



United Way drive easy to be a part of

By Fred Leoniak

Last October, in my capacity as campaign vice chair, I was asked to pen a column for this United Way series. In that column, I spoke about something that I truly believe in — good corporate citizenship as it relates to workplace philanthropy. I had the great fortune of working closely with Tom



Fred Leoniak
United Way

Murray, the 2005 campaign chair on his historic run to the \$2 million goal.

The experience, along with my new role as campaign chair, has galvanized my conviction in the Centre County United Way and given me a fresh perspective.

To me, supporting the United Way campaign simply means being a good corporate citizen. To paraphrase the words of philosopher Michael Novak, "building good and profitable companies is a noble human calling, which makes the good works of civil society achievable." The 39 agencies helped by the Centre County United Way truly represent the good works of our civil society.

Previously, I gave several compelling reasons for companies to become involved with the United Way. Being a good corporate citizen because "it's the right thing to do," is just one motivation. We know that morale often improves when employees feel good about helping a cause that seeks to resolve broad-based and pressing community needs such as those addressed by the United Way.

Employee productivity often follows that lift in morale. Employers can also view the United Way as part of their fringe benefits package, a safety net that will be there for their employees when they need it.

Now, I'd like to add one more perspective. Participation in the United Way campaign is fun and easy. Many companies that conducted employee campaigns for the first time last year did so because they learned how simple and efficient payroll deduction can be. The fun element comes to light when a company partners with the United Way to learn more about the many opportunities for employee involvement.

Not only will everyone learn more about the work of the United Way's 39 partner agencies, but the campaign can provide an opportunity for creative and energetic participation.

The three cardinal virtues of business, as described by Michael Novak in his book "Business As a Calling," are creativity, building community and practical realism. Nowhere can I find better examples of these three virtues than in the companies that participated in our Pacesetter Campaign.

On Tuesday, at our campaign

CLIMBING TO THE TOP

State College teen reaches new heights in glacier study experience

By Eric Smith
For the CDT

During the summer break, many local high school students probably spent time enjoying the outdoors and camping. But it is doubtful any of them took camping to the heights that Molly Holleran did.

Molly, a 17-year-old State College resident and senior at State College Area High School, spent eight days climbing on the glacier-covered Mount Baker, a 10,778-foot-tall volcano in Washington.

She was one of one nine students from a pool of 110 applicants who were selected for Girls on Ice, a free program for teenage girls that combines mountaineering and science to promote women in the sciences.

This year, Girls on Ice, hosted by the North Cascades Institute in Sedro-Woolley, Wash., was held Aug. 6 through 15. As part of the program, girls ages 15 to 19 climb and study Mount Baker, a volcano in the Cascade Mountains covered in glaciers.

"A friend of my mom who works on campus sent us an e-mail," Molly said. "She told us about the program and said they were looking for a girl who likes to work outside, who is athletic and has good academics. I applied for the heck of it, and a month later, I heard that I was accepted."

Molly's mom, Ellen, is a friend of



Photos provided/Molly Holleran

Top: The Girls on Ice crew prepares to climb Mount Baker, a volcano in the Cascade Mountains covered in glaciers. Above: Molly, left, makes cheese-cake on the mountainside with her friend Sabrina, a fellow participant.

Susan Brantley, a geosciences faculty member at Penn State, according to Tom Holleran, Molly's father. Brantley recommended the teen and, along with Molly's high school chemistry teacher, Judy Hershey, wrote a letter of support.

"They were both very supportive," Tom said. "It was nice for Molly to have the opportunity to do this.

Not many kids get this kind of chance."

Start of the journey

Once in Washington — getting there was Molly's first experience on an airplane — Molly joined a team of eight other girls who would be with her in her ascent of Mount Baker. Mount Baker is a volcano in the Cas-

cades, along with Mount St. Helens, Mount Rainier and others.

"They were from all over," Molly said of the other girls. "One was from Spain, another was from Texas, one was from Alaska and one was from Queens, N.Y."

With the program looking for a combination of girls who were athletic, and girls who were interested in sciences, Molly, a volleyball player and ski instructor at Tussey Mountain, said everyone tended to identify with either one area or the other.

"Where I am more on the athletic side, some were not as much," she said. "We all talked about it, and we agreed that we probably all wouldn't have been friends if we didn't meet for this."

But all the girls had one thing in common, she said.

"Nobody had ever done anything like climb Mount Baker before," Molly said. "We were all on the same level."

Three expert guides were on hand to instruct the girls. Erin Pettit, a glaciologist, research associate with the University of Washington and adjunct teacher at Portland State University, was in charge of the expedition. Helping Pettit on the science end was Ohio State University doctoral student Sarah Fortner, who is studying glacier geochemistry. Mountain guide Cecelia Mortenson

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Local teen climbs up to study

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helped with climbing techniques.

Learning new skills

From Mortenson, the girls would pick up crucial climbing skills and tactics to help in the event of an emergency, Molly said. Once some of those abilities were mastered, the hike up the mountain began.

On the mountain, there were several possible dangers, including crossing deep crevasses in the ice that would be easy to fall into, Molly said she enjoyed learning the climbing techniques.

"I learned how to rope," she said. "I learned all of the knots and commands. I know it sounds silly, but when you crossed a crevasse, you would yell, 'crossing.' It always felt good to hear everyone making it over."

The science instruction taught Molly to keep her eyes open for other things.

"The teaching was about the features of the mountain," she said. "We looked out for certain things and talked about them later. We looked at the vegetation one day, rocks another day, and ice crystals another."

Life on ice

A base camp was set up at 6,000 feet, Molly said.

"You could feel (the elevation)," she said. "When you did something, it seemed harder to do."

They camped three to a



Photo provided/Molly Holleran

Members of Girls on Ice suit up to climb Mount Baker, a 10,778-foot tall volcano in Washington.

tent, which Molly said was a little cramped.

From the camp, they set out on various expeditions to explore the different areas of Mount Baker.

"We would climb over to the glacier," she said. "There were huge crevasses, and we had to be careful. When we got higher, we would hang together in a group of four. One day it was so foggy that I could barely see the person in front of me. It was really scary going over the crevasses in the fog."

During most days, the temperature rose so the girls did not

need to wear jackets. But during the night, it became a bit chilly, even though it was August.

"One morning I woke up and there was ice on the little pond next to the camp," she said.

They took no showers for the eight days the girls were on Mount Baker. The food was good, but there wasn't the variety and availability that she was accustomed to off the mountain, Molly said.

"Before we went on the mountain, we picked from a huge pile of granola bars and candy bars for sugar," she said. "For breakfast, we had

oatmeal. For lunch, we usually had granola. And for dinner, we had soup or macaroni. It was not a wide choice."

The girls had to filter their own water, and they often used the small pond next to the camp as a source.

"On the glacier, we made it from the glacier itself," Molly said. "It is the best water you will ever taste. It is very cold."

Molly said she enjoyed the beauty of the mountain, but there were four consecutive days of clouds and rain in the middle of her hike.

"The best view while I was

there was from the camp," she said. "I could see for quite a ways."

Lasting impression

After spending more than a week on the mountain, the girls returned to the North Cascades Institute, where the first thing on everyone's agenda was a hot shower, Molly said.

For two days, the girls processed their results, she said. Measurements had been taken around the glacier, and the girls concluded the glacier had moved while they were on their hike.

Since her return, Molly said it is difficult to explain her experiences to others. Many of her peers, she said, do not understand what a glacier is.

"It's like a frozen river that takes a long time to flow," she said.

Seeing instructors and role models such as Pettit, Fortner and Mortenson has weighed heavily on her mind.

"I was able to see adults who actually do this for a living," Molly said. "I also realize that they went through a number of years of school. They are definitely well educated."

Molly said she could see herself going on another hiking experience and that she will consider what she saw when thinking of career goals.

She will definitely cherish the bond she has made with the other girls and has already started to e-mail them.

"We all became really close," she said.

United Way gets set for fall drive

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kickoff celebration, we will announce the fundraising efforts of 42 Pacesetter companies worked tirelessly through the summer months to set the pace for this year's campaign.

Ted McDowell, this year's Pacesetter chair, has marshaled the creative energy of 42 campaign coordinators to create new and innovative ways to engage employees in the workplace. Penn State, although not officially a Pacesetter, organizes countless creative fundraising events to benefit the United Way throughout the year within each college and department. All of these groups, from town and gown, come together for the good of our community.

We know the goal won't be reached without the many volunteers pulling together and playing their parts to be accountable for their roles; that's practical realism.

The leaders of the Pacesetter companies understand that regardless of how much their employees earn, everyone should be given the opportunity to give, or at least hear the United Way story.

Though McDowell will have more to say about this trail-blazing group in an upcoming