

Keith Thomajan, President & Chief Executive Officer United Way of the Columbia-Willamette

Keith grew up in Massachusetts and attended Phillips Andover Academy and Colby College (class of 1991). Following college, Keith was accepted into Teach for America (TFA), a then-fledgling educational reform initiative designed to impel motivated young people to give two years of service as a teacher in under-resourced districts across the country. Keith began teaching in South Central Los Angeles (just months after the '92 riots) and then spent two years teaching 7th–9th grade English in gang-affected schools in East Oakland, California. An intuitive teacher, Keith followed his two years with TFA by teaching 6th grade English and History at the Hamlin School, an affluent, private girls' school in San Francisco.

An avid rock climber and mountaineer, Keith joined Pacific Crest Outward Bound School in 1996, becoming a Lead Instructor in the High Sierra and Joshua Tree. Keith led 8-22 day mountaineering and rock climbing courses, and melded his skills in education with Outward Bound's approach to experiential wilderness education. Keith then spent three years with Hurricane Island Outward Bound School's youth-at-risk program in the Florida Everglades. He developed the program's education component, oversaw the wilderness component, and in 1998 assumed program leadership. Keith ended his tenure with Outward Bound as the Director of Development for Washington and Oregon. Through his work, Keith helped the school exceed revenue goals and build active regional advisory boards.

Keith became President/CEO at Camp Fire Columbia in 2001. At Camp Fire, Keith was instrumental in the revitalization of the 100-year old organization, garnering enthusiastic buy-in from the board of directors, staff, alumni, and stakeholders. By 2012, Keith had oversight for \$4M+ in budgets, and a staff of 35 FTE and 175 part time/seasonal employees. Keith's fundraising efforts led to 404% growth in contributed revenues (including grants from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Meyer Memorial Trust). Under Keith's leadership, Camp Fire positioned itself as a modern youth development program offering high-quality out-of-school time programming to help close the achievement gap; programs served 21 local schools and over 1,000 of Portland's most low income and marginalized youth every week of the school year. 2010 evaluation data for these school-based programs showed that Camp Fire kids made academic gains at faster rates than non-Camp Fire peers. Additional Camp Fire programs include Camp Namanu (a 552 acre rustic summer camp) and Teen Leadership Programs focused on career- & college-readiness.

Keith took the helm, as President/CEO, at United Way of the Columbia-Willamette in 2012. That year the organization set a local record by raising \$22 million. In his first year, Keith managed the acquisition of Hands On Greater Portland, enabling United Way to better support community volunteerism through 26,000 volunteer "matches" each year. In 2013, United Way launched a ten-year effort to *Break the Cycle of Childhood Poverty* in our region, citing data that reflects 20% of local kids growing up in poverty, and acute educational, economic and health disparities in our communities of color. Since the launch of this campaign, United Way has seen 5% growth in critical workplace campaigns (besting the 1-2% national and historic average); secured funding from the Gates Foundation as well as multi-million dollar grants from government partners; and landed a \$2M estate gift. Keith's team of 45 FTE work closely with community, corporate and philanthropic partners to serve as the backbone partner for the *Breaking the Cycle* work, and to mobilize the community to join the movement to re-write the script for our low-income kids.

Keith has been married to his wife Edie for 19 years and they have two awesome sons (who keep them hustling!). The family lives in southeast Portland. Keith has served on the Portland Parks Board (Chair, 2007-2010), Hands On Greater Portland (Chair, 2010), and as a national Trustee for Camp Fire USA. Keith is active an active volunteer with the Mazamas and serves as a committee member/instructor in the Advanced Snow & Ice Climbing program. In his free time, Keith can be found climbing and skiing the Northwest's highest peaks.