



Reaching out a hand to one impacts the condition of all!

Jennifer and Sharon to the rescue!

The fire took it all. One small light fixture that malfunctioned in Kimberly's apartment and nearly everything was gone.



The single mother with children ages 5 and 2 years old had just moved to Raleigh from New York City. Her dreams of a better life seemed to be coming true. She had a full-time job at a local day care facility and, even though it was not enough to help cover the cost of asthma medicine for her two children, she was still moving forward.

Then the fire happened. The apartment bedrooms were destroyed; toys, clothes, stuffed animals, furniture. Power was short-circuited in the building and all her family's food spoiled. Looking around her, all Kimberly saw was destruction and devastation.

Enter Jennifer and Sharon. They were on call at the Red Cross, a United Way of the Greater Triangle partner agency, when the fire was reported. They dashed to Kimberly's side to offer help. Working together they helped Kimberly develop a recovery plan and worked to solve her immediate needs caused by the disaster.

With Jennifer and Sharon's guidance, Kimberly found help from the Salvation Army and Helping Hands Mission for mattresses, bedroom furnishings and toys for her two children. Her supply of food was replenished through the Catholic Parish Outreach food pantry.

Kimberly expressed her gratitude to the Red Cross Triangle Area Chapter for their support following the fire. "If it was not for the Red Cross, my children and I would not have made it through this. The two volunteers who came to the scene were so nice and they really helped me feel safe," said Kimberly.

Jennifer and Sharon don't just wear the shirt, they live it!

In 2008, United Way partner agencies' services in the Triangle:

Assisted 5,232 people with rent and utilities.

Gave out 10,773,928 pounds of food.



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Thomas the Inspirer!

“We get to go to ECU football games, museums, Monster Jam, Frankie’s, play football and basketball, and he has helped me learn how to earn money,” gushes Damion about Thomas, his “Big” assigned to him through Big Brothers Big Sisters, a United Way of the Greater Triangle partner agency.



A few years earlier, Damion’s mom didn’t know what to do. Damion’s father was in jail and she knew her son needed a positive role model to help him grow and mature into manhood. That’s when she decided to bring Damion to Big Brothers Big Sisters.

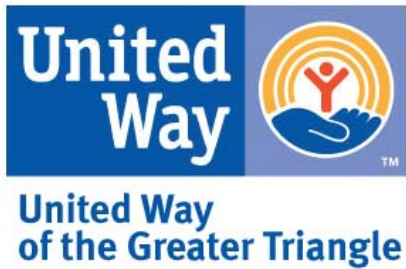
Thomas, Damion’s Big Brother, finds it easy to give back through Big Brothers Big sisters. He doesn’t think of himself as a teacher but Damion does! “Thomas inspires me. He taught me to stay away from bullies and to not stoop to their level; when doing any job, do the best you can; not be afraid to ask teachers or others when I need help; and to not look differently on others that are from another race,” Damion explains.

“Since Thomas has become my big brother, my grades have gone up, I’m more active in sports and I’m more responsible with school work and other things,” Damion admits. Damion’s mother confirms that not only have her son’s grades gone up but that he is now in advanced classes. She has also noticed Damion has come out of his shell and become more assertive in the two years that Thomas has been in his life.

Thomas doesn’t just wear the shirt, he lives it!

In 2008, United Way partner agencies’ services in the Triangle:

- Provided one-on-one mentoring for 2,139 youth.
- Helped 41,096 at-risk children avoid gang activity, substance abuse, delinquency and teen pregnancy



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Mike's Dish Room Guidance

United Way heroes are everywhere, even in college campus dining hall dish rooms! Mike was on duty the day Nathan and his coach from The Arc of Orange County, a United Way of the Greater Triangle partner agency, walked in. Nate's coach asked Mike to take him under his wing and show him the dish room ropes.



High schooler Nate, who is mentally challenged, was in his high school's occupational studies program which required vocational experience for graduation. Nate was also moving into a group home and needed money for his expenses. The Arc led Nate to a job on University of North Carolina's campus.

It wasn't an easy job in the dish room. Nate was on his feet all day long, the pace of work was fast, and the work was challenging. But with time and Mike's guidance, Nate picked up the pace, learned the routines and took the initiative to add trash and recycling to his duties.

Today Nate has opened his own bank account and signed up for direct deposit, learned how to ask for time off, and has become a member of the team at Carolina Dining Services. And, the best news is, Nate earned his high school diploma!

Nate shares with everyone, including Mike, how proud he is to earn his own money, how he walks to and from work each day from his group home, and that he enjoys having the weekends off. He has made lots of friends in his group home as well as in the dining hall.

Mike doesn't just wear the shirt, he lives it!

In 2008, United Way partner agencies' services in the Triangle:

- Assisted 11,442 youth in the Triangle participate in Community service and/or vocational training.
- Helped 672 people with disabilities increase their annual income.



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Stephanie Survives and Gives Back

How can a story about homelessness, substance abuse, and no education have a happy ending? It did for Stephanie!

In foster care for years, Stephanie moved out of the system when she turned 18 confident she could make it on her own. It wasn't long before she was in legal trouble and ended up in jail. Unable to rent an apartment due to lack of finances she slept in shelters, abandoned buildings, and behind a local church parking lot.

Then she met another homeless youth who told her about the center at Haven House, a United Way of the Greater Triangle partner agency. There Stephanie found food, crisis counseling, bus tickets, clothing and other solutions for her immediate needs.



Two more United Way partner agencies also offered Stephanie assistance. Urban Ministries provided her short-term shelter. Stephanie then signed up for culinary training classes at the Interfaith Food Shuttle. As time went on, Haven House found Stephanie permanent housing and offered her lifeskills classes, financial support, furniture and transportation assistance.

Back on track, Stephanie remembered those she left on the streets. She decided to become an advocate for teens in Haven House's program. In addition, she partnered with a staff member to begin a monthly newsletter for those homeless teens who drop in at Haven House's center.

Stephanie doesn't just wear the shirt, she lives it!

In 2008, United Way partner agencies' services in the Triangle:

- Aided 2,779 substance abusers overcame addictions, acquired life and employment skills, remained alcohol and drug-free and successfully transitioned back into the community.
- Provided 5,232 people with financial assistance for rent or utilities.

