



Why I participate in CFC...one person's personal perspective

I have seen the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) from three perspectives—as a federal employee; as a beneficiary of CFC agencies; and as a Loaned Executive for the Johnson Space Center for 5 years.

I participated in the Combined Federal Campaign for the first time in the fall of 1971. At that time I had been an employee for about 5 months, had been married for two years, had a first child 3-months old, and just purchased the first family house at a cost that exceeded both my wife's and my salaries. Even though I had plenty of financial reasons not to give, that was never a consideration or factor. It was an easy decision to give through payroll deduction—it was simply the right thing to do. I have given to the CFC each and every year since—forty-one years—counting 2011, but my reasons and perspective have changed.

Thirteen years into my career, my wife and I adopted a daughter, after having three healthy sons. We adopted Sara through DePelchin Children's Center, who was, and still is, a CFC agency. At 5-months of age, Sara was diagnosed with a heart condition that required a heart transplant. We found ourselves in a position that if our daughter was going to live, some other infant was going to have to die. On November 1, 1984, at 9-months of age, Sara received the heart of a 2-year old girl who died of a head trauma, and whose mother donated her organs for transplant purposes. Sara received the gift of life, a supreme act of kindness and a gift that we will never, ever, be able to repay.

With Sara, my wife and I got involved with organ donation causes and worked with CFC agencies like The Living Bank and LifeGift, organ procurement agencies. In 1989, Make-A-Wish Foundation gave Sara her wish and provided her and her family a trip to Los Angeles to enjoy Disneyland and other area attractions. Make-A-Wish was, and is, a national CFC agency. Although Sara died in November 1997 from complications associated with organ transplantation and anti-rejection medication, we would not have had those 13 years but for a gift of life. CFC agencies also played a beneficial purpose during those years.

My third, and last perspective, of the CFC has come from 5 years as the NASA Johnson Space Center Loaned Executive following my retirement in January 2006. I have had the opportunity to work with CFC agencies and their representatives, and seen and heard the benefits of those agencies, as well as, heard and seen the dedication and passion of their representatives and speakers.

Based on my three perspectives, I now know that the CFC is not just an event that occurs each and every year between September 1 and December 15. It is far more than that. It is an opportunity for each and every one of us to stand up and be counted. I believe that the CFC is all about acts of kindness that people do for others. I believe that these acts of kindness happen to all classes and kinds of people. I believe that each of these acts of kindness influence additional acts by those affected and those who witness those acts. I believe that these acts of kindness come full circle back to the original givers.

That is why I give to the CFC!