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Volunteers receive recognition through 2011 WE Awards

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Over the years, many wonderful people have affected my life: my mother, a high school teacher, a co-worker, a clergyman. These are just some of my role models. I'm sure you have a similar list. These individuals stretch us to our fullest potential and by their lives, inspire and guide us.

In my job as a volunteer director, I have been fortunate to meet many inspiring individuals who in the course of their normal routines are quietly accomplishing many amazing things. These are today's role models for all of us, right here in our community.

I have the privilege to announce the 2011 WE Awards winners -- individuals, groups and businesses that volunteer their time, share their talents and put WE before ME to make a better life in Marathon County.

Youth Honoree: In nearly four years, 12-year-old Peyton Medick has organized the collection and donation of more than 35 tons of food and 210 holiday meals. She also educates others on hunger issues in our area.

Adult Honoree: Sally Sann has served as a mentor for low-risk and high-risk offenders through ATTIC Correctional

Services for more than 10 years.

Adult Honoree: Through coaching at Hawthorn Hills and by establishing Wausau United Soccer Club, Jeff Sorenson has helped make athletic programs accessible and affordable for many area students.

Senior Honoree: Dorothy Duberstein has sewn and donated more than 5,200 quilts for Children's Service Society clients and others in need since 1958.

Family Honoree: Strong faith has guided Bob and Donna Anderson in a commitment to service at Saint Clare's Hospital. Together they have given more than 11,000 hours of spiritual and organizational support in the past six years.

Group Honoree: Fifty-six NTC International Programs Students from 14 countries have accumulated over 4,464 hours of service at 55 different sites for the past 12 months. Their efforts have strengthened local agencies and enriched and educated our

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community.

Corporate Honoree: Family owned K-tech Kleening Systems, Inc./K-tech Charities has supported the community through 10 years through charity fundraisers, school mentoring, highway cleanup, holiday food baskets and donated cleaning services for fire victims and cancer patients.

Congratulations to this year's winners and all the WE Award nominees. Your contributions are tremendous. Thank you to the WE Award sponsors, River Valley Bank, Target, M&I Bank and United Way Volunteer Connection.

National Volunteer Week was celebrated April 10 to 16. Besides honoring those taking action to better their communities, the week was also about inspiring people to become involved in their communities. To begin a search for volunteer opportunities in Marathon County, please visit www.unitedwaymc.org.

Shelly Kaiser is the volunteer connection director of United Way of Marathon County.

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