Employees Hold Golf Tournament; Raise $50,000

A group of employees coordinated the first TGH Employee Golf Tournament to benefit the Employee Emergency Fund. Employees and their guests attended the June 13 event at the Bay Palms Golf Complex at MacDill Air Force Base, and it was a tremendous success. Nearly 60 employees and their guests, totaling close to 140 people, participated. Tournament coordinators hoped to raise $20,000 for the Emergency Fund — and they exceeded that goal by raising $50,000. “We were really amazed and really proud of the amount we raised in such a short time,” said Patty Conze, manager of Human Resources, who helped organize the event. The tournament was so well received, another is already being planned for next March, said Chris Roederer, senior vice president of Human Resources.

The tournament’s winning team included from left: guests J.W. Thomas, Mark Royals, Mark Hofferberth and Chris Bechwith with Senior Vice President of Human Resources, Chris Roederer.

Amy Paratore, vice president of ER and Trauma Services, left, Cheryl Eagan, vice president of Support Services and Building Operations, Janet Davis, vice president of Acute Care and Therapy Services, and guest Shaela Wolf get ready to play golf.

Employees Support One Another In Record Numbers

When Tampa General’s 2010 Employee Campaign was launched last February, employees took the campaign’s slogan, “Help us help each other,” to heart. They had a chance to make contributions to the Employee Emergency Fund that directly benefits co-workers who face unexpected financial hardships.

They showed support for their fellow employees in record numbers, making it the hospital’s most successful single-year employee fundraising campaign ever.

The Employee Emergency Fund began with a substantial contribution from the hospital, but it required further funding from donations and fund-raising activities to meet employees’ needs. To accomplish that, the fund became the central focus of the campaign, which is administered through the TGH Foundation.

The campaign’s goal was set at $175,000 — but TGH employees surpassed that goal by more than $46,000 and contributed $221,154.

“It’s the largest amount we’ve raised in a single-year employee campaign,” said Robin DeLaVergne, senior vice president and Foundation executive director. With more than 1,500 employees making contributions, this year’s campaign also had the largest number of donors of any employee campaign, said Robin.

Overall, 25 percent of the hospital’s employees made contributions to the campaign, and more than 56 percent of those were contributing to the employee campaign for the first time.

Total department participation was also at an all time high. Sixteen departments had 100 percent of their employees who contributed, 25 departments had 75 percent employee participation, 45 departments had 50 percent employee participation, and 70 percent had 25 percent of their employees who contributed.

Support, continued on next page
Support, continued from page 1

During this year’s campaign, the department again had a very high level of contributions from its employees.

“It demonstrates the kindness and goodness of the Environmental Services staff,” said John. With this year’s campaign directly benefiting employees who are in need, the staff realized it was an opportunity to help many of their peers who may need help from the fund, he said.

The outpouring of support for others is a testament to the family-like attitude among the hospital’s employees. “Part of our culture is that we care for our patients, and we care for each other,” Robin said.

Chris Roederer, senior vice president of Human Resources, agrees. “It proves that our employees are very giving,” he said. “The moment Senior Management provided the seed money, I’ve been overwhelmed with the response. It exceeded our expectations.”

Employees had the option of donating specific amounts each pay period, giving a one-time gift or donating ATO hours to the fund of their choice. Employees donated approximately 1,600 ATO hours, a value of about $28,494.

While the Employee Emergency Fund was the primary focus of the campaign, employees could also contribute to other Foundation funds, including the NICU campaign, or the Fund for the Future. Donations to the NICU campaign were nearly $14,500, and a little more than $8,000 was contributed to the Fund for the Future.

Proceeds from Special Events – Every Penny Counted

Throughout the campaign, special events, such as raffles, were held to raise funds. Employees also bid on a silent auction to have TGH vice presidents spend four hours working in their departments. Proceeds from those efforts added up to more than $5,600. Empty water bottles were even placed in departments so employees could contribute their share, resulting in approximately $300 in donations.

The kickoff event featured a carnival-like atmosphere where employees could play games, like dart throwing, to win prizes.

Ambassadors Helped Spread the Word

While events were held to raise funds, more than 50 employees, like Maria Feiz, a nurse on the Surgical Prep Unit, volunteered to be the campaign’s official ambassadors. They helped out at campaign events, visited departments to explain the campaign’s goals, answered questions and garnered employees’ support.

“The reason I didn’t hesitate to volunteer is because I’ve been here for 15 years and it’s good to be able to do something for the employees,” she said. With the economy, any co-worker can be faced with difficult financial situations, she said. “At least we have somewhere to go to help,” Marta said.

Providing Financial Help During Emergency Situations

Since its establishment, TGH’s Employee Emergency Fund has been a lifeline of sorts for almost 20 employees who found themselves faced with unexpected circumstances that placed them in desperate financial need.

While TGH offers ATO contributions to help employees when they are out on medical leave, employees who experience unforeseen short-term emergencies, such as the death of a family member, theft, loss of property, or an accident, often did not have any way of getting financial assistance—until now.

Employees often come to Human Resources when they have emergency financial situations, and often there aren’t any resources available for them, said Chris. Co-workers sometimes take up collections to help them, but those efforts often favor popular employees, he said. Employees who are less well-liked, or who don’t want to reveal their situation to others, may be left out of receiving assistance, he said.

When employees apply for assistance through the Employee Fund, their application is screened by Human Resources, and qualifying requests are forwarded to the Employee Emergency Fund Committee, comprised of representatives from the Foundation, Human Resources and other departments.

The name and personal information of applicants is concealed so that the employee remains anonymous. The process, said Chris, “is unbiased and void of favoritism.”

How Your Donations Helped Others In Their Time of Need

“It was just an unbelievable feeling to have that kind of care displayed at my workplace. It made me feel more thankful to be part of Tampa General. To have that support extended to my family…words cannot describe the peace of mind I was given.”

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The employee who made those comments wishes to remain anonymous. But she wants to thank every employee who donated to the Employee Emergency Fund. Your contributions helped her family get through a serious financial emergency.

The family’s struggle began when her husband, who is the primary income earner for the family, developed serious medical complications following surgery. He was unable to work for two months, which put the family in a serious financial bind.

“We had exhausted all of our emergency funds, we didn’t have any thing else left,” said the woman, who is also the mother of young children. The last straw came when the family received a final notice from the electric company that their service would be disconnected if they didn’t pay their $500 power bill.

“I was worried about the health of my husband and how I was going to pay the electric bill,” she said. “It was a helpless, terrible feeling.”

As she thought about possible resources that could offer her assistance, the hospital’s Employee Emergency Fund came to mind. She filled out the application and was contacted by a member of the fund’s committee a few days later. Her request was reviewed by the committee and approved. The money owed was paid directly to the electric company.

“It was a huge problem,” she said, “and within a week it was gone.”

Now the family is getting back on its feet, her husband has recovered and returned to work.

“I thank them for having this fund. I was very touched by this,” she said. “It’s a very loving way to reach out to people.”

Other recipients have also expressed their gratitude for the help they received in emergency financial situations.

One employee wrote to the Fund’s committee members, “Oh my God… you know you are very much loved. Thank you so much. You are my angel. Please thank the committee. I really believe in miracles and know never to lose my faith. I feel like crying and will probably do so when I get to my car at the end of my shift today.”

“You know the tears just won’t stop. Just to know that there are people that really care,” wrote another. “May God bless you all.”

All regular, part-time and pool employees who work at least 16 hours per pay period and who have no active discipline or Performance Improvement Plans on file are eligible to seek assistance from the fund. The assistance must be for short-term or temporary circumstances, such as, medical conditions, fire, theft or loss of property, death of an immediate family member, or accident.

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Support, continued from page 2

Bill Geoss, manager of Social Work, serves on the committee and has seen firsthand how the contributions from employees can make a difference in the lives of those who face sudden financial hardships.

Since employees requesting assistance are in an emergency situation, the committee’s goal is to meet as quickly as possible and render a decision, said Bill.

“We leave the meeting with a real good feeling about the help we’re providing,” Bill said. “I’m really proud of the hospital. This is our way of giving back and recognizing that our employees have needs too,” he said. The fund is part of the solution to “help people get back on their feet.”

While the 2010 Employee Campaign has concluded, employees can still make donations. Gifts to the Employee Emergency Fund, and other Foundation funds, are accepted year-round. Pledge forms are available on the Employee Portal or by contacting the Foundation.

“I hope the fund will sustain itself and assist employees for years to come,” said Chris.

Michael Scott, left, chair of the Patient Care Tech Practice Council, donates $350 to the campaign from the council to the Foundation’s Mandalyn Clongneor, director of development, and Glenda Evans, stewardship coordinator.
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The tournament's winning team included from left: guests J.W. Thomas, Mark Royals, Mark Hofferberth and Chris Bechwith with Senior Vice President of Human Resources, Chris Roederer.

On May 20 the campaign’s ambassadors gathered for the presentation of the 2010 Employee Campaign’s check, totaling $221,154.88. Chris Roederer, senior vice president of Human Resources, right, presents the check to Robin DeLaVergne, executive director and senior vice president of the TGH Foundation.

Support