

# IAM District W24 recognized as 'Labor Partner of Year' at United Way function

Machinists District W24 was named "Labor Partner of the Year" at United Way of the Columbia-Willamette's annual Celebration of Caring recognition dinner April 19 in Portland. This year's Community Giving Campaign raised a record \$22,005,560.

United Way of the Columbia-Willamette covers four counties in the Portland/Vancouver area.

The Labor Partner of the Year award is selected based on unions that not only participated in this year's campaign, but that also showed outstanding support of

United Way and community services.

In presenting the award, United Way said: "... the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers District W24 set a strong leadership standard in promoting and supporting United Way of the Columbia-Willamette. Whether raising funds to benefit Guide Dogs of America and Labor's Community Service Agency, volunteering to serve on local boards and participate in community-building events, or standing steadfast in support of United Way, the Machinists 'Live United' spirit

is the inspiration throughout the labor community and beyond."

Organized labor is always a major participant in the fundraising campaign, both in promoting the agency at union worksites and through donations. Vickie Burns, executive director of Labor's Community Service Agency, served on the 2011 United Way Campaign Cabinet. The cabinet was chaired by Gregg Kantor of Northwest Natural. Bob Tackett, secretary-treasurer of the Northwest Oregon Labor Council, sits on United Way's Executive Board, as does Barbara Mathey, CEO of the IBEW & United Workers Federal Credit Union.

Eighteen labor organizations, including the Northwest Labor Press, were among 100 award nominees for 2011. The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 48 was a collaborating partner for community impact projects and initiatives.

More than 1,000 local companies conducted employee giving campaigns. Intel Corporation led the way, with a record contribution of \$7.2 million.

United Way of the Columbia-Willamette President and CEO Keith Thomajan said individual and employee giving was a factor in outpacing last year's total by nearly \$900,000. It is the ninth consecutive year for campaign growth and puts the Portland area chapter of United Way among the top 4 percent of United Ways in the nation, placing 42nd out of 1,249.

## Social Security will not go broke

By ROSS EISENBREY  
Economic Policy Institute

Social Security will never run out of money. Even in 2033, when the multi-trillion dollar buildup of funds for the baby boomers is used up, there will be hundreds of billions of dollars of contributions to the trust fund, and Social Security will continue to pay three-fourths of promised benefits.

Many claim younger workers will never claim Social Security benefits. Far from it. Even for workers who retire after 2033, benefits will be higher in inflation-adjusted terms than they are today, though they will replace a shrinking share of pre-retirement earnings.

It is true, however, that reducing promised benefits is a bad thing. We should avoid it by making better-off

Americans pay the same Social Security tax rate as average Americans. The loophole that shelters all but a tiny portion of millionaires' income should be closed. Warren Buffet and Mitt Romney should pay Social Security taxes at the same rate on their income as their secretaries pay on theirs.

The worst way to address the potential benefit cuts that could happen two decades from now is for Congress to jump the gun and cut benefits now. Cutting benefits by raising the retirement age or reducing cost-of-living increases is no solution for future benefit cuts. That should be obvious, but there are plenty of snake-oil-selling politicians who want to do just that. There is only one way to avoid benefit cuts, and that is by raising more revenue.



Willie Groshell of Portland-based National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 82 and Eryn Byram of Labor's Community Service Agency collected six mail bins full of food at this year's Celebration of Caring recognition dinner for United Way of the Columbia-Willamette. The food collection was a head start the NALC's "Stamp Out Hunger" food drive May 12.

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