

CHEROKEE COUNTY 2011 ADVISORY BOARD

Steve Shepard, Chair, GE
Debbie Arneson, community volunteer
Courtney Bradley, Northside Hospital - Cherokee
Pam Carnes, Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce
Susan Carter, Georgia Power
Tracy Chambers, Cherokee County Government
Jim Christner, community volunteer
Penny Dempsey, Cherokee School District
Judge Ellen McElyea, Superior Court, Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit, Cherokee County Justice Circuit
Janie Gulick, Gulick Designs
Steve Hudson, Northside Hospital - Cherokee
Jonathan Kesler, The Kesler Law Firm
Julian Pouncy, Prudential Financial
Pam Price, Belk Stores
Eddie Robinson, Cherokee County Fire Department
Charlie Smiley, community volunteer
Nathan Smith, REMCO Solutions

2011 CHEROKEE COUNTY CAMPAIGN CABINET

Ivan Garcia, Chair, Edward Jones
Georgia L. Bailey, Flint & Connolly, LLP
Dennis Burnette, Cherokee Bank
Mike Chapman, Morrison Products, Inc.
Rod L. Drake, Jr., Georgia Power
Janie Gulick, Gulick Designs
David Harrison, community member
Alison Higgins, Northside Hospital - Cherokee
Jeff Mitchell, United Community Bank
Julian Pouncy, Prudential Financial
Bob Robinson, Express
Employment Professionals

Jeremy Swafford, Southeast Restoration
Jo Ellen Wilson, Reinhardt College

STAFF SUPPORT

Catherine Owens, regional director
Carley Jacobs, development officer
Ofelia Nunez, regional coordinator

CHEROKEE COUNTY

VOLUNTEER HELPS RELIEVE TAX-SEASON STRESS



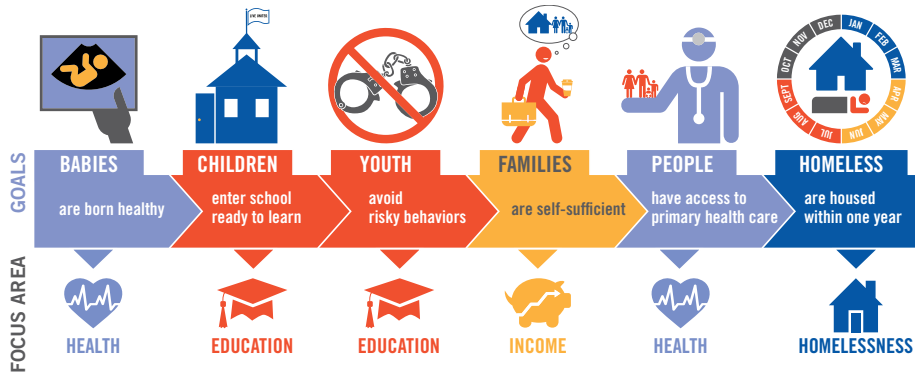
United Way in Cherokee County
1600 River Park Blvd., Suite 202
Woodstock, GA 30188
678.623.2854 tel • 770.516.5678 fax
unitedwayatlanta.org

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.
LIVE UNITED
United Way
United Way of
Metropolitan Atlanta

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.
LIVE UNITED
United Way
United Way of
Metropolitan Atlanta

WHY UNITED WAY

United Way improves lives by mobilizing the caring power of our community to advance the common good. We focus on the building blocks for a good quality of life — education, income, health and ending homelessness. United Way unites nonprofits, businesses, government, donors and volunteers to keep kids learning and in school, help people achieve financial stability, strengthen our health safety net, and end chronic homelessness. Join us and become a part of the lifeline.



PARTNERS IN THE ATLANTA REGION WITH SERVICES IN CHEROKEE

American Cancer Society
 American Red Cross
 Auditory-Verbal Center
 Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta
 Boy Scouts Atlanta Area Council
 Catholic Charities Atlanta
 Center for the Visually Impaired
 Diabetes Association of Atlanta
 Easter Seals North Georgia
 Families First
 Georgia Council on Substance Abuse
 Georgia Radio Reading Service


Girl Scout Council of Northwest Georgia
 Jewish Family & Career Services
 Latin American Association
 Link Counseling Center
 Marcus Jewish Community Center
 Pathways Community Networks
 Saint Joseph's Mercy Care Services
 Sickle Cell Foundation of Georgia
 Travelers Aid of Metropolitan Atlanta
 Vision Rehabilitation Services
 Visiting Nurse Health System
 YMCA of Metro Atlanta

COMMUNITY PARTNERS IN CHEROKEE

CASA for Children, Inc
 Cherokee Boys & Girls Club
 Cherokee Child Advocacy Council
 Cherokee Day Training Center

Cherokee Family Violence Center
 Cherokee Outdoor YMCA/YMCA of Metro Atlanta
 MUST Ministries

VOLUNTEER HELPS RELIEVE TAX-SEASON STRESS

 George Russell, Jr. knows how time-consuming taxes can be.

On weekends during tax season (late January through filing deadline in April), Russell helps Cherokee County residents file their personal income taxes through **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)**, an IRS program coordinated locally through the **Atlanta Prosperity Campaign**, a partnership among United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta, the Atlanta Community Food Bank and other agencies. During the work week, Russell also holds a full-time job with the IRS.



His volunteerism helps people improve their financial health by making sure they get back as much money as they are owed.

VITA also benefits the economy. During the last tax season, Russell filed 435 tax forms for Cherokee residents, generating about \$700,000 in federal and state tax refunds, including the Earned Income Tax Credit. That helped pump valuable dollars back into the marketplace. And the service doesn't cost residents a dime.

Russell, who has been a VITA volunteer for eight years, rotates among the Cherokee County public libraries to assist residents. He goes over their deductions and income. He files their taxes electronically, though some people prefer to send in forms by mail.

Two-thirds of the people are repeat customers, Russell says, adding that the program reduces the strain on taxpayers who cannot afford an accountant.

"The program is such a great help because of the uncertainty people have about taxes," Russell says.

Cherokee has a higher income level than some metro Atlanta counties, but the community is still feeling the negative effects of the down economy. About a quarter of the people Russell helped in 2011 received unemployment benefits, he says.

Russell signed up for the VITA program because he wanted to give back to the community in an area he feels most comfortable.

"I love to help folks out, and I think I'm doing something that's good," he says. "It's so great to see the expression on their face when they get a refund."