

<name>,

Thank you for your support and pledge during last year's Florida State Employee's Charitable Campaign. I hope that you will join me once again in donating to this worthwhile cause which both benefits our community and contributes to UCF's image as having a positive impact in a myriad of ways.

Last year I highlighted some of my volunteer experiences which have made me passionate about philanthropy and brought to light for me the impact that donated dollars have on individuals in need. This year, I would like to share a tale...

A mother, a stay-at-home mom for most of her life, found it necessary to start working full time later on in life with no college education or experience in her background. She is now 60 years old and makes \$19,000 a year (and an additional \$2,400 a year from an extra cleaning job). The father also did not graduate from college. He makes \$25,000 and is 64. They own a home with a sagging roof they can't fix, support a son with mental illness, and try to help a daughter who has two children and lives in Atlanta. Their other daughter is doing fine, but can't help enough with the significant bills.

In 2004, the father became very sick with cancer. They told him he had less than a 10% chance to survive, but he decided to fight for life and is still going through treatments today. Last year they paid over \$100,000 in medical *co-payments*. Their nest-egg has been depleted. He still works full time – even going in right after chemo treatments -- to put off losing his salary. They are impacted by many factors – even gas is a stress factor for them since they drive an hour to work. They have both used all of their paid sick leave and annual leave.

You can see that my mom & dad could easily be homeless tomorrow, but they have one advantage that many don't – a large Italian family to fall back on who sends them money and offers a place to stay if they ever needed it. Not everyone has such a cushion and *anyone* could lose everything. They might need a place like the Coalition for the Homeless (8021) or the United Way (8000) to help them. And Papa Bear might not even still be here to give his awesome hugs if there weren't organizations like the American Cancer Society (5504) and the Cancer Research and Prevention Foundation (9504) promoting research for cures and treatments.

Other organizations have special meaning to me and my family as well. The Lupus Foundation of America (5533) promotes research and awareness significant to us. An organization similar to Meals on Wheels (8064) assisted my Grandmother and Grandfather after Grandpa's car accident, when they were living alone and both bedridden and unable to shop or get daily help from family. Research into the care and cure of Alzheimer's has benefited my grandfather, and agencies such as the Alzheimer's Research Foundation (2590) advance our understanding and care. The Girl Scouts (8019) provided my sister with a scholarship that helped her to start college. She didn't finish at the time, but her credits that she earned have helped her to start this semester in a nursing program.

Whether or not we have directly used services, we are affected daily by the contributions that these organizations make in our world. Again, I thank you for stepping up with me and making a positive impact on our community.

Respectfully,

*When asked by a prospective donor how much he should give, the best reply is, "Give until you are proud."*

- Paul Ireland