



SUCCESS STORY

UNITED WAY DAY OF CARING



On September 11, 2009 Outdoors for All hosted their second annual DSB Hike & Bike event. For the last two years, Outdoors for All has hosted an event with the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) on United Way Day of Caring. Hiking and cycling throughout the day, beautiful weather and a delicious BBQ, a lot of smiles on both volunteers and participants...a day just does not get much better than that in Seattle!

United Way Day of Caring was established to promote the spirit and value of volunteerism, increase awareness of local human service agencies and schools and demonstrate the power of giving back to the communities around us. This year's Day of Caring event had 8,974 volunteers from 114 companies came together to help 270 non-profit organizations. Teams across King County built affordable housing, added fresh coats of paint to daycare centers, cleared paths on hiking trails and much more. The estimated total of donated labor for the day was over \$1 million dollars. It was truly a day of hope, unity change and action (United Way of King Count, website).

Both the DSB and Outdoors for All look forward to the annual Hike & Bike event. "This is our favorite event with Outdoors for All," said Joy Iverson, an employee with the DSB. The Outdoors for All Foundation provides outdoor recreation opportunities for children and adults with disabilities. Every year, Outdoors for All works with the DSB to provide events focused on hiking, cycling, kayaking, skiing, rock climbing and so much more. The Department of Services for the Blind's mission is to provide "Inclusion, Independence, and Economic Vitality for People with Visual Disabilities". The United Way Day of Caring project each year provides Outdoors for All the opportunity to get a large group of visually impaired adults out on the trail.

This year's project provided 18 visually impaired adults the opportunity to get out and hike and use adaptive cycles around Magnuson Park in Seattle. With the amazing weather

on our side and over 20 volunteers on hand, each individual from the DSB got a personal guide in helping them enjoy the outdoors. One of the King County Library System volunteers stated, "What an amazing opportunity. I feel really grateful to have had the chance to experience a day like this."

A few state officials even stopped by the event including but not limited to Peter Goldmark, the Public Lands Commissioner and Rex Derr, the Director of WA State Parks and Recreation Agency. Both Goldmark and Derr got a chance to ride one of our most popular adaptive cycles, the JTB (Just Two Bike), with one of the DSB participants. Derr stated at one point how much he would like to see more of these types of activities taking place in the state park system and was happy to come out to the event to see it in action*.

Thank you to the support of the United Way of King County staff for all their hard work in organizing such an amazing and important event throughout the region. And thank you to the King County Library System volunteers for all your enthusiasm and time at this year's United Way Day of Caring 2009.

*This past year Outdoors for All had been given a grant through the No Child Left Inside program which provided Outdoors for All the opportunity to grow its kayaking program and get youth out into the state parks through hiking, cycling and kayaking activities. To read more about this grant and its success, read our NCLI Grant Success Story.

To get involved as a participant, intern or volunteer with Outdoors for All, give us a call: 206.838.6030 or email info@outdoorsforall.org

