

Partner Spotlight: Comcast: A Company that Cares

Three years ago, Comcast recognized a major national need: internet access for low-income families. Children needed computers to do their homework; parents needed computers to find and apply for jobs. What happened to families who lost internet access because they couldn't afford it?

For years, Comcast has funded the United Way partner, Boys and Girls Clubs, computer centers across the country for years. But what about homework that must do at home?

Responding to a critical need for help, Comcast created the "Internet Essentials Program". The program, which subsidizes the cost of internet service, has brought access to **1.8 million people - 450,000 families**. The social and economic impact of this initiative is enormous: information that was previously unavailable to millions now travels at the speed of light to their eager fingertips; millions who were disconnected are connected.

Of the program, Director of Government and Community Relations, Sharon Codeanne says, "Comcast believes in looking forward and giving back and that is why we partner with community minded organizations like the United Way of Pioneer Valley to bridge the digital divide in order to support the education of tomorrow's future leaders."

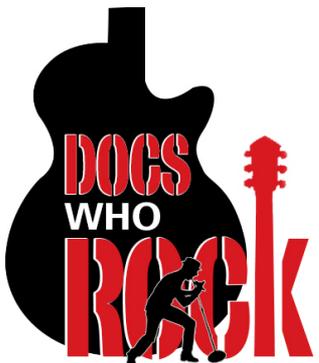
In addition to their IE Program, Comcast has given back to communities across the nation by supporting and inspiring employee participation on their annual Comcast Cares Day. In 2014, that meant organizing and sponsoring 80,000 volunteers across the country. Since 2001, more than 500,000 volunteers have participated in volunteer Comcast Cares' efforts (<http://corporate.comcast.com/comcast-voices/making-change-happen-on-comcast-cares-day-2>). These 500,000 volunteers have donated over 3 million hours of service to their local communities: hours spent on tasks ranging from neighborhood clean-up to painting public murals.



United Way of Pioneer Valley will join Comcast Cares Day on April 25th for beautification projects at Headstart's Springfield location.

See information [here](#).

Come to 30 Madison Avenue in Springfield at 8:00 a.m. to help Comcast help our community.



Come Rock with the Docs!

Dust off your best concert tee and brush up on your air guitar, it's time for the annual Docs Who Rock concert! Docs Who Rock is a rockin' good event sponsored by Baystate Health to raise money for United Way of Pioneer Valley. The concert will feature two bands whose members are doctors at Baystate: SutureSelf and Plan B.

When? Friday, May 29, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

Where? Open Square, 4 Open Square Way in Holyoke

Price? \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door

Tickets? Call Sue Fontaine (413) 794-7630 or visit the Marketplace Gift Shop at BMC

Students on a Mission

At the United Way of Pioneer Valley, April means [Youth Generate](#), a program that inspires students to assess their communities and develop projects that meet a unique or specific community need. YouthGenerate enables students to become community change-makers by developing entrepreneurial skills to solve community problems, motivating them to take the initiative to lead community change, and helping them to recognize their role and the positive impact they can create.

The program, which doubled from 5 schools to 10 schools since its first year, includes student run projects ranging from blood drives to Forest Park Zoo beautification projects. Erik Rizzo, a Southwick-Tolland Regional High School senior, leads a group that's involved in lending a hand at Forest Park.

When we asked Rizzo, the President of his school's Interact Club, about his role in the project, he said: "Volunteering, in general, has made me realize that I love to help others and to make a difference in this world. The best part about volunteering is the good feeling you get from doing it. It opens the door for future opportunities, recognition from volunteering, college, and careers."

Inspired by his role in UWPV's Youth Generate program, Rizzo hopes to study biochemistry in college so that he can pursue a career in medicine, a career that he says, will provide for future volunteer opportunities. "Because I want to be in the medical field one day, I can already see multiple instances where I would be volunteering in local hospitals or doctor's offices."



Changing The Odds

United Way of Pioneer Valley helps local people - individuals, families with young children, Veterans and Senior Citizens change the odds by funding programs and services addressing critical needs in our community.

You can help. Visit [this page](#) to make a secure, online donation.



Pioneer Valley Profiles (PVP)

Denis Gagnon, Jr. of Excel Dryer
(East Longmeadow, MA)



[Click on the image to watch video.](#)

Bud Delphin of CareerPoint
in Holyoke



[Click on the image to watch video.](#)

Upcoming Events

United Way of Pioneer Valley
Annual Meeting & Celebration!

Date: Wednesday, June 17, 2015

Time: 5:15 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Location: Chez Josef, Agawam

Admission: \$20

More information: [Click here](#)

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