

Volunteers

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A distinguished record
John F. Hall of Hickory, owner and president of Express Office Systems, was recently honored for more than two decades of service to the United Way of Catawba County.

MAY 1995

Bridging the gap

Program develops culturally diverse leaders

To increase diversity in nonprofit leadership positions, Network 2000 recruits, trains and helps place minority professionals on the boards and committees of nonprofit agencies.

BY EALENA CALLENDER

Raleigh

Representatives of various nonprofit agencies eagerly wait at their display tables to talk to the young professionals in the room.

Looking for potential volunteer leaders, they have come to this United Way Agency Fair to meet participants of Network 2000, a Wake County-based minority leadership development program.

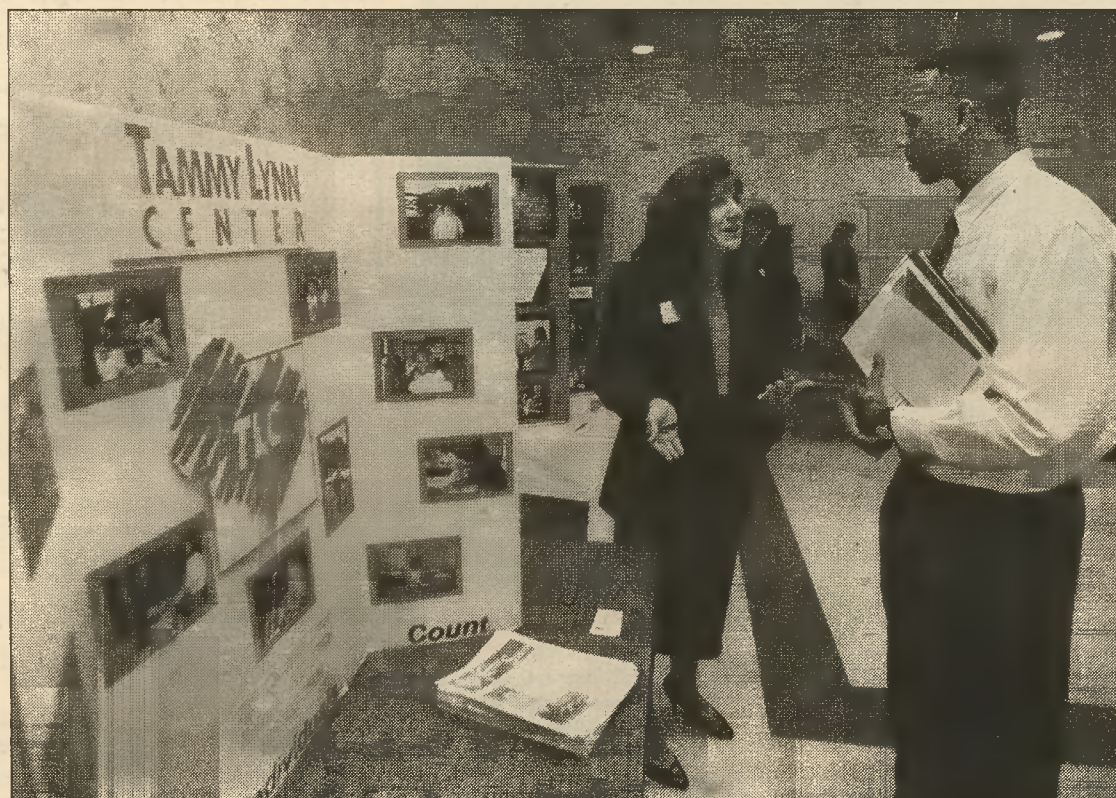
"It's a nice way to link up with people that we're looking for in terms of special skills and interests," says Susan Sittnick, director of communications for the Family Services Center in Raleigh.

The Agency Fair is one of five sessions of Network 2000 - Developing Culturally Diverse Leaders, a program that trains minority professionals to work for the United Way of Wake County and its member agencies at the committee, division and board levels.

A lack of minority representation on the boards of nonprofit agencies led to the development of the network program in 1990. Since it began, 160 people have "graduated" and about 130 of them now hold volunteer leadership positions, says program director Lillian Branch.

One of those network graduates, Rick Shields, is now chairman of the United Way of Wake County's Inclusiveness Steering Committee, which coordinates the training program.

"The program is very helpful in terms of providing training to individuals who are interested in being involved with nonprofit agencies," says Shields, who also is a member of the board of directors of the United Way and vice president of the board of Rehabilitation Therapy, a member agency. "It has been criti-



Lorraine Vineyard of the Tammy Lynn Center, left, talks to Ron Williams at the United Way Agency Fair in Raleigh for participants of Network 2000.

Photo by Jim Bounds

cal in terms of linking up individuals and agencies who might not have otherwise come in contact."

Network 2000 got started with help from Project Blueprint, a project of the national United Way of America. Project Blueprint provides technical assistance and resources to local United Way affiliates attempting to recruit, develop and place African-American, Hispanic, Asian and Native-American volunteer leaders on their boards.

The project was designed to help United Way agencies throughout the U.S. that were asking for help with increasing board diversity, says coordinator Mary Williams Stover.

"Most of the challenge is not as a result of a lack of interest on the part of minorities but a lack of access," she says. "People don't know how to connect with boards, and boards don't know how to connect with people who are interested."

Local programs such as Network 2000 serve as a needed bridge, she

says. Eighty similar programs now operate in the U.S. In addition to Network 2000, North Carolina has minority leadership programs in Winston-Salem and Greensboro.

Challenge Greensboro, for example, gives participants the chance to work on projects at Triad-area nonprofits.

"We're touching people who would not be given access to the information or the networks or the people if the program were not in place," says Kenneth T. Alston, founder and executive director of Challenge Greensboro. "Not only does the community get a better informed civil servant, but the corporation gets a better person."

In Wake County, Network 2000 participants are recruited twice a year from all corporate donors to the United Way. Each corporation is asked to recommend minority employees for the program and to pay the employees while they attend weekly training

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MARY W. STOVER
coordinator, Project Blueprint,
United Way of America

LEADERSHIP

sessions.

Twenty participants are selected to take part in five training sessions that include an overview of the United Way and its agencies, legal responsibilities of board membership and working in a multi-cultural environment. The Agency Fair is one of the final sessions designed to help participants decide which agencies they would like to join.

Stefanie Mendell, executive director of Hopeline Inc. in Raleigh, is enthusiastic about Network 2000. Hopeline has two graduates of the program on its board and committees.

"They're among our more qualified board members," Mendell says. "A lot of times people don't really understand what it means to work on a board...It's a real plus to have people who've been through training that gives them the edge."

Like other agencies that participate in Network 2000, Hopeline sees diversity as an important goal.

"We serve a very diverse community," Mendell says. "It helps to have a volunteer base that reflects that."

For information about Network 2000, call Lillian Branch at (919) 833-5739. For details on Project Blueprint, call Mary Williams Stover at (703) 836-7100.

CHILDREN

ly \$2.99 million in the state last year, and hopes to raise more than \$3 million this year.

Six companies with headquarters in North Carolina are among the top 100 fundraising teams for WalkAmerica - First Union National Bank, which ranks second; NationsBank, sixth; Wachovia Bank, 34th; BB&T Financial Corp., 74th; Carolina Power & Light Co., 86th; and Southern National Bank, 87th.

The March of Dimes has the mission of preventing birth defects and infant mortality. It works to do that through community services, advocacy, research and education.

Last year, for example, the organization gave more than \$500,000 for research at Duke University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. So far this year, the March of Dimes has given the two universities more than \$600,000.

Todd Cohen

Healthier babies Tar Heels at top for March of Dimes

Thousands of North Carolinians this spring have been walking for children.

Part of WalkAmerica, the annual fundraising effort by the March of Dimes, the walkers have helped make North Carolina the national nonprofit's top state for fundraising.

WalkAmerica, the annual fundraising effort by the March of Dimes, is being held in roughly 75 Tar Heel communities. Most of the walks are this spring, with a few scheduled for later in the year.

North Carolina, the 10th-largest state, is first in the United States in raising money for the March of Dimes. That ranking is based on giving to the March of Dimes compared with disposable income in the areas in which the dollars are raised.

Four March of Dimes chapters in North Carolina - Eastern North Carolina, Western North Carolina, the Greater Triad and the Greater Piedmont - typically are among the top 10 in the nation in fundraising.

The March of Dimes raised near-

BRIEFLY

Correction

An item in the April issue about eligibility for the North Carolina Association of Volunteer Administration's volunteer certification exam was incorrect. The certification program is open to NCAVA members with two years of volunteer management experience. The exam is scheduled for May 8. For information call Sandy Leonard at (910) 373-1633.

Teen pregnancy prevention advocates wanted

The Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of North Carolina and Governor Jim Hunt have designated May "North Carolina Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month." The nonprofit advocacy group now is seeking volunteers throughout the state to help get the word out. Volunteers would design and imple-

ment projects in their communities such as organizing poster contests, creating a city proclamation, planning a forum on teen pregnancy prevention, or talking to the local media about doing a story on teen pregnancy prevention. For information about volunteering, call (704) 335-1313.

Durham launches volunteer street patrol

Durham has begun a volunteer parking patrol that will help police issue citations to drivers who park in spaces reserved for the handicapped. Similar volunteer efforts are in place in Asheville, Greensboro, Greenville, Lenoir and Winston-Salem. Volunteers for the Durham Parking Enforcement Program will be trained by police.

Dance Festival needs interpreters

The American Dance Festival, held each summer in Durham, hosts scholars and performers from over 40 countries. Volunteers fluent in almost any language are needed to translate at rehearsals, press interviews, classes, etc. Volunteers also are needed for other ADF jobs. For information, call Lara Ryan or Bev Smith at (919) 684-6402.

Conference attendees to share literature

Nonprofit organizations are invited to bring copies of their annual reports, brochures, or other literature to share at Philanthropy '95. Attendees will be responsible for setting out their materials in the morning and removing them at the end of the day. For information, call Kate Foster at (919) 836-2877.