

SHAW LOCAL News Network

The sky's the limit at first ever Sponsorship Empowerment event for Kishwaukee United Way



The Kishwaukee United Way hosted its very first Sponsorship Empowerment Luncheon on Sept. 12, 2023, at the Lincoln Inn at Farandas in DeKalb. (Photo provided by Kishwaukee United Way)

By Shaw Local News Network
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DeKALB – The sky was the limit at Kishwaukee United Way’s first-ever Sponsorship Empowerment Luncheon recently, as community leaders, volunteers and donors gathered to highlight service and philanthropy work.

The event, sponsored by Old National Bank and WDKB 94.9 radio, was held Sept. 12 at the Lincoln Inn at Farandas in DeKalb, according to a news release from Kishwaukee United Way. The theme for the annual campaign kickoff was “The sky is the limit” with guest speakers Carole Peters, CEO of United Way NEXT, and Tia Anderson, retail manager at Heartland Bank, who both shared their personal United Way journey and community involvement.

Peters spoke about her background as a little girl who struggled with a speech impediment growing up in Marengo, and encouraged the audience

to dig deep and identify what motivates them to support United Way and DeKalb County communities, according to the release.

Event participants engaged on a blue carpet with WDKB Radio host Robby Cruz and United Way board member, sharing stories about their support of the service organization.

Michele Vaughn, who took over as executive director of the Kishwaukee United Way in March, spoke about her vision for the organization and the DeKalb community coming together and expanding resources to serve on a greater level. Vaughn is expected to begin a months-long campaign speaking tour throughout the county to encourage community support.

“In the kitchen when you’re cooking something good, you ask yourself what is that smell? Well, we are going to take the lid off what we are cooking, and DeKalb County is going to smell what Kishwaukee United Way is cooking,” said Vaughn, according to the release.



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During the event, Kathy Johnson, workforce development manager for Mortenson Construction, presented \$11,989 in support of the United Way’s “Do Something Good” two-week campaign. Mortenson employees volunteered their time to various funded partnering agencies, according to the release.

In addition, a 2-1-1 Community Talk Show will be launched to highlight the many resources in DeKalb as well as community members. The show will air on Kishwaukee United Way’s Facebook page. For more information, email info@kishwaukeeunitedway.com or visit Kishwaukee United Way’s website kishwaukeeunitedway.com.



Kishwaukee United Way Executive Director Michele Vaughn, Ed.D., speaks during the group's first Sponsorship Empowerment Luncheon on Sept. 12, 2023, at the Lincoln Inn – Farandas in DeKalb. (Photo provided by Kishwaukee United Way)