

FRANK & PEG LYNCH

The 2020 United Way Campaign Chairs



PHOTO BY
BILL STOKES

"Our community's recovery requires that we maintain a strong network of health and human service programs. It is up to each of us."

Frank and Peg Lynch, Co-chairs, 2020 United Way of Central Illinois Campaign

BY KAREN ACKERMAN WITTER

Giving back is part of Frank and Peg Lynch's DNA. They are this year's co-chairs of the 2020 United Way of Central Illinois campaign, continuing their long legacy of helping others in the Springfield community. A lifelong resident of Springfield, Peg and her family have a deep and long commitment to education. Peg retired five years ago, after working as a dedicated and compassionate special needs teacher at Washington Middle School for thirty years. Her impact extended far beyond the classroom. She was devoted to her students, providing mentoring, tutoring, guidance and assistance with extra-curricular activities. Peg is a product of Springfield public schools. She graduated from Southeast High School, which is where her father, Bob Kyes, taught for nearly 40 years.

Peg earned her undergraduate degree in education from Southern Mississippi University, after transferring from Eastern Illinois University. She later earned a master's degree in education administration from the University of Illinois Springfield. Her first teaching position was in Nokomis, Illinois, where she taught for four years before moving to Springfield. Although Peg retired from teaching, she hasn't retired from having a positive impact on children and families in the Springfield community.

Frank hails from Loves Park, Illinois and earned his undergraduate and law degrees from Southern Illinois University (SIU), graduating from SIU Law School in 1983. His first job after law school was with the Illinois Attorney General's Office. In 1997, Frank joined Bruce Beeman and Randy Wolter to form a plaintiffs' litigation and tort practice. He is now a partner with Wolter, Beeman, Lynch & Londrigan, LLP, a Springfield law firm that specializes in personal injury, workers' compensation, medical and professional malpractice and products liability trials and appeals. The firm represents clients in Sangamon County and surrounding areas, including Jacksonville, Lincoln, Decatur and Litchfield. Previously, he

worked as a litigator at an in-house insurance defense law firm associated with First Financial Insurance Company and Special Insurance Services in Springfield, and he was a partner at Heyl, Royster, Voelker and Allen, a state-wide insurance defense firm.

Lifelong commitment to helping others

Serving the greater good is integral to Frank and Peg Lynch's lives. "Frank and I were raised by parents and siblings who taught us to serve and love our neighbor," says Peg. "From those to whom much has been given, much is expected." Jennifer Gill, Superintendent of Springfield Public Schools District 186, has seen this first-hand.

"Peg and Frank Lynch are lifetime District 186 supporters, whether serving the schools directly or serving our

community in a manner that supports the learning of our students," says Gill. "They have always kept the needs of students at the forefront. They embody what it means to provide equitable access of services to students, and they both step up in service to make this happen."

Frank is a dedicated volunteer with many local organizations. He serves on the board and is past president of the Sangamon County Emergency Food and Shelter Program. He has volunteered and contributed to Helping Hands Homeless Shelter, the Boys and Girls Club and M.E.R.C.Y. Communities. In the mid-90s he served as board member, board president and trustee of the Springfield YMCA.

Frank not only volunteers for the community, but also his profession. He is a faculty member with the Il-



It's no secret that change doesn't come easy.

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Peg's parents Marilyn and Bob Kyes with grandson Robert and granddaughter Lauren



*L-R: Peg Lynch, Robert Lynch, Becca Heimburger
Lauren Lynch, Jordan Hammerman and Frank Lynch*



*Son Robert and
daughter Lauren Lynch*



*Frank and Peg taking a
selfie on the river.*



Illinois Institute of Continuing Legal Education and helps plan, organize and present continuing legal education programs to members of the Bar throughout Illinois. Frank has also been a lecturer, speaker and author for the Southern Illinois University Law Journal, Illinois Defense Research Institute, Illinois Bar Association, National Business Institute and the Illinois Trial Lawyers Association. The Illinois Institute of Continuing Legal Education named Frank Volunteer

of the Year in 2014. He was awarded the Springfield Good as Gold Distinguished Volunteer of the Year in 2016.

Peg's passion is teaching, and that passion never wavered, according to Greg Eller who taught special needs students with her for 15 years at Washington Middle School. "Peg came excited and raring to go daily and had a talent to play the many roles it takes to work with others," says Eller. "Teaching was fun for her, and she made

learning fun for her students." He also saw first-hand the calming effect she had on students, having observed her ease students' fears and provide a level of comfort as events unfolded on 9/11. Peg always supported her students. When she learned a female honors student was not planning to attend an Honor Roll Ceremony at Southeast High School because she didn't have anyone to support her, Peg and Eller stepped in to be there for her.

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Frank has been involved with the United Way of Central Illinois for 25 years. Peg has volunteered alongside him and has become more involved since retiring from teaching. Frank and Peg were asked to serve as this year's campaign chairs, due to their long involvement with United Way and passion and commitment to helping others.

Frank was introduced to the United Way in 1995, when he was asked to serve on a panel to help evaluate grant applications and make recommendations to the United Way board about funding. He has volunteered in many capacities, including serving on the Community Impact Committee and the Board of Directors from 2013 - 2019. He was the 2017 Board Chair. Frank says he is most proud of having participated in the Strategic Planning Committee, which improved how United Way allocates funding. "United Way asks for community input and relies on experts and data to identify the most urgent problems in the community," says Frank. "United Way then identifies programs that offer the most effective solutions and holds those programs accountable by showing measurable improvement."

United Way of Central Illinois – serving Springfield since 1922

The United Way of Central Illinois has been serving the Springfield area for nearly 100 years, raising hun-

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dreds of millions of dollars to invest in local programs that serve the community. It is the largest private funder of health and human services in Sangamon and Menard Counties.

John Kelker, President and Chief Professional Officer, has known Frank and Peg Lynch since 1996. Kelker cites the significance of the strategic planning process in 2014, which Frank chaired. This 18-month process

with extensive community participation led to transforming the United Way of Central Illinois from a membership organization to a community impact model. Four priorities were identified through this process – basic needs, education, financial stability and health. Funding immediate basic needs is vital to the most vulnerable members of the community, and long-term investments in education, financial stability and health are the building blocks for a good quality of life.

Any organization can apply for funding in the four focus areas. Each focus area has a Vision Council, consisting of 12 – 14 volunteers who carry out a rigorous process to identify the most urgent community needs, review applications and recommend funding for those programs that offer the most effective solutions. These councils include experts in the field who establish the criteria for funding and consider relevant data as well as the capacity to achieve results and measurable outcomes. Organizations must apply annually, and there is no guarantee of ongoing funding. Big Brothers Big Sisters, Compass for Kids, Girl Scouts of Central Illinois, Springfield Ur-



Frank and Peg taking a selfie over dinner.

UNITED WAY LEADERSHIP GIVING SOCIETIES

MAKE AN IMPACT - GIVE IN AN EXTRAORDINARY WAY



TOCQUEVILLE SOCIETY

The Alexis de Tocqueville Society recognizes the generosity of individuals and families contributing at the highest levels of personal giving. These caring philanthropists exemplify an outstanding commitment to improving the quality of life in our community. Tocqueville Society membership is based upon a giving level of \$10,000 or more.



United Way fights for the basic needs, education, financial stability and health of every person in our community, and the impact of a United Way Leadership Gift cannot be overstated. The extraordinary generosity of the members of United Way's donor networks opens doors to a better life for all of us living in our community. Please join us as partners in making our community a better place to live, work, and raise children.



LEADERS GUILD

United Way of Central Illinois' Leaders Guild Society recognizes our community's most committed individuals and families, the champions of change who annually contribute \$1,000 or more to help inspire hope and create opportunities for a better tomorrow. Leaders Guild Society membership is based upon your chosen level of giving.



COMMUNITY BUILDERS SOCIETY

The Community Builders Society recognizes those who make an exceptional commitment to our community through their gift of \$500 to \$999 annually. This group of game-changers allows United Way to lead the fight for the basic needs, education, financial stability and health of every person in our community.

LEADERSHIP LEVELS	ANNUAL GIVING	PER WEEK
Susan Lawrence Dana Membership	\$7,500 - \$9,999	\$145 - \$192
Vachel Lindsay Membership	\$5,000 - \$7,499	\$97 - \$144
Abraham Lincoln Membership	\$2,500 - \$4,999	\$49 - \$96
Elijah Iles Membership	\$1,750 - \$2,499	\$34 - \$48
John and Mary Kelly Membership	\$1,000 - \$1,749	\$19 - \$33

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ban League, Catholic Charities, Mini O'Beirne Crisis Nursery, Senior Services of Central Illinois and Helping Hands are examples of organizations that have received funding recently. All organizations receiving funding for education initiatives are required to undergo training in Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

Kelker says both Frank and Peg are effective cheerleaders and spokespeople for United Way. Frank knows the value and need very well, given his many volunteer roles with United Way. Peg, as a former educator, understands the significant role of the United Way in helping children and families outside the classroom.

The United Way typically raises in excess of \$2 million annually, with the annual campaign contributing the largest piece. With the uncertain impact of COVID-19, there is no set financial goal this year beyond raising as much as possible because there will always be unmet needs. "One thing we would like to accomplish is to keep United Way, and the work that we do, at the forefront of community thought and to keep our historic donors en-

gaged while expanding our support," says Frank. Many local businesses are strong supporters of United Way, and there are hundreds of volunteers in workplaces throughout the community who advocate on behalf of United Way. Many employers provide opportunities to participate in workplace giving through payroll deduction. Earlier this year the United Way of Central Illinois partnered with the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln to create a COVID-19 relief fund to respond to specific community needs. This was a one-time opportunity, and more than \$900,000 was raised and allocated to over 100 organizations. Kelker says that in other communities United Way organizations and community foundations are often competitors. "A strong community needs both," says Kelker. The COVID-19 relief fund is a good example of collaboration in a time of community need.

Family members following in their parents' footsteps

It comes as no surprise that the next generation of the Lynch family is continuing a life of service. Peg and

Frank married in 1987 and have two children, who follow in their parents' footsteps by helping others. Lauren, age 30, is an Acute Care Nurse Practitioner with Washington University Physicians, practicing in the ICU at Barnes Jewish Hospital in St. Louis. Since March she has been on the front-line of working with COVID-19 patients in the intensive care unit at Barnes. Son Robert is 28 and the regional operations manager for GoHealth Mercy in St. Louis, administering 11 urgent care facilities, which have also been providing pandemic-related healthcare. Peg and Frank are proud of their two adult children and also concerned since they are working on the front-lines. "We shared the fear and pride of parents with children in the fight who are risking themselves for the greater good," says Peg. Clearly, the entire Lynch family is continuing the family legacy of serving and loving their neighbors.

