

Partner Spotlight: Baystate Health Systems

Baystate Health

When we asked Baystate Health Systems staff who we should interview for our bi-monthly spotlight volunteer column, James Watts was at the tip of everyone's tongue. His mention was always followed by a smile, a laugh, and the remark: "That guy is a character". They weren't wrong.

James greeted us warmly and enthusiastically with the same smile. Watts, Baystate Health System's lead concierge, has dedicated nearly three decades to Baystate. He's spent the last decade volunteering both in and outside of Baystate for United Way causes. Volunteerism, he says, is something his mother taught him - something he's proud to do.

When we asked Watts what volunteer work he's most proud of, he mentioned one past, and one present. He said he'll never forget travelling to South Carolina to rebuild burned churches and to give a "hand-up, not a hand-out" to people who, in the wake of the fire, were left with nothing. He said this event, and many like it, are what make him feel proud about the current volunteer work he and Baystate Health System conduct today - including Baystate's United Way Day of Caring, and Baystate's Annual United Way fund-drive. [Click here to see James Watts tell his story in his own words.](#)

Our partnership with Baystate Health Systems has grown strong in recent years. Though we focus on different community issues, our work is complementary, and the community is stronger when we work together.

When we asked Jason Newmark, Vice President of Diagnostic Services at Baystate Health Systems, and Co-Chair of the Springfield based United Way fundraising campaign, about his organization's partnership with the United Way he said, "The health care system, we focus mostly on preventative care and treating folks when they are sick, but when you look at the partnership with the United Way, we are able to be more proactive, to reach out to work on education, to work on basic needs that people in our community have that the hospital alone can't deliver."

According to Newmark, "With a tremendous partnership, we have a chance to really make an impact on our community." We couldn't agree more. [Click here to watch a short interview clip of Jason.](#)

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)



When Sue Fontaine asked Jodi Olmstead how long they've been friends, Jodi looked at Sue, looked down, and mouthed "forever.". Sue's question and Jodi's response epitomized their friendship - and the good work they've done for the United Way.

Sue and Jodi have worked at Baystate Health Systems for a combined half century. Jodi has spent most of that time working hard raising funds through Baystate's annual United Way fund-drive; this year she was a crucial part of the \$400,000 effort. Sue is a recent addition to the United Way/Baystate effort. She was brought on, of course, by her best friend Jodi.



Thank You!

Our 93rd UWPV Annual Meeting & Celebration was a smashing success!

Over 200 guests at Chez Josef in Agawam enjoyed tasty hors d'oeuvres and cool beverages as they mixed and mingled to the jazzy sounds of the Ethel Lee Trio. The hardworking and dedicated Employee Campaign Managers (ECMs) had fun with our photo props in the red carpet event.

Azell Cavaan and Waleska Lugo-DeJesus served as the wonderfully enthusiastic event MCs, introducing our speakers and keeping the event moving along at a good pace. Our awards presentation honored individuals and organizations who show true leadership and connect the community. We truly appreciate all of our community partners, donors, volunteers and leaders who joined us to celebrate a year of Living United!

Of course, none of this would be possible without our event sponsors: THANK YOU to MassMutual Financial Group, Health New England, Excel Dryer, City of Springfield Department of Health & Human Services and Jennifer Endicott.



Individual Sponsor:
Jennifer Endicott

Help Us Stuff the Bus

The United Way of Pioneer Valley, in partnership with Peter Pan Bus Company, is collecting school supplies to fill over 1,300 backpacks for children who are homeless in Springfield, Holyoke, Westfield, Chicopee, West Springfield, and South Hadley.



These young students have it hard enough; giving them a new backpack filled with all the right supplies helps them start the school year on the right foot - focused and ready to learn!

From July 24 to August 8, local companies and stores will hold collection drives for donations of school supplies (locations and dates to be determined). Backpacks will be delivered right to the schools.

SAVE THE DATE!

Stuff the Bus Kickoff will be held on Friday July 24th at 10:00am at the Holyoke Mall (50 Holyoke Street, Holyoke MA)

Help us STUFF the BUS with the school supplies kids need most!

- No. 2 Pencils
- Erasers
- Binders
- Paper
- Crayons
- Highlighters
- Pencil Boxes
- Pens
- Glue Sticks
- Rulers
- Two-Pocket Folders
- One-Subject Notebooks

Upcoming Events

SAVE THE DATE!

United Way of Pioneer Valley Day of Caring is one great day of giving back!

In 2014, there were 930 volunteers from 32 companies serving 36 nonprofit organizations.

Our 22nd Annual Day of Caring will be held on Friday, September 11th, with a record number of volunteers and companies participating.

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