

# Combined Fund Drive a giving success

If you walk through the halls of some state offices next week, you might see beautiful carnations adorning worker desks.

You might wonder what benevolent soul had the money to brighten these workers' day.

The truth is, state workers received the carnations from co-workers as part of a fundraiser for Washington state's Combined Fund Drive.

Across the state, volunteers will sponsor activities from ice cream socials to basket auctions to raise money for the roughly 2,100 charities that receive money through the fund drive.

Last year, more than \$5.6 million was pledged in Washington by public employees and retirees.

This was the largest amount of money raised in the 21-year history of the drive. Much of that success rests on more than 3,000 state employees who volunteer each year to work on the drive.

The volunteers are the backbone of the drive, and it is their ingenuity and staunch support of the program that continues its success.

But why would a state employee want to contribute to the Combined Fund Drive?

Here are several reasons why about 21,000 public em-



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**VIEWPOINTS**

ployees have chosen to donate to their favorite charities in this way.

■ **It is easy and convenient.** You simply fill out the form, either paper copy or on-line, and indicate which charities you want to donate to and what amount you want to give each pay period, or you can choose to do a one-time donation.

Where else can you donate to multiple charities all at once?

One of the benefits that I found from giving through the drive is that I was finally able to turn down charity solicitors gracefully. I always have been a soft touch when it comes to charities.

In fact, my husband used to grab the phone out of my hands if he thought it was a charity soliciting donations.

Giving through the drive has enabled me to say "no" easily. I simply say, "I already

donate to you through the CFD at work." To which they reply, "Thank you," ending a pleasant and guilt-free conversation.

■ **Every contribution, no matter how small, makes a difference.** I first started giving to Combined Fund Drive in my "poor" years.

Those are the ones where every dime is important, because you are just making it from paycheck to paycheck.

So at that time, I donated \$2 a pay period. But looking back, I am no longer embarrassed, because I know that even that small amount made a difference in a needy child or adult's life.

Just \$10 a month can provide crisis services to six victims of sexual assault or payment for a complete platelet count for two children going through cancer treatment.

So if you can give only a few dollars, that's fine — because every contribution helps. Two dollars from 10,000 employees creates \$20,000 — that definitely can make a huge difference.

■ **It provides a way for you to help children, adults and your community.** This is the biggest reason most employees contribute to the fund drive: to help others.

Whether giving to the

national American Heart Association or the Exceptional Foresters (a facility for the developmentally disabled in Shelton) it's a way to help those in need.

If there is one thing that has always impressed me in state service, it is the capacity to give that my co-workers show every day. Maybe it's because they serve the public, or maybe it's just that they have some of the biggest hearts I've ever seen, but they definitely care about others.

Mark your calendars. There are three dates that state workers can attend the Combined Fund Drive Charity Fairs. The campaign kickoff will happen Wednesday at the East Capitol Campus Plaza. The second CFD Charity Fair is Thursday at Lacey's Huntamer Park, and the last fair happens Sept. 19 in Tumwater at the Labor and Industries Building. The hours for all three are 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

For more information on the Combined Fund Drive and to learn how to donate via paper or online go to [www.cfd.wa.gov](http://www.cfd.wa.gov).

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