



Sioux Empire United Way

News Release

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For immediate release

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Sioux Empire United Way Recognizes Community Leadership

SIOUX FALLS, SD – Sioux Empire United Way held its annual Thank You Event on **Wednesday, February 18** at the **Holiday Inn City Centre**. Six individuals and three companies received awards at the event.

The following community awards were given out during the event: Recipients are bolded. *Additional information regarding the award and recipients is attached.*

- Heart Club Philanthropist of the Year – given to a Heart Club member who has demonstrated active involvement, and has also encouraged or influenced others to contribute – **Scott Lawrence, Lawrence & Schiller.**
- Rich Garry Rookie of the Year Award – given to a first-time Sioux Empire United Way volunteer who has stepped up and made a tremendous impact in their role, helping to fulfill the mission of Sioux Empire United Way – **Tim Braithwaite, Sanford Health.**
- Volunteer of the Year – given to a Sioux Empire United Way volunteer who selflessly and generously gives of his or her time and talents to help fulfill the mission of the Sioux Empire United Way – **Suzy Collignon-Hodgen, Avera Health.**

- Larry Oppold Memorial Award – given to a human service professional for outstanding dedication to his or her work – **Wendy Giebink, Sioux Falls School District.**
- Helen E. (Oppold) Blair Memorial Award – given to an individual whose work in human services, law enforcement, education, or church based fields towards child abuse prevention and early intervention is exemplary – **Erin Baker-Daggett, Children’s Inn & Bright Start Nurse Home Visitation Program.**
- Business of the Year – given to three companies or organizations, based on employee numbers, that have greatly benefited the community through its generosity and its employee involvement – **1 – 100 employees – SDN Communications; 101 - 500 employees – U. S. Bank; 500 + employees – Sammons Financial Group.**
- David Birkeland Memorial Award – given to the business or professional leader who most exemplifies David Birkeland’s involvement in our community – **Ron Moquist, Raven Industries.**

Sioux Empire United Way also recognized more than 900 volunteers at the event. The luncheon offered volunteers the chance to sample signature donated soups from the following local restaurants: Minervas, Olive Garden, Ruby Tuesday, Westward Ho Country Club, and Wild Sage Grille. Salads, bread baskets, and an ice-sculpture were donated by the Holiday Inn City Centre. Dessert was provided by the Minnehaha Country Club.

For more information please contact Brandi Miller, Sioux Empire United Way Marketing Director, at 605-336-2095.

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