



Diana Reid, longtime president and CEO of United Cerebral Palsy of the Mid-South, credits guidance from Bill Burtch, owner of Harmony Coaching and Consulting, with reducing stress in her job. "It's very cathartic for me," she said, "and it's lightened the load."

# Working Smarter

Advice from coaches network focuses energies of nonprofit execs

By Jane Roberts, Memphis Commercial Appeal

[Contact](#)

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If you see United Cerebral Palsy national ambassador William H. Macy at the VESTA Home Show this weekend (proceeds go to UCP of the Mid-South), credit in part the Memphis Coaches Network for \$68,000 in pro bono coaching that's helping nonprofit executives work smarter and more creatively.

And get more attention.

Through the Women's Foundation, network coaches met twice a month with executives from 19 Memphis nonprofits that serve women, from MIFA to the

DeNeuville Learning Center to Girl's Inc.

The coaches, all practitioners, start their second year in the project this month.

"Leading a nonprofit is one of the loneliest jobs in the world," said Jeanne Gray Carr, managing partner in Team Trek Coaching Group and former director of Planned Parenthood.

"You have no peers in the organization. And it's exceedingly hard to retain a quality staff because you can't afford to pay people what they are worth."

Ask Sister Lakshmie Napagoda, who helps 225 women a year with GEDs or job training on \$200,000 at the DeNeuville Learning Center.

"When a woman comes to register in the GED program, she may not have her ninth-grade education," Napagoda said.

Staff and volunteers stretch to cover literacy programs, child care and transportation so the women can go to school.

For Napagoda, the challenge is balance, every day. "Coaching made me more aware of my personal needs," said Napagoda, member of Sisters of the Good Shepherd.

Napagoda's coach, Shelley Baur, is president and owner of One Source Associates and has been coaching since 1991.

"When coaching is at its best, it allows people to claim their own power and move forward," she said.

"There are different points of view on coaching," Baur said. The one she likes is "holding up a mirror so others can see themselves."

Diana Reid, longtime president and CEO of United Cerebral Palsy of the Mid-South, found stress relief through her experience with the life-coach network.

Call it old school, but Reid felt personally responsible when giving dried up after 9/11.

"I felt, quote, that I 'should' be able to prevent money from falling out," she said -- and hire the best staff and grow as fast as the need in Memphis.

Reid, head of UCP of the Mid-South for 23 years, realized she was trying to solve problems alone that coach Bill Burtch, owner of Harmony Coaching and Consulting, suggested could be better analyzed with her senior staff.

Now, the group meets every Monday to work through the challenges of running a \$1 million nonprofit that annually serves more than 700 people with disabilities.

"I feel much less stress," Reid said. "It's very cathartic for me, and it's lightened the load.

"When you're trying to effect change, you can't print money. You've got to keep it coming in with new fund-raising volunteers or expanded big events," she said."

That's where Macy, who played the salesman with cerebral palsy in *Door to Door*, comes in.



At the advice of her coach, Diana Reid (left) now tackles problems with help from senior staff.

Reid invited him to be honorary chairman of the VESTA tour, sponsored by the Memphis Area Home Builders Association, because the organization is a UCP corporate partner.

The home builders will give UCP \$1 from every tour ticket. The total is expected to exceed \$40,000.

In turn, the home builders will get proceeds from the \$35-a-head Friday evening preview party featuring Macy.

"We want to make sure our corporate partners benefit from any cooperation with UCP and that it's not just us with our hands out," Reid said.

Coaching fine-tuned her energy, and the staff has noticed.

"There's a focused energy from Diana now," said director of Memphis Works Kate Lareau.

"She's always been a great boss, but I could tell after the coaching sessions, she was renewed and refreshed."

#### **Coaches**

Dawnelle Hurd  
Robin Graham  
Mary Jo Greil  
Wayne Shannon  
Jeanne Gray Carr  
Linda Bailey  
Shelley Baur  
Bill Burtch  
Pat Ferguson  
Phil Murphy  
Gina Prigoff  
Petra Rees  
Paul Wright

#### **Participating agencies:**

Girls Inc.,  
St. Mary's Episcopal School,  
DeNeuille Learning Center,  
United Cerebral Palsy of the  
Mid-South,  
The Salvation Army,  
Women in Community Service Inc.,  
Women's Oasis of Memphis,  
Southwest Tennessee Community  
College Foundation,  
Synergy Treatment Centers,  
Hope Works Inc.,  
Dress For Success,  
YWCA,  
Memphis Family Shelter,  
Blues City Runners,  
RISE Foundation,  
University of Memphis, Herff  
College of Engineering,  
MIFA Opportunity Banc,  
Community Legal Center.  
The Women's Foundation