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United Way Success Story:

Creighton Mabry

Creighton is a United Way of Greater Battle Creek board member and is involved in educational and diversion programs focused on redirecting at-risk youth through community programs. This is his story:

As a youth I came here from Chicago and I kinda had my challenges with gangs and being with gangs in Chicago and coming here and not doing so well in school.

I had the opportunity to come here and get turned around by going to the YMCA camp. Getting in the summer youth program helped me to learn to get along with other youth and helped me change my direction. So now I'm just trying to give it back, the way I got it. I give it back to the kids I work with by keeping them busy, trying to keep them off the streets, keep them doing positive things.

The Brush with Kindness program is a program where we united with



Habitat for Humanity. They had a program called Brush with Kindness where the youth paint houses. So what we targeted here in BC are senior citizen's houses that have code violations or some senior citizens that couldn't afford to have their houses painted, these youth go out and paint their houses.

To give these kids something to do. Teach them how to paint, teach them a skill. In case later on in life, they want to become a painter. We teach them how to paint, scrape houses and get them all ready. And it helps the senior citizens who couldn't afford to get the work done.

It (Brush with Kindness) keeps the kids off the street and teaches them a usable skill. It gives them four hours of work five days a week. I think idle time causes a lot of mischief and they get in trouble so this program keeps them busy, keeps them feeling good about themselves.

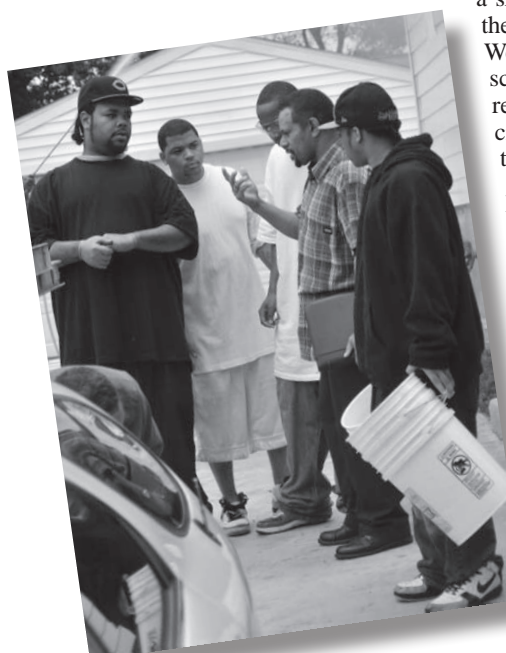
It gives them a sense of hope instead of a sense of hopelessness. Hopelessness because they don't have a job, they

don't have a skill. This way they feel good about themselves, when they get done painting the houses, the houses look really nice, the homeowners are happy and it makes them feel good and it gives them hope and keeps them off the streets.

I think the United Way does an excellent job working with us. I have another program called Young Men in the Making and they sponsored a computer lab. We have a nice computer lab that the kids use.

Through the Monday Morning Group there are pooled funds that United Way contributes to that helps finance Brush with Kindness. They are the ones that helped us give something to these kids. So United Way plays a very important role in helping in the community.

I like United Way, I've been giving to them for many years. I worked at Ralston for 24 years and I always gave through my payroll deduction to United Way. And I see where it pays off, it does a good job and helps people. I'm a people person, I like to help people, and I specialize with youth, so when United Way helps it is just a blessing to us all.



Our Mission:

The mission of United Way of Greater Battle Creek is to mobilize the caring power of our community to Advance the Common Good by measurably improving lives.

Our Vision:

A vital, caring community supporting the building blocks for a good life - a quality education that leads to a stable job, income to support a family, good health and access to basic human needs.



United Way of Greater Battle Creek

Don't forget
these
**IMPORTANT
DATES!**

Wrap-Up

Thursday, December 10, 2009

Annual Meeting

Thursday, March 11, 2010

Remember to check our website at www.unitedwaybattlecreek.org for updates.