

## Northwest Airlines stands united for communities

Northwest Airlines (NWA) featured their United Way support in two articles in the September 2007 issue of their inflight magazine, [NWA World Traveler](#). The articles focus on NWA employees' year-round dedication to United Way, volunteerism, and the communities where they live and work. "NWA co-workers understand that—as with an airline—positive change in our communities is possible only through team efforts," writes NWA President & CEO, Doug Steenland. United Way appreciates this commitment to teamwork and values our partnership with NWA.



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### United We Stand

Doug Steenland



September is a month of beginnings. For many of us, the beginning we notice most is the start of a new school year for our children and neighbors. For others, it marks the harvest, the culmination of a season of effort and anticipation.

September also is a time for starting new projects, such as the start of a new United Way campaign, when - like many corporations and communities - we begin a year-long commitment to supporting this tremendous organization and the work it does in our community.

The people of Northwest Airlines have generously opened their hearts and pocketbooks to the United Way over the years, consistently raising more than \$1 million in annual contributions. With the economic uncertainty that has characterized the airline industry in recent years, we could have chosen less aggressive goals. I am proud to say that we did not.

The employee-led NWA United Way team and the thousands of participants affirmed their outstanding commitment to their communities and the good work of United Way by setting an aggressive goal - \$1.4 million - and by exceeding that goal by a wide margin. The team brought energy and creativity to the challenge of establishing a winning model for a year-round United Way workplace program. I encourage you to take a look at "[Inside NWA](#)" to see just how creative they can be.

Every day, NWA employees are out in their communities, sharing their knowledge, passion and commitment in myriad ways, taking on projects that support a spectrum of organizations. Whether it's working with Habitat for Humanity to build affordable housing in Detroit, Memphis and Minneapolis-St. Paul or raising funds for earthquake relief in Japan, the people of NWA meet the challenge by working together.

Teamwork is what makes our United Way program so successful. NWA co-workers understand that - as with an airline - positive change in our communities is possible only through team efforts. Our ability to coordinate the safe, reliable transport of 150,000 people every day is the very same skill set that is vital to meeting the needs of the communities we are proud to serve.

United Way volunteers identify key issues, help set priorities and create fund strategies. They are "doers" in the very best sense of the word. Some of the issues they take on are universal, such as meeting basic needs and improving economic self-sufficiency, preparing children to succeed and nurturing families, and promoting health and independent living.

Others may be unique to a community, such as working to establish the Minnesota Helps Bridge Disaster Fund. The fund contributes to organizations assisting in the physical and psychological rehabilitation of those directly affected by the collapse of the 35W bridge in Minneapolis. In all of our communities, NWA co-workers know that by working together, we can achieve great results.

I know that many of our passengers are also strong supporters of the United Way, and we share a commitment to strong communities. Your support of this wonderful organization is one of the many, many reasons that we are proud to serve you and be your airline of choice. Welcome aboard.

*Doug Steenland, President & CEO*

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## **Team Spirit**

Nancy Perron

### **Inside NWA**

Every volunteer knows that it takes a collective effort - a team - to make a real difference in the community. At Northwest Airlines, it takes a group of more than 100 United Way team leaders and thousands of participants to mount a successful campaign and year-round program.

Those efforts yielded big dividends this year when the NWA United Way team, led by Steven Sear, vice president-sales and customer care, set an ambitious goal of \$1.4 million - and flew past their goal by more than 12 percent. Ingenuity and enterprise defined this year's United Way campaign at NWA.

Rather than focusing all fundraising activities in a single month, the people of NWA combined a spring campaign with year-round awareness and events. Rather than simply issuing pleas for support, the NWA United Way team demonstrated their creativity by organizing a series of fun - and profitable - special events. Among the NWA United Way firsts this year:

- A classic car show that gave employees in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area the opportunity to show off their prized vehicles, with entry fees benefiting the United Way campaign.

- The first "NWA Idol" contest, which raised money as friends and co-workers of NWA's most talented employees voted - often - by purchasing tickets. Arnold Felizardo, a senior developer in airport operations, sang "This is the Moment" to win the competition.
- A collaboration that teamed NWA and Mesaba MSP airport operations and line maintenance employees with the Minnesota Twins for a week of airport events. The highlight of the NWA/Twins Grand Slam Week may have been the Executive Dunk Tank - giving NWA employees the opportunity to dunk NWA executives for a good cause.

Memphis employees added the "Your Change Can Make a Change" program to their campaign mix, and Tampa, Fla., employees continued their Team Penny Wars. NWA corporate headquarters kicked off the spring campaign with a "Season Opener," including wiffle ball and tug-of-war competitions. Tampa and Hibbing, Minn., reservations centers invited non-profit agencies that benefit from the campaign to participate in agency fairs on site. Sales and raffles of all types - such as baked goods, pizza, gift baskets and "jeans day" stickers - were popular throughout the system.

The heart of the campaign, of course, remains the individual contributor. This year, the NWA United Way Campaign Team emphasized the convenience of payroll deduction with weekly drawings. As a result, many co-workers chose the ease of payroll deduction.

Brian Gallagher, president and CEO of United Way of America, may have said it best in his letter congratulating NWA United Way volunteers: "Through your United Way campaigns and many other acts of generosity, your leadership team and all of the employees of Northwest Airlines have demonstrated your continued commitment to creating lasting communities around the world."

- Nancy Perron