

Local

## United Way raises \$1.66M in county

### Leading donors saluted

 By Austin Ramsey Messenger-Inquirer

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United Way of the Ohio Valley raised \$1.66 million in Daviess County during last year's fall campaign, falling about \$90,000 short of a year-end goal.

But the nonprofit support organization has maintained a steady three-year average, which officials said Thursday is key for agency partners facing an increasingly competitive donor market.

It's largely up to businesses and their employees in the region to help United Way support a majority of the nonprofit sector, said Daviess County Campaign Chair David Bristow. After all, he noted, two-thirds of all agency donations come from the corporate world.

That's why Bristow joined other United Way leaders in Owensboro on Thursday to help celebrate and recognize the individuals and local companies who have led the way in that effort.

"We celebrate the success of United Way, past, present and future, by recognizing those who reach out beyond themselves to help others," he said. "United Way works because local people raise the dollars, and because local people who invest in United Way make the decisions on how those dollars should be spent."

Among highlights at the annual Awards & Recognition Breakfast on Thursday was the presentation of two new plaques, including the Board Chairman's Award, which went to both Kimberly-Clark and MPD Inc., and the Horizon Award, which Kentucky BioProcessing LLC earned.

Both Owensboro Municipal Utilities and Southern Star Central Gas Pipeline Inc. were recognized as top performers and received the Campaign Chairman's Award for demonstrating the greatest overall achievement and impact on the campaign. U.S. Bank and Home Mortgage received its fourth Louise P. Gipe Award alongside Owensboro Health Regional Hospital. President's Award winners included Swedish Match, Southern Star Central Gas Pipeline Inc., Atmos Energy Corp. and Ebelhar Whitehead PLLC.

Certificate award winners were announced, too, and there were several agency partners among them. That's important, Bristow said, because it illustrates just how highly nonprofits value United Way dollars.

"Most of our agencies rely on multiple funding sources every year," he said. "But the United Way investment is unique, and I think that shows in how willing they are to participate."

Thursday's campaign announcement marks the start of an important next step in the fiscal year process that connects donor dollars with nonprofit agencies in need. Community Investment volunteers will split up into five different teams -- two health, two education and one financial stability. Each of the roughly 20 United Way agencies will undergo a thorough review processes by those teams over the next month to determine how the \$1.66 million will be allocated.

Campaign Director Cindy Ferrell said United Way should be prepared to make public those allocations as early as May.

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