



## **U.S. Oil Co. Inc. creates fund for basic needs assistance**

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U.S. Oil Co. Inc. hopes to raise at least \$800,000 this summer for its newest charitable fund, which will assist nonprofits serving people who struggle to make ends meet.

The creation of the U.S. Oil Open Fund for Basic Needs will expand the reach of U.S. Oil's philanthropic dollars that are administered through the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region Inc. and the Greater Green Bay Community Foundation, said Sarah Schmidt, family president of the Combined Locks-based U.S. Oil.

"We recognize that the agencies and organizations that are already serving the community are doing a good job," Schmidt said Monday.

"We want this fund to support quality existing programming that's going on."

All of the proceeds from the company's 22nd annual U.S. Oil Open golf outing and fundraiser Aug. 8 will help build up the new fund because the company covers event-related and administrative costs, said Schmidt, of Evanston, Ill.

The Fox Cities 2006 Leading Indicators for Excellence (LIFE) study, a community assessment of the area's strengths and its opportunities for growth, prompted the Schmidt family to establish the new fund.

"One of the primary purposes of the LIFE study is to help our community direct our resources in the most important directions and this (U.S. Oil Open Fund for Basic Needs) is an excellent example of that," said Community Foundation President and CEO Curt Detjen.

The study, which the Grand Chute-based Community Foundation helped sponsor, calls for better access to health care, including treatment for those who are living with mental illness or are battling addictions.

It also cites the need to provide people with other necessities such as affordable housing, quality child care, job skills training and literacy support.

"One of the things (nonprofits) see is they don't have enough resources to stop the floodgates," Schmidt said. "Once poverty becomes chronic, the challenges are just so much greater. Maybe this fund can help to intervene, preventing a one-time issue from becoming a chronic need."

Since 1986 the U.S. Oil Open has generated more than \$6.7 million to aid children, people affected by diabetes, and those touched by Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

Each year's U.S. Oil Open has amassed dollars for one of the three interest areas, Schmidt said. Beginning in 2008, she said, each event will benefit all four areas.

Individual and corporate sponsors so far have pledged about \$150,000 toward this year's fundraising goal, said U.S. Oil Open event coordinator Terri Green of Kaukauna.

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