

Positive energy fuels United Way Drive *by Ray Westbrook*

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United Way of Lubbock kicked off this year's \$4.2 million campaign

Wednesday with a message that extolled the virtues of confidence, creativity, teamwork and communication.



Supplying the message was motivational speaker Joel Zeff of Dallas with help from a host of United Way volunteers at the Memorial Civic Center.

Utilizing impromptu skits by the volunteers, Zeff portrayed the importance of confidence, creativity, teamwork and communication.

"We have to have fun," Zeff told the crowd of about 800, but that should not cloud the message that special things can happen when opportunity and support come together.

"It is a circle of energy," he said. "We are dependent on each other."

Already, many employees in Lubbock seem to understand.

Through the generosity of workers at 12 Lubbock companies, nearly 23 percent of the goal already has been raised.

United Way honored the leadership of the JumpStart companies during the program.

"The campaign is off to a great start," said Matt Bumstead, JumpStart chairman.

"In a year like this year, when there was the word out there that maybe it would be a tougher year because the economy is down, these 12

companies knew that it's important for them to accept this challenge and show the local community that this will be the best year ever."

The JumpStart companies provided \$954,133 by holding employee fundraisers prior to the start of the general campaign.

Sharon Prather, United Way's 2001 campaign chairwoman, said the companies met 110 percent of their \$870,000 goal.

"It feels great to start the campaign with such good news. We feel very positive about the rest of the campaign," she said.

The companies who provided the initial thrust of the campaign are Cingular Customer Call Center, Covenant Health System, Dillard's Department Store, KLBK-KAMC TexasSize, Llano Logistics, Lubbock Avalanche-Journal, Sam's Club No. 8270, United Supermarkets, United Parcel Service, Wal-Mart No. 861, Wal-Mart No. 945 and Wells Fargo Texas Customer Service.

Prather told the audience: "United Way started in Lubbock in 1946. That was 55 years ago, and I think it says a whole lot about Lubbock people, about how we truly do care about one another. When we see someone in need, we take care of that need. It pleases me greatly and is one of the reasons I love living in Lubbock."

United Way of Lubbock provides funding to 22 local health and human service agencies.

This year's campaign will reach its midway point Oct. 10, and organizers are planning a victory celebration at 11:45 a.m. Nov. 5 at the Civic Center.

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