Coordinating Committee. Metzel, like many other leaders of smaller CFC campaigns, hopes to meet his fund-raising goal by pooling the small donations of a larger number of participants. So far, however, he and other organizers who spoke to *Federal Times* haven't raised half of their funds at the campaign's halfway mark.

The CFC formally kicked off Sept. 1 and runs through Dec. 15. The Cincinnati Metro Area CFC raised \$1.24 million last year and hopes to raise \$1.25 million this year. It has raised about 25 percent of that goal so far, executive director Marcus Glasgow said.

That's good considering the region's unemployment is above 10 percent and many federal employees are worried their spouses employed at private companies may lose their jobs, he said. He's hopeful more employees will join in, donate smaller amounts and push the campaign to meeting its goal.

"Cincinnati is one of the harder-hit areas like Cleveland and Detroit — we're really feeling the economy. Our volunteers and donors give it their all, and we didn't want to discourage them by reducing our goal," he said.

Glasgow said he's told volunteers to encourage small donations, which can quickly add up when pooled together. If all of the federal employees in the Cincinnati area who don't

currently participate in the CFC donated \$1 a week, the campaign would have an additional \$296,000 a year, he said.

"We're hoping that emphasizing that even small gifts count might get some people to react and donate," he said. Metzel said the Central Iowa CFC had a late start because of paperwork backlogs. The campaign kicked off the week of Oct. 18 and has raised \$100,000 so far, he said.

The campaign raised \$528,000 in 2008 and hopes to reach \$581,000 this year. The economy hurt the Lubbock, Texas, Area CFC last year, which raised \$78,000, falling short of its \$85,000 goal. Local Federal Coordinating Committee Chair Justin Weaver said he's optimistic that the campaign will meet this year's goal of \$79,500. The campaign kicked off its drive at the beginning of October and has raised about 30 percent of its goal so far. Weaver said Lubbock hasn't been as badly hit as other regions by foreclosures and layoffs, which has him optimistic.

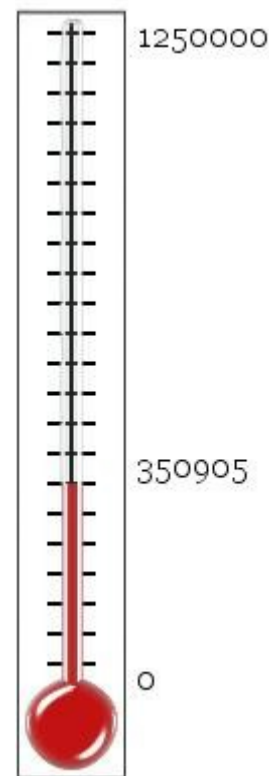
"The mood is more positive, and people seem not quite as concerned about layoffs. We're facing one of the smallest [federal] pay raises in recent years, but the mood does seem to be better than a year ago," he said. Many campaigns have cut administrative expenses to maximize dollars for charity.

"We used to have various prizes for each level of giving, but we found with some of the smaller donation amounts, we were spending more on the prize than we were bringing in," said Weaver, a National Weather Service meteorologist.

See *Making a Difference*, page 3

Going for the Goal

The Campaign has reached 28% of its goal with \$350,905.



The Cincinnati Metro Area CFC would like to thank the following for their sponsorship of the 2009 Campaign:

**Government Employee
Insurance Company
(GEICO)**

**Greater Cincinnati
Federal Executive Board**

CFC Testimonial: Pledges help environmental organizations

For \$1 per pay period, you can:

- conserve 1 acre of threatened ecosystem
- provide 520 people with educational brochures describing how they can play a role in protecting urban green space, restoring residential recycling and implementing new clean energy standard in their communities.
- remove 60 pounds of trash from a beach, catalogue it, and identify who put it there
- feed one endangered raptor for ten days
- plant a tree in an inner-city neighborhood
- provide a public library with quarterly issues of an environmental newsletter for one year

For \$2 per pay period, you can:

- provides 200 lbs of sunflower seeds for bird feeders
- supplies food and medicine for a nest of American Kestrels
- provides care for nestling song birds
- furnish one hour of expert training in land protection for a citizen's group or land trust interested in natural areas preservation in their communities
- provide an educational program in a natural area for an elementary school class
- help alert residents to pollution levels at area beaches so that beachgoers can make safe choices about where to swim
- save 18 feet of trail for bicycling, horseback riding, running or hiking
- plant 2 trees to restore an urban tree canopy and reduce the trapped heat caused by de-forestation
- underwrite staff time to provide customized assistance to an individual affected by exposures to toxic substances in the air, food, water or soil, or to one who is seeking to prevent such exposure

For \$3 per pay period, you can:

- support citizens groups working with key officials to convert abandoned railroad corridors, giving local communities an opportunity to create a "rail-trail" for walking, bicycling, and nature appreciation on land that might otherwise be lost
- provides dip nets for a class to monitor streams and ponds
- provides a neighborhood ozone monitor
- provide four low-income community-based groups with subscriptions to a publication that educates community activists on threats to public health posed by environmental problems and provides organizing tools they can use to protect their communities
- underwrite one hour of a collaborative project to reduce dangerous car emissions and create cleaner air for us all to breathe

For \$4 per pay period, you can:

- purchase 1,000 tree seedlings and planting equipment for a community
- organize a 3-hour litter walk on a river's edge by 20 concerned citizens
- equip a team of students with materials and incentive prizes to pass school policies or establish school programs that create a healthier environment in school facilities

- help set aside and preserve wilderness areas from destructive actions

For \$5 per pay period, you can:

- furnish all classes of a high school with charts and guides about alternatives to commonly used hazardous household products
- furnish a middle school with a forest ecology curriculum
- support a 10-person crew of volunteers for a day of annual maintenance of a 3-mile trail
- purchase 15 books or videos about plant care for a public library
- purchase 25 rolls of film to help document and report suspicious and dangerous activities to authorities, including unusual discharges in our waterways
- plant more than 200 cedar trees for a habitat restoration project

For \$6 per pay period, you can:

- prevent 75,000,000 pounds of carbon dioxide, the major contributor to global warming, from entering the Earth's atmosphere
- teaches students to monitor and restore streams
- helps to support the maintenance of a hiking trail
- helps to train volunteers in an animal rehabilitation clinic
- provides an x-ray for an injured Red-tail hawk
- provides a scholarship for a student to attend an environmental education program
- cover the cost of an experienced community organizer to help grassroots groups reduce, eliminate, clean up or prevent chemical contamination that threatens their communities' health

For \$10 per pay period, you can:

- helps to support environmental education at several natural centers in Ohio
- helps to purchase rain barrels for backyard conservation programs
- helps to rehabilitate one injured Great-horned Owl or 20 baby song birds
- provide posters and other educational materials to inform park visitors about steps they can take to help prevent increased air pollution in their parks
- provide 1,900 daffodil bulbs for school children to plant

For \$20 per pay period, you can:

- help purchase a pair of high-powered field binoculars
- help fund research to identify the chemicals in air pollution that are linked to birth defects, lung cancer and leukemia
- provide rain gear for 20 youths on an inner city outing trip to the wilderness

For \$25 per pay period, you can:

- help create an electronic copy of a research report and make it available to environmental professionals and citizens around the world

Your tax records and the CFC

What documentation is required for contributions made through payroll deduction?

When a donor makes a contribution by payroll deduction, the donor must have the following documents to substantiate the deduction:

- A pay stub, W-2 or other document furnished by the employer that indicates the amount withheld during the tax year for payment to the PCFO and,
- A pledge form, or other document prepared by the PCFO that shows the PCFO's name.

The requirements for contributions over \$250 only apply for a payroll deduction contribution if the amount of any single payroll deduction is in excess of \$250. Therefore, if the donor makes any single payroll deduction donation – not the sum for the year – in excess of \$250, then the pledge form or other document must also include a statement that the organization does not provide goods or services in consideration for any contributions made by payroll deduction. This is understood to mean goods or services other than those considered “insubstantial” as defined in IRS Publication 1771.

If the donor paid by cash or check, what constitutes a sufficient receipt?

For contributions of \$250 or less, the IRS requires the donor to maintain a record of the contribution. The record must be:

- bank record; or
- a written communication from the PCFO containing:
 - ◊ The name of the PCFO;
 - ◊ The name of the charitable organization(s) designated to receive the contribution). (Note: The IRS will accept the unique five-digit code as the name of the organization since it can be determined from the CFC Charity List)
 - ◊ The date of the contribution; and
 - ◊ The amount of the cash or check.

Therefore if the donor contributed by check, a copy of the canceled check or a bank or credit union statement will serve as a sufficient record. If the donor contributed by cash, the donor will need to obtain a written communication from the PCFO to substantiate contribution. A credit card contribution may be substantiated with the donor's credit card statement.

Alternatively, if the pledge form accompanying the cash or check contribution contains the four items indicated above as required for a written communication from the PCFO, then a copy of the pledge form, together with an indication that the pledge form and contribution have been accepted by the PCFO, may be provided to the donor as a sufficient record.

For contributions in excess of \$250, the IRS requires the donor to maintain the record described above (for contributions below \$250) and in addition, the donor will be required to substantiate the contribution. The additional requirement for substantiation is a contemporaneous written acknowledgement from the PCFO containing a statement whether PCFO provided any goods or services in consideration for the contribution. have to be described.)

Separate contributions of less than \$250 will not be aggregated.

In order to provide the written communications described above, the PCFO must have sufficient information with which to document the contribution, which may include a canceled check or a receipt from the campaign keyworker accepting cash.

Making a difference

(continued from page 1)

Now, anyone who donates \$100 or more will receive a stadium blanket, a hit for employees who flock to high school or Texas Tech University football games, he said. Glasgow said his CFC is processing pledge cards in-house to save \$3,000. The process is more time-consuming but is fiscally responsible, he said. The CFC of Central Iowa decided not to give donors prizes, scrapping the usual \$1.50 water bottle for a savings of \$7,000. Metzel has had no complaints about the decision.

“That’s money that could be better spent back in the community,” said Metzel, a pharmacist at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Des Moines. Agencies also agreed to loan executives to work part-time on the campaign. That way, reluctant agencies

aren’t left without an employee for the duration of the campaign. The move allows for more loaned executive scattered throughout the campaign’s coverage area, which reduces mileage costs and time commuting to agency offices.

Instead of posting double-digit fund-raising gains, Metzel said he wants to see more employees connect to local charities and give what they can. He said the sour economy actually seems to motivate people to donate, especially to local charities. People are connecting to the needs of those hurt by the economy in a way they may not have to victims of natural disasters, Metzel said.

“There’s a tornado. Or a flood. Every year there’s some disaster, some crisis. This is the first year where the crisis has been felt border to border, coast to coast. It’s rallying people more than in the past,” he said.

Need CFC information?

- Locate a Coordinator
- Get CFC materials
- Find charity info
- Provide comment

Contact the CFC Office to get all your CFC information. You can write, email, call, or FAX:

CFC
John Weld Peck Federal Building
550 Main Street, Ste. 1-116
Cincinnati, OH 45202
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