

# Meet Debbie and Bryan Macon

As anyone who has led the United Way of Northwest Georgia annual campaign in the past can tell you, it is no small task.

Campaign chairs dedicate countless hours setting a strategy, assembling the right team, making calls on local businesses and individuals and sharing United Way's story to ensure our legacy of success continues. This legacy is important because it guarantees resources are in place to meet the needs of the community. We are fortunate that so many have risen to the challenge when asked, and in some cases, have raised their hands and asked for the job.

Around this time last year, I received a phone call from Bryan Macon. He and his wife, Debbie, had been talking about the many things they have been a part of in the community, particularly with United Way. They decided they would like to lead the United Way campaign in 2018. I was thrilled, because I knew that anything that this dynamic duo takes on is always a

huge success.

The Macons have been involved in United Way for many years. They not only give generously of their financial resources,



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but they devote their time to helping others. Bryan began his United Way path as a donor. As his understanding grew of United Way's critical role in the community, he became a fund distribution volunteer, then chair. This group of approximately 70 volunteers,

now known as Community Solutions, decides how the money raised is allocated back into the community in the most efficient and effective ways. Bryan later was our board chair for three years from 2000 to 2002. In fact, Bryan was part of the search committee which hired me as president almost 15 years ago. Even though Bryan isn't on the board, I have always relied on his wise advice and counsel on all things United Way.

Debbie and Bryan have been instrumental in growing our Alexis de Tocqueville Society and chaired that effort three times; each time exceeding the amount raised

the previous year. They are founding members of our Peacock Legacy Society launched in 2015 and are fully devoted to creating and ensuring a better future for our community. Over the years, they have helped expand United Way community partner RossWoods Adult Day Services and even came to United Way asking for funds on behalf of RossWoods. Bryan has served on the board of the Boys & Girls Club, Debbie led the capital campaign at Dalton First United Methodist Church, and through their combined efforts, they've helped countless individuals and families.

Debbie shies away from the limelight, instead preferring a role as humble servant. I remember arriving at Camp Joy at our church where my children attended every summer. There was Debbie, paint brush in hand, painting the lobby of the gym and snack area for the kids. I also met with her several times for United Way business while she was spearheading the building project of RossWoods, grandchild in tow.

When this power couple isn't volunteering, they enjoy spending time with their two wonderful grandchildren. Debbie

also enjoys gardening, remodeling and reinvigorating spaces. Bryan, president of Dorsett Industries, enjoys living through all of Debbie's remodeling projects. They celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary on Saturday.

Please join me in thanking Debbie and Bryan as we begin another year of mobilizing donors, advocates and volunteers to fight for the education, basic needs and health of every person in our community. Last year United Way improved the lives of more than 55,000 people in Whitfield and Murray counties.

Join us on Tuesday, Sept. 18, at 6 p.m. at Burr Park in downtown Dalton for our Kickoff Block Party & CEO Trike Race. Debbie and Bryan, their campaign cabinet and the United Way board will announce the 2018 campaign goal at 6, followed by the CEO Trike Race. At 7, Barrelhouse will perform in the park. Dinner tickets will be sold at the event for \$10 for adults and \$5 for kids 12 and under. Thanks for joining us in improving lives in our community. United we win!

*Amanda Burt is the president of United Way of Northwest Georgia.*