

LIVE HERE, GIVE HERE..AN INSIDER'S PERSPECTIVE

by Teresa Dahlstrom, Donor Relations Coordinator, United Way of Otter Tail County

OK, I admit it. I admit I was so me what "going through the motions". I was doing what was right....right? I was giving and encouraging others to give....I was gathering givers. I knew my hard earned money was going for something worthy, something right. I was the Human Resource Manager for a company that employed over 100 people....people from all walks of life....and from both sides of the county. I was assigned the task of coordinating an "internal fundraiser" for the annual United Way of Otter Tail County campaign. So, I had my task and I was going to make it happen. Looking back, I didn't know exactly how my efforts or monetary donation would pay off, whom it would help or what it would do for the community. That was then.

Working for three nonprofits has opened my eyes, taught me a few things. I had no idea that my donation helped to shelter one of our employees and her three girls for over two months....shelter them from an abusive spouse and father while working for us. In fact, my donation may have saved their lives.

I had no idea that my donation was providing a safe place for our employees' children to go after school...a place that was warm, comfortable. In fact, my donation may have saved their lives.

I did not know that my donation gave a former employee life's basic needs just to survive after her family's home burned to the ground. In fact, my donation may have saved their lives.

Finally, I did not know that my donation to United Way of Otter Tail County, three years later, would provide an opportunity for residents to give blood....so that my son's life could be saved.

We never know when we will use a partner agency of United Way. We never know what tomorrow will bring. We do know one thing. There is hope for tomorrow. Giving to United Way of Otter Tail County will help your neighbors, your family, and your children. Despite best efforts this year, we are yet short of our goal by 20%. If you have not given to the 2007/2008 campaign, there's still time. The official campaign window doesn't close until March 31st. For those of you that have invested in the programs and people of Otter Tail County, we thank you.

United Way of Otter Tail County provides leadership in uniting our county to create lasting changes in community conditions. For questions, volunteer opportunities or, if you would like to donate to the campaign, please call 218.736.5147 or go to www.uwotc.com