



United Way of West Alabama

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Chris Gunter Leads United Way Annual Campaign

Tuscaloosa, AL—(May 15, 2023) Chris Gunter, local businessperson, and philanthropist, will serve as the 2023 United Way of West Alabama (UWWA) Campaign Chair. The Campaign Chair sets the annual campaign goal, helps identify new funding sources and builds relationships with community leaders and corporate donors to garner crucial financial support for UWWA's 30 partner agencies across West Alabama. Gunter will be aided in fundraising efforts by the 2023 Campaign Cabinet and UWWA Board of Directors.

A native of Tuscaloosa and graduate of Central High School, Chris is no stranger to the Tuscaloosa community. He has a bachelor's degree in management human resources from Faulkner University. In 1998, He enlisted in the US Army as a 74 Delta Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Specialist where he was deployed on three major campaigns including Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Noble Eagle, and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Upon completion Chris was Honorably Discharged as a highly decorated noncommissioned officer.

Chris Gunter, frequently referred to as "The Pepsi Guy" has been with Buffalo Rock Pepsi for over 20 years where he currently holds the title of Franchise General Sales Manager over Tuscaloosa and the 7-county surrounding area. "Chris has worked hard to develop a broad involvement in the Tuscaloosa community," says Matthew Dent, The Buffalo Rock Company Chief Executive Officer. "He is a fabulous representative of Buffalo Rock and the Tuscaloosa Community."

Chris Gunter currently serves on The Art and Humanities Council of Tuscaloosa Executive Committee, United Way of West Alabama Board of Directors, The Veterans Park Memorial Board of Directors, and The Tuscaloosa One Place Board of Directors.

"Chris has true servant's heart for our community. His positive energy and leadership style is a great source of inspiration for our staff at United Way as well as for our volunteers," says Jackie Wuska, UWWA President & CEO. "While we all are feeling the impact of the increased costs of everything today, the rising costs are creating tremendous need for those on fixed incomes or who work hard but do not make enough to meet their basic needs. We are excited to have Chris's guidance in this year's campaign to raise additional support to enable our partner agencies to continue to help 1 out of 4 people in our community."

Well respected for his drive and leadership qualities, he has also served on the West Alabama Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors as Vice Chairman of Membership and Investor Relation and Vice Chairman of Marketing and Communication. In 2018, Gunter received two leadership awards including the United Way of West Alabama Young Leaders Award and the West Alabama Chamber of Commerce's Charles H. Land Member of the year award. Just the following year under Chris Gunter's leadership, The Buffalo Rock Company was awarded the 2019 Robert C. Tanner Corporate Service Award.

“Chris is one of those special people that you can reach out to when a need presents itself and you know he will pitch in any way he can,” says Monique Scott, UWWA VP of Campaign Development. “It’s people like him with a true commitment to our community that makes Tuscaloosa and West Alabama such a special place when it comes to helping others.”

For more information about how you can be a part of the 2023 United Way campaign, please visit uwwa.org or contact Monique Scott or Laura Green at (205) 345-6640 or campaign@uwwa.org.

2023 Board of Directors

Jheovanny Gomez, Jalapenos Mexican Grill **(Board Chairman)**

Susan Bell, University of Alabama

Matt Brooks, Nucor Steel

Karen Burklew, Alabama Power Company

David Coleman, Hunt Refining Company

Martin Colvin, FNBCA-Pickens County

Chris Cox, Shelton State Community College

Norman Crow, City Councilman & D.T. Freight Company, Inc.

Deidra Diaz, University of Alabama

Erwin Dudley, Sr., Community Volunteer

Hon. John England, Jr., Community Volunteer

Shawn Gilliam Mercedes-Benz U.S. International

Brian Groeschell, SmartBank

Chris Gunter, Buffalo Rock

Will Hewson, Hewson Family Foundation, Inc.

John Humber, Community Volunteer

Dr. Amy Jones, University of West Alabama

Shelley Jones, Community Volunteer

Katrina Keefer, DCH Health System

Hon. Stephanie Kemmer, Bibb County Probate Judge

Barbara Kucharski, Community Volunteer

Brian Luoma, The Westervelt Company

Brent McCorkle, Michelin-BFGoodrich

Elizabeth McGiffert, Community Volunteer

James Mowery, Publix Supermarkets

Mary Bess Paluzzi, Community Volunteer

Jordan Plaster, Ameriprise Financial

Pam Pruitt, Community Volunteer

Sandra Hall Ray, Community Volunteer

Mollie Rowe, Eutaw Housing Authority

Brenda Ryan, Community Volunteer

Justice Smyth, IV, University of Alabama-EDA

Harrison Taylor, Community Volunteer

Elizabeth Winter, Regions Bank

Chelsea Burroughs Winters, Capitol Park Title LLC

2023 Campaign Cabinet

Chris Gunter, Buffalo Rock (**Campaign Chairman**)
Amanda Lightsey, Children's Trust Fund
Dr. Amy Jones, University of West Alabama
Bert Sims, Way, Ray, Shelton, & Co.
Brenda Ryan, Community Volunteer
Brian Groeschell, SmartBank
Caroline Strawbridge, University of Alabama
Chad Tindol, University of Alabama
Chelsea Winters, Capitol Park Title LLC
Chris England, City of Tuscaloosa
Deidra Diaz, University of Alabama
Glenda Webb, City of Northport
Heather Dill, Embassy Suites
Jay Welborn, Piggly Wiggly
Jheovanny Gomez, Jalapeno's Mexican Grill
Joe Eatman, Shelton State Community College
Josh Hayes, Prince, Glover & Hayes
Justyce Smyth, Economic Development Authority
Kelsey Rush, Visit Tuscaloosa
Dr. Kristin Reed, University General Dentistry
Lydia Avant, Tuscaloosa City Schools
Mark Nelson, Tuscaloosa County Commission
Martin Colvin, BankFirst
Mary Harmon Young, Pritchett-Moore Real Estate
Matt Feller, BFGoodrich Tire Company
Michele Coley, Michele Coley Allstate
Mollie Rowe, Eutaw Housing Authority
Nicki May, Bibb County Medical Center
Dr. Paul Diaz, Riverview Dental Designs
Quin Kelly, Stillman College
Sandra Hall Ray, Community Volunteer
Stacey Ashe, Robertson Banking Company
Hon. Stephanie Kemmer, Bibb County Probate Judge
Steeve Steele, Synovus Bank
Tanya Winstead, West Alabama Chamber of Commerce
Terri Brewer, Tuscaloosa County Schools
Tripp Powell, Yea Alabama
Zach Wolfe, County of Tuscaloosa