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United Way helps families

By USAIC Public Affairs Office, Brenda Donnell

Goodwill, Red Cross, the YMCA, the Salvation Army, Second Harvest Food Bank and about 50 other local organizations and services receive funding through the United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley.

United Way is one of the many organizations that Fort Benning's community can help by contributing to the Combined Federal Campaign, which kicked off Thursday.

"Give where you live," said Scott Ferguson, president and CEO of UWCV. "Last year, we had over 22,000 people in the Chattahoochee Valley who supported the United Way."

Ferguson said many of the services United Way helps fund benefit Fort Benning's Soldiers, civilians and retirees residing in the tricommunity.

"If you're living here and you're using the services, your children, spouse or parents are using them, you really need to support those quality of life programs," he said.

Forty-four percent of UWCV funds go to youth programs, such as Boy and Girl Scouts, Girls, Inc., Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Families and Schools Together and more, Ferguson said.

"A lot of what we do in the Girls and Boys Club, both in Phenix City and Columbus, is mentoring and homework help right after school, and they track their grades to make sure those kids are doing well in school, working with the schools," he said.

Columbus Hospice, Inc., receives funds from UWCV that are used for two programs, Caring for Our Own and Continuous Care, said Diane Taylor, vice president of marketing for Columbus Hospice, Inc.

Both programs provide patients with nurses, social workers, chaplains, volunteers and physicians who visit patients weekly in their homes to help them control pain and to take care of them. They visit more often if needed. Hospice care is given to patients without regard to diagnosis, cultural diversity or ability to pay.

Taylor said Columbus Hospice, Inc., employees are also very supportive of UWCV.

"One thing we pride ourselves on is that our employees have 100 percent participation in United Way, because they really believe in it," Taylor said.

Ferguson said those who donate probably won't miss what they contribute, but they will miss the services lost if they don't donate. Anyone who wishes to give to the UWCV during the Combined Federal Campaign should choose code 46792.

For more information about UWCV, visit www.unitedwayofthecv.org.

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