

'Fun work:' Many lend community a hand for Portsmouth Day of Caring

By Charles McMahon
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PORTSMOUTH — For Lee Bowley, an employee at Bottomline Technologies, Wednesday's annual Day of Caring event wasn't just about getting out of the office and away from the daily grind.

Instead, Bowley said the 18th annual event was more about helping the community and getting a chance to know some of her fellow employees.

"It feels like a different kind of work," Bowley said. "Fun work."

With paint brushes in hand, Bowley and her fellow employees helped paint the pool at the Seacoast Family YMCA during the event, traditionally held once every fall and spring.

"This is camaraderie," said Bowley.

Nearly 1,000 employees from 35 companies participated in the United Way of the Greater Seacoast event on Wednesday. Close to 50 community-based nonprofits in the region benefited from the day long event, geared toward educating volunteers about issues facing the community, fostering long-term volunteer engagement and matching companies with volunteer projects in issue areas they are most interested in.

Volunteers from the Wednesday event completed more than 120 projects at the different Seacoast nonprofit agencies including the Community Child Center, **The Housing Partnership** and the Urban Forestry Center.



EJ Hersom/Staff photographer Deb Michaud cleans brick at the Seacoast Family YMCA in Portsmouth Wednesday during the United Way Day of Caring.

invaluable for the local nonprofit.

Nappo said without the help of the volunteers the projects would need to be paid for by the nonprofit and would in turn affect the bottom line and the group's ability to provide services to the local community.



EJ Hersom/Staff photographer Tracy Lang, left, and Samantha Church seal the Seacoast Family YMCA pool Wednesday in Portsmouth as a project for the United Way Day of Caring.

The volunteers who attended the day of caring came from area businesses such as Liberty Mutual, Bottomline Technologies, Lonza Biologics, Public Service of New Hampshire and Newmarket International.

Marc Bouchard, Enterprising Support Activities Manager for Bottomline, was on hand Wednesday as his fellow employees landscaped, painted and even built a few walls at the local YMCA.

Bouchard, who is also the 2009 United Way Day of Caring chairman, said the event fell right in line with the goals the company hopes to achieve within the community.

"One of our principles for a company is supporting the community," said Bouchard.

For Frank Nappo, executive director of the Seacoast Family YMCA, the work done on Wednesday proved to be



EJ Hersom/Staff photographer April Morgan, front, cleans up a patch that will become a flower bed in front of the Seacoast YMCA Wednesday during the United Way Day of Caring in Portsmouth.