

United Way director resigns

Leaving organization on solid ground

By AARON ALDRIDGE
Staff Writer

After four years as executive director of United Way of Sullivan County, Kelly Murphy will be leaving at the end of the year to work at Valley Regional Hospital in Claremont as director of development and marketing.

"The job Valley Regional presented to me is very challenging," Murphy said. "And I can still play a role in the community initiatives started at United Way."

When Murphy first came on board she found an organization that was anything but organized.

"It had struggled for a long time," Murphy said. "There basically wasn't a lot of stability."

At the time the United Way was only used to distributing what little funds were collected through donations, according to Murphy.

"The old United Way was in and out money flow," Murphy said. "I decided we needed to look long term. We can provide funding, but the agencies face the challenge of transportation — getting people to and from services."

Murphy has worked with the Community Transportation Association of America to develop a solution to transportation

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problems in the county.

"Right now we're looking at the needs and how to coordinate those needs," Murphy said. "By this time next year there will be a coordination of transportation."

Murphy hopes that her successor will continue working on having a positive impact on the community.

"The United Way is the community," said Mike Quinn, interim chairman of the United Way of Sullivan County. "The executive director is the leader at the helm of the United Way. If we do our job well, the job of the United Way will transcend the position held by Kelly."

Murphy said she could not have succeeded in her position without the community's help and support.

"This United Way would not have succeeded if the communi-

ty did not want it to succeed," Murphy said. "I can't make people give money or volunteer."

Murphy said she was most proud when she witnessed a group of 13 community volunteers discuss how to allocate a small amount of money.

"One of my greatest moments was watching a group of community members sit around a table talking about the agencies they had just interviewed," Murphy said. "The agencies were scrutinized and they asked hard questions. They spent 25 minutes discussing how to allocate \$100. It is a very small amount of money in comparison to the need."

Murphy said last year the United Way received requests for \$150,000, but was only able to allocate half that amount.

From each dollar raised, 87 cents goes directly to agencies

or to fund community initiatives, according to Murphy. The remaining 13 cents is used for resource development and administration.

"The United Way of Sullivan County is one of the more efficient United Ways in the country," Murphy said.

Murphy will begin working part-time at Valley Regional Nov. 5 and move to full-time in January. For the time being, she will work with the new executive director to ease the transition.

At this time a successor has not been named.

"The board will meet next week to discuss appointing an interim director," Quinn said.

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