



HENRY BURY

Intelligencer

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Tracey Clarke first learned just how important the United Way is to the community during a wedding show she organized early last year.

Now she is being paid to help the United Way of Quinte raise much-needed dollars to fund the work of 50 community agencies in Hastings and Prince Edward Counties.

The 31-year-old Clarke is the full-time campaign manager hired earlier this year and she is in the midst of her first fundraising campaign.

"My main priority is to make sure we're doing everything we can to ensure a successful campaign," she said.

She is buoyed by the success of the 2004 campaign to date and remains confident the overall goal will again be met.

The United Way has already raised more than \$600,000 toward its \$1.5 million target, putting it about \$100,000 ahead of last year's pace.

"We have a great team here and I'm just one member of that team," said the Lingham Street resident. "I couldn't be prouder of saying who I work for."

This is the busiest time of year for Clarke, yet it doesn't phase her one bit.

"I am inspired by the many volunteers who give so much of their personal time to help the United Way reach its goal ... I feed off their dedication."

Clarke has an educational background in advertising and photography but it was a wedding show she organized at the Wally Dever Arena in March of 2003 that made her realize how important the United Way is to helping make people's lives better throughout the Quinte area.

She held a raffle draw during that wedding show to benefit the United Way. Even

though it only netted a few hundred dollars for the United Way, it was an invaluable experience for her.

"That is where I first became involved with the United Way and that's where I started to understand what the United Way is all about in trying to help the community," she said.

When the campaign manager's position became vacant, Clarke jumped at the opportunity of making a difference in the