

Fort Collins awarded for volunteer work

United Way granted \$10,000 for service

by **KEELEY BLAKLEY**

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Fort Collins can add another award to its long list — this one for its locals' charity work.

The United Way of Larimer County was awarded \$10,000 for its community service work during USA Weekend's 10th annual Make a Difference Day in October.

During the past decade, Make a Difference Day, which began as a single day's volunteer work, has grown to a week of community service. This year, almost 4,500 people completed more than 160 different projects in the Choice City.

Jami McMannes, a volunteer center specialist for the United Way of Larimer County, said that there is an increase in participation every year but this year seemed special.

Volunteers worked on a wide range of projects throughout the Fort Collins-Loveland area.

Some people raked leaves and fixed up homes for Larimer County's Neighbor-to-Neighbor program, while others made blankets or held Halloween events for local kids.

Many of the projects had an environmental focus. Workers planted trees and worked on restoration projects in natural areas.

Adam Molzer, the volunteer center director at the United Way of Larimer County, said that people in Larimer County are really active when it comes to community service.

He said that in Fort Collins, volunteering has really become a tradition and people are eager to serve their community.

Fort Collins is ranked 7th in the nation for volunteerism in a mid sized city.

The United Way plans to use the award money to promote their services and projects throughout the year and further support for Make a Difference Day, McMannes said.

The group is not interested in getting more people or more projects for next year. They are more interested in making sure that they continue to meet the needs of the community, Molzer said.

United Way officials expect similar or better numbers at next year's event.

The award was "richly deserved," said Fort Collins Mayor Doug Hutchinson.

"I'm very excited. I'm very proud of Fort Collins," Hutchinson said.

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