



## “Gift of Light”

### An NRECA International Foundation Employee Donation Program

#### What is the United Co-op Appeal Campaign?

The United Co-op Appeal (UCA) is an annual workplace giving program that is managed by the Cooperative Development Foundation. UCA supports non-profit organizations that use the cooperative enterprise model to bring self-sufficiency and economic development to individuals and communities through the United States and around the world.

The voluntary workplace giving program allows employees to make regular donations via payroll deductions to the UCA campaign, selecting the recipient they wish to donate to. Employees can also make one-time donations.

#### What is the “Gift of Light”?

It is the brand name that the NRECA Foundation is using for the UCA fundraiser campaign. The UCA program includes a dozen different organizations that an employee can choose and by giving it the name of “Gift of Light,” we hope people will think of electricity and choose the Foundation as their charity of choice.

#### Goals and Objectives

The goal of the “Gift of Light” program is to help fund programs that will bring electricity to people in developing countries, such as Sudan, Philippines, Haiti and Guatemala. The funds raised will provide the Foundation with the ability to continue helping people get electricity.

The objective of the “Gift of Light” fundraising program is to create awareness amongst co-op employees and encourage them to donate to the Foundation on a regular basis (every paycheck).

#### How to Implement the Campaign

Once your cooperative has agreed to be a host for the “Gift of Light” fundraising campaign, the Foundation will supply you with materials (brochures and contribution forms) for all the employees of the cooperative. The Foundation will also send your co-op a few videos of the work being done overseas as an example of how the money can and will be used.

We strongly encourage the cooperative to have a kick-off meeting to introduce the campaign and excite their employees into participating. We suggest the co-op concentrate on creating awareness in the first year or two of the campaign. By concentrating on participation, we are able create awareness and that is



what regularly triggers people to donate. A suggested initial donation might be as little as \$2.00 per paycheck. This is a small amount per person and they may feel it will not hugely impact their monthly salaries. In later years, once the employees are more engaged, a monetary goal can be established to encourage employees to modestly increase their donations.

If your co-op already hosts another workplace fundraiser (such as United Way), you can host both campaigns at the same time. At NRECA, we have found that the campaigns do not compete with each other. On the contrary, they give the employee more choices and chances to participate – and more interest raises more funds for everyone!

To facilitate the coordination and implementation of the “Gift of Light” fundraising campaign, we suggest the co-op designate a coordinator for the activities. The NRECA International Foundation will gladly work with this person and help them develop a plan on how to help promote the campaign and create awareness for the Foundation.

The tasks for the campaign coordinator would be simple:

1. Set up a kick-off meeting in where the co-op manager personally encourages staff to make a payroll contribution.
2. Distribute the employee information packets and collect the completed contribution forms.
3. Prepare and submit a simple report for the United Co-op Appeal Campaign, with copies to the NRECA International Foundation and the co-op’s payroll department.

Additionally, the payroll department will be involved to schedule deductions from and send a quarterly check to the UCA headquarters.

## **Ideas to encourage participation**

To help promote the campaign, here are a few ideas that the co-op can implement:

### **1. All Staff Meeting.**

Schedule a meeting for all staff to attend and arrange for the general manager to give a speech to encourage staff to donate. If someone from your co-op has volunteered for the Foundation before, they can give a short presentation on what it meant to them to go overseas. This personal touch will greatly help motivate and encourage your staff to give.

### **2. Video Coffee Breaks.**

This is one of our most popular events at NRECA headquarters. We host a short meeting on a Friday afternoon, between 3:00 and 3:30 p.m. where we play one of the videos (6-8 min) talking about the



Foundation's projects. We also talk for a few minutes, giving an introduction of what the Foundation is and its overall mission and activities. We provide coffee and pastries to all who attend.

### 3. Prizes.

Ask vendors to contribute a prize for a drawing. All employees that turn in their contribution forms by a set date are eligible to participate and win.

## Reports

After the "Gift of Light" campaign is over, the co-op needs to send a copy of the contribution form together with a final report to the headquarters of the United Co-op Appeal, plus a copy to the NRECA International Foundation. The final report template is a simple form that includes final totals pledged by the employees as well as one-time contributions.

## Checks and Thank You Letters

All checks should be made out to the *United Co-op Appeal*. All donations are tax deductible.

Additionally, all individuals and organizations that make a donation to the Foundation will receive a personalized thank you letter.

## Contact

If you have any questions or comments on how to implement the "Gift of Light" campaign, need additional resources or additional information regarding the NRECA International Foundation, please contact:

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