

## How I LIVE UNITED

*Rachel Hubbard*  
*Employee Campaign Manager*  
*American Girl Boston*

One of this year's winners of United Way of Tri-County's Employee Campaign Manager of the Year award, Rachel Hubbard, shares some of her experience running United Way campaigns. This is her third year working for American Girl Boston, and her third United Way campaign, ever since the store opened at the Natick Collection in 2008. An enthusiastic supporter of United Way, Rachel and her team conduct fun, successful campaigns with many activities that encourage a high rate of participation from the employees at American Girl Boston.



### ***What do you enjoy about running the United Way campaign?***

I particularly like the chance to work with our Employee Committee, which has representation from all of the departments in our store, from management to loss prevention. They really come up with great ideas! Working with all the departments to achieve our goal is truly a team effort. It's a great chance to work cross-functionally.

### ***What is your biggest challenge?***

Choosing events to hold during the campaign. We also do fundraisers year-round, so that we can remind employees about the United Way, and update them on the work being done. I've also learned that it is important to ask for help – you can't do it alone! And people want to be involved in the campaign, beyond just being asked to donate.

### ***What activities have worked for your campaign?***

Doing Penny Wars\* is always great – the competition can get intense! We also are able to offer our employees a 'buck-a-book' sale of American Girl books, many of which aren't generally available to the public. They love those, and the entire proceeds go to United Way.

### ***What advice do you have for your fellow ECMS?***

You want to be sure to do things that fit with your company's culture. For example, the Penny Wars is fun for us to have friendly competition between departments that everyone could participate in. Also, be sure to recruit a team – don't try to do it all with just one or two people. Having a team approach also lets other employees get more involved, to work together, to offer new ideas, and to try those new ideas out.

### ***What makes a successful Employee Campaign Manager?***

Well, I do like to plan! Also, you need to be willing to listen, and to ask for help. You should have a good support team, and it's best if that team represents the whole company. Be willing to try new things, and learn from both your mistakes and successes. And most importantly – have fun!



### **\*How to Hold a Penny Wars Competition**

Teams compete to see who can fill each team's jar with the most pennies. The team with the most pennies wins.

#### **HOWEVER.....**

The key aim (and the real fundraiser) is to sabotage the jars of your rivals. This is done by adding coins (and banknotes) other than pennies to their jars which score negatively. Therefore 10 pennies in one team's jar can be wiped out by the addition of a dime thrown in by another team.

It is usual to run Penny Wars over the course of a week. A deadline is set for the last day when the coins will be counted and totals for the jars - positive and negative, will be announced.

Teams watch the jars during the contest period, adding pennies to their own and 'negative' coins to their rivals' as needed.

As the deadline approaches feverish activity will often ensue as last minute efforts are made to boost your own team's total and stave off the threat from rivals. In fact a good tip to boost final totals is to "set up" a bit of a finale and countdown.

It is not at all unusual for most jars to be "negative" at the count up.