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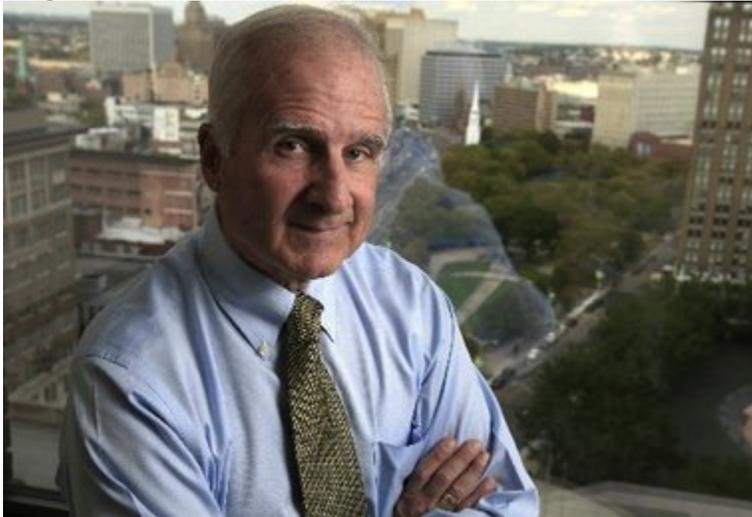


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Patti Sapone/The Star-Ledger Alfred Koeppe, president and CEO of the Newark Alliance and chairman of the 2010 Newark Holiday Fund in his Newark office, Tuesday, Oct. 19.

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NEWARK — Alfred C. Koeppe has led two major New Jersey corporations. He's been a force in Trenton, serving governors on both sides of the aisle. He's mentored students in Newark, and helped found a nonprofit organization to better the economy of New Jersey's largest city. He answers to "Al," "Dad" and "Grandpa."

His lengthy list of accomplishments will grow in a few weeks, when he adds the title of "Chairman." Koeppe has been selected to chair the Greater Newark Holiday Fund's 2010 fundraising campaign.

The annual campaign that has served northern New Jerseyans in need since the Great Depression is in good hands with Koeppe at the helm, according to those who know him.

"He's a superstar," said Frank Ferruggia, president of the Greater Newark Holiday Fund. "Al's history, his commitment to the city of Newark and his terrific personality all added up."

The fund currently provides 12 charities in northern New Jersey with desperately needed relief during the holiday season, as need magnifies and budgets run out at the end of the calendar year. The 2009 campaign exceeded its fundraising goal of \$400,000, and those in charge hope to again pass the same target. More than 62 percent of the fund's donations came from individual donors during the 2009 campaign, while the remainder was given by corporations. A leader of the business community is selected each year to chair the effort.

"I'm honored to be asked to help out," said Koeppe, 63. "It's important to have societal safety nets during the holiday."

Koeppe is not a stranger to philanthropy. In 1993, he was elected president and chief executive officer of Bell Atlantic-New Jersey, and became president and COO of PSE&G in 2000. As head of the two companies, both based out of Newark, he was familiar with the Holiday Fund's work.

After retiring from PSE&G in 2003, he joined the nonprofit Newark Alliance, where he is currently president and CEO.

He is also a trustee for St. Benedict's Prep School in Newark. In Trenton, Koeppe served as chairman of the New Jersey Schools Construction Corporation under Acting Gov. Richard Codey, and currently holds the position of chairman of the state's Economic Development Authority.

Now a Manasquan resident, Koeppe was educated in Newark, in addition to working there. He received his undergraduate degree from Rutgers-Newark, and earned a J.D. from Seton Hall School of Law as well.

Part of Koeppe's willingness to help North Jerseyans in distress are his ties to Newark.

"I have a strong sense of responsibility in this city," he said. Newark has, "an allure that is hard to put your finger on."

Many of the donations the fund receives annually come from donors outside the coverage area of Essex, Union, Passaic, Hudson, Morris and Bergen counties, proving, Koeppe said, that New Jersey residents statewide have ties to Newark.

"It is the moms and dads who lived and worked in Newark at one time," Koeppe said. "One of the reasons the fund has endured 70 plus years is the people in Newark, from generation to generation, have a sense of community that they remember, that they treasure."

According to Ferruggia, the relationship between Koeppe' and Newark is mutual.

"He's beloved by the entire community," Ferruggia said.

"The one thing you always hear from everybody is, 'what a nice guy.' He's the perfect symbol for the Holiday Fund and what we're trying to achieve."

Ferruggia hopes Koeppe's extensive list of contacts and network of relationships throughout the state will yield donations when the eight-week fundraising campaign kicks off Nov. 14.

But Koeppe's goal is simple.

"Raise as much money as we can," said the chairman.

"It's nickels and dimes and thousand dollar bills."

For more information on the Greater Newark Holiday Fund, including a complete list of the 12 agencies it serves, please visit holidayfund.org