

Op-Ed 2014

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For more information, contact:

Peter Theisen, United Way of Whatcom County, [ptheisen@unitedwaywhatcom.org](mailto:ptheisen@unitedwaywhatcom.org), (360)733-8670  
Tamara Tregoning, United Way of Whatcom County, [ttregoning@unitedwaywhatcom.org](mailto:ttregoning@unitedwaywhatcom.org), (360)733-8670

### **WECU® AND UNITED WAY – MAKING DREAMS COME TRUE**

WECU® is deeply committed to creating a stronger community which is why we are pleased to partner with United Way of Whatcom County. United Way is not just an organization; it's a movement that provides hope and opportunities for a better tomorrow for so many in our community. WECU® supports education, health, and financial stability efforts in Whatcom County – which are the same focus areas supported by United Way of Whatcom County.

WECU®'s mission is to help our members achieve their financial dreams. Whether those dreams are to grow a business, save for the future, or purchase the perfect home, we want to provide our members with the means to achieve a brighter future. As a financial cooperative, the funds our members save at WECU® are used locally to provide loans to other members and businesses. We have a strong commitment to our members and a passion for service.

In addition to serving our members, WECU® also strives to develop and enhance our community. We provide support to numerous community organizations in the form of monetary donations, financial education classes, the use of WECU® facilities, and through a variety of volunteer events. WECU® not only contributes as an organization; our employees are also very community-minded and contribute not only their time participating in local sweat equity projects, but also contribute financially to organizations such as United Way.

Each year WECU® assembles a United Way Committee to conduct our workplace giving campaign. To kick off the annual campaign, United Way representatives are invited to share their mission and to talk about the key projects that support our community. WECU® provides a variety of incentives to encourage staff giving. Our team's unique approach to the campaign has been so successful that in past years WECU® has received several awards from United Way as a result of our efforts. Committee members and staff are pleased that our gifts to United Way's Community Impact Fund stay right here in Whatcom County.

Various WECU® employees also volunteer on United Way's Fund Distribution Committee, gaining insight into the donation process and assisting with crucial community-changing decisions. Additionally, for many years we have provided the United Way Campaign with a Loaned Executive - a WECU® staff member

who works with United Way on its overall campaign. This has been a great professional development opportunity for staff and an excellent way to give back to our community.

It takes each of us doing our part to build a brighter tomorrow, and to achieve our dreams. I invite you to join us and make a contribution to United Way today. Your gift to United Way of Whatcom County's Community Impact Fund will help to increase caps and gowns, will make certain that families have a place to call home, and will help to provide the resources for safe, healthy and active living in our community.

If your workplace offers a United Way Campaign, please consider participating and making a contribution to the Community Impact Fund. If your workplace does not offer a United Way Campaign, consider starting one. To start a United Way campaign at your workplace, or to make a donation, call the United Way at 360-733-8670 or see [www.unitedwaywhatcom.org](http://www.unitedwaywhatcom.org) for more information.

I've had the pleasure of serving on the United Way of Whatcom County Board of Directors; seeing the inner workings of this amazing organization has solidified my passion for its work. I look forward to continuing the longstanding partnership between our organizations in my new role as President/CEO of WECU®. We're fortunate to live in this wonderful and vibrant community, where great things happen when we Live United!

Jennifer Kutcher  
President/CEO  
WECU®

About the author:  
Jennifer Kutcher is President/CEO of WECU®