Shell Norco went over the top to support the community this year. The site’s annual HERO Campaign, supporting the United Way of St. Charles and other non-profit organizations brought in more than $1,158,978.

Kicking off the campaign earlier this year with a Jambalaya and Gumbo Cookoff, the site followed a “racing to the top” theme to promote fund-raising efforts with a challenge to break last year’s record-setting goal. “We did it, by $90,829,” said General Manager Brett Woltjen, who announced the results at a site-wide meeting.

“Congratulations and thank you to all those who gave generously to help others in the community,” he continued. “The campaign is about winning, but not because we reached beyond our goal. It’s about winning for a better community and a better quality of life for those who need assistance whether it is for the long-term or short-term help following a natural disaster. Most of the agencies and organizations which benefit from our donations serve St. Charles Parish residents. That is important to Shell Norco as a company and to our employees, who live and work here.”

Contributions from Norco employees were matched two for one by Shell’s Corporate office. “I couldn’t be more proud of our Norco family and our company for the generosity and the commitment to help others,” he said.

Woltjen serves as Co-chair for the 2017 United Way of St. Charles campaign and several Shell Norco employees serve as members of its Board or on committees.
Norco’s Production Team Support Engineer Giselle Medina and Operations Support Engineer Shannon Guo recognize that they are role models for the third-graders in their audience and are happy to get them enthusiastic about science.

“These kid’s eyes just light up when they see all these different experiments,” Medina says. “You can tell they are very curious about how these things are applicable in real life. They get excited, they have a lot of fun, and I’ve heard them whispering about it when they leave saying, ‘That was so cool’.”

“I think this event is a great opportunity to show the kids what made us interested in STEM careers,” Guo adds, “and also for kids to see what the options are to get an exposure to these kinds of concepts.”

Experiments included lighting a light bulb, demonstrating levitation and feeling the force of repulsion between light poles in a magnet. They made a big impression.

“This is very interesting,” said third-grader Dalton, 8. “It teaches us a lot about science and has a bunch of fun activities.”

Sophia, 9, is considering a career change. “I want to be an actress but if that doesn’t work out, I want to be an engineer like them. It’s very cool and interesting to me.”

“I want to go into the U.S. Marine Corps,” says Aaron, 9. “I think I’ll use a lot of science there so I need to learn this stuff.”

Their teachers appreciate that the program shows their students how the concepts they are learning in the classroom will be used in real life.

“I think this is a wonderful program,” explains third-grade teacher Ann Snakenberg. “It gets the kids excited and curious about different concepts and shows that both women and men can be engineers. The kids always get excited when it’s a Science is Fun Friday.”

“We’re starting a unit on magnetism so it will be great to have some background knowledge,” adds third-grade teacher Janelle Vicknair.

“I hope Shell never stops sending volunteers for this program,” Vicknair adds. “It makes a difference in a child’s life to see people from their community involved in their education.”

The fact that Shell offers programs like this makes me like that I work for Shell even more,” Medina states. “Shell tells us all the time that the next generation is our future as a company and I like that they realize that it’s important to reach out and support STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics).”
Here Comes the Parade

Here Comes Christmas

The skies were blue and the weather just right. The day couldn’t have been better for a parade through the streets of Norco. Hundreds of Norco area families and guests from around the region celebrated the great weather and the official arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus – by helicopter – to kickoff the holiday season with Norco Noel, the town’s traditional Christmas parade. In line with this year’s theme Santa Salutes our First Responders, the parade featured fire trucks, ambulances and decorated floats as well as marching bands, walking and dancing groups, area festival queens, horseback riders, the New Orleans Jeep Club and a special float for Santa and Mrs. Claus. Shell Norco has been a major sponsor of the afternoon event since its re-establishment in 2001.
The first time you shake hands in greeting with WENDY HEASLIP you might be a little surprised. The petite engineer has quite a powerful grip.

Spend some time getting to know her and the surprise turns into understanding and admiration. The Shell Norco Air Permit Engineer is a record-setting power lifter. She benches presses at 193 lbs., deadlifts 292 lbs. and squats over 286 lbs. “It’s empowering,” Heaslip explains her fascination with the sport. “There are only so many things in life that empower you. For me, getting stronger is being in control. Powerlifting is challenging and gives me a way to measure the challenges and growth. You always have a goal, whether it is in your daily workout or in a competition.”

She broke records for her age and weight group in her first competition last year and recently broke a national record for her bench press (her own) in her second meet. She is also ranked top nationally for her squat in masters 50-54 age group, 56 kg weight class in the USPA (United States Powerlifting Association).

Not a novice to athletics, Heaslip was a runner before entering the powerlifting world. “I started to read about bone loss in women and the need for weight bearing exercises for bone health,” she says. “That was around the time I was really into photography and noticed that a 70-200 mm zoom lens was getting pretty heavy to handle.”

A fierce competitor, diet and training are top priorities for Heaslip. A typical day includes a breakfast of oatmeal, blueberries and egg whites. She has a mid-morning protein shake and a lunch includes three to four ounces of white fish (sometimes salmon), a potato and vegetables. It’s bread with PB2 as she heads to the gym after work and post-work dinner may include a light protein entrée or cereal. “Sure, I have cheat days,” she smiles. “We do live in Louisiana. But you know, I don’t always feel my best after a cheat day.”

Heaslip trains about 90 minutes a day, five days a week and never less than an hour. Her workout includes lifting, benchpressing and squatting with 20 minutes of cardio work and sprinting at the end of a session at least twice a week. “No matter how tired I am, I push myself to get to the gym because I know how good I will feel after working out,” she explains. “In the last six months I have only had two unscheduled rest days.”

Generally, the only woman in the gym, Heaslip fits right in with the veteran Marines who run Hwy 22 gym on the North Shore where she trains after the work day ends. “The Marines help coach my form and are very generous with their assistance,” she says. “There is a distinct camaraderie among powerlifters. You don’t compete against someone else; you are really competing against yourself as you push toward a heavier lift.”

With less body fat and more muscle than her running days ever yielded, she is no longer worried about bone loss and enjoying the benefits of her reputation as a strong, empowered female with solid family support. “My parents were always supportive of any athletic endeavor I pursued,” Heaslip continues. “My dad ran marathons and I consider him a role model. He was a firm believer in the ab wheel. It worked for him and today I incorporate that equipment in my training program as a tribute to him.”

A native of Baton Rouge, who spent several years in Holland and Belgium during her dad’s assignment there with Dow, she is a 1997 graduate of Louisiana State University. An environmental engineering major, with a minor in chemistry, one of her first assignments after graduation was as a consultant for Shell Norco and Shell Convent and worked with Shell Lubricants. “I hired on as a Shell employee in 2014 at Norco – right back where I first started.”

Interested in learning more about power lifting? Heaslip will be glad to share a few tips and offer much encouragement. She is an ISSA Certified Personal Trainer. “Nothing is better than feeling strong. It’s better than feeling skinny,” she advises. It’s better than that eternal pursuit women have to get back to their pre-birth weight. It is very literally empowering yourself, both physically and mentally to overcome (heavy) obstacles standing in the way of your goals.”

It could have been coincidence, fate or maybe just a little maternal instinct, but it was also a time when Heaslip’s daughter was considering a career as a personal trainer. "My daughter was never athletic however, powerlifting was appealing to her," she says. "After she tried it she excelled at it and holds several national and international records herself. She truly found her sport. After she got her certification I volunteered to work with her and was soon working out and competing myself. It is such fun to see how you continue to gain strength. When I accomplished benching my bodyweight I considered that significant. Now I have almost more than doubled that.”

“For me, getting stronger is being in control. Powerlifting is challenging and gives me a way to measure the challenges and growth. You always have a goal, whether it is in your daily workout or in a competition.”

WENDY HEASLIP
AIR PERMIT ENGINEER, SHELL NORCO
Shell has a strong tradition of supporting the military by hiring veterans and those in the National Guard or Reserves,” said veteran and MILNET Chair Mike Cisneros as he welcomed participants and guests to the Veterans Day event. MILNET is the Shell-sponsored military network for employees. “Today, we are honoring and thanking veterans for their service to our country and extending our support for those who continue to serve.

In a round-table discussion, employees shared their military experiences ranging from active duty in Vietnam and Afghanistan to patrolling New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina. The veterans and active-duty personnel noted not only their commitment to serve the country but also emphasized the extraordinary life experiences and career training.

Special Guest Brigadier General Pete Schneider, who currently serves as the Assistant Adjutant General – Air, Louisiana National Guard, Jackson Barracks, New Orleans, Louisiana thanked the veterans for their years of service commending them for their visible demonstration of patriotism.

The Brigadier General’s diverse military career began with enlistment in the 159th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron as an Aircraft Electrical Systems Specialist in 1984. He received his commission from the Air National Guard’s Academy of Military Science in 1991 shortly after graduating from the University of New Orleans. He served in various staff positions throughout the Louisiana Army and Air National Guard throughout his career, including the command of Airmen and Soldiers task forces during statewide emergencies.

A highlight of the event was the signing of an Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) commitment demonstrating Shell’s commitment to employees who may be called to active duty as well as require time away from the job for training. Norco General Manager Brett Woltjen signed the agreement with Retired Commander Larry L. Jones United States Coast Guard, who represented the ESGR program.

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is a Defense Department program promoting cooperation and understanding between civilian employers and their National Guard and Reserve employees. “Shell is committed to the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve program and to the support of those who serve or have served in the military,” Woltjen said. “We recruit those with military backgrounds and encourage our employees to participate in the Guard and Reserves. And when employees do get called to active duty, they know that Shell will have a job waiting for them when they return.”

This issue of Newsline features the annual listing of veterans and active military as well as employees with military relatives.
Shell takes great pride in acknowledging the many employees who have served or continue to serve their country as members of the United States Armed Forces. In this end-of-the-year issue of Newsline, the Norco Manufacturing Complex recognizes the patriotic employees and relatives of employees who have served or are currently serving as members of the military.

James D. Acosta
Son of James Acosta
Army National Guard • 2001–2009

Marcus Adams
Son of Timmy Adams
Army • 2015–Present

Carl Agurcia
Marine Corps • 2001–2005

Ronald J. Allen
Brother of Donald Allen
Army/Army Reserves • 1970–1977

Angel L. Alvarez Sr.
Father of Angel L. Alvarez
Marine Corps • 1985–1987

Art Armenta
Army • 1986–1993

Jesse Arriaga
Navy/Navy Reserve • 1976–1989

Shawn Arriaga
Son of Jesse Arriaga
Navy • 2006–2011

Nick Avocato
Marines Corps • 1996–2004

Russell Avocato
Brother of Nick Avocato
Navy • 1990–Present

Vincent Avocato
Brother of Nick Avocato
Navy • 2000–2006

Karl Barrett
Marine Corps • 1982–1988

Mark Batiste
Navy • 1987–1995

John Baum
Air National Guard • 2001–Present

Ronda Bennett
Fiancé of Richard Riley
Navy • 2010–2014

Douglas Bergeron
Army • 1989–1992

Eric Billingsley
Army • 1991–1997

Wilbert Blanchard Jr.
Brother of Clifford J. Blanchard
Army • 1971–1974

Wilbert Blanchard Sr.
Father of Clifford J. Blanchard
Army • Served during WWII

Johnnie Bonds
Army National Guard • 1985–1992

Robert Bordelon
Air Force • 1976–1979

Micheal Boyd
Army Reserve National Guard
1989–1995

Tyrell Braud
Marine Corps • 1993–1998

Carl Breaux
Brother of Lynn Breaux
Marines Corps • 1982–1987

Ken Breaux
Army/Army National Guard
1983–1988

Ellery Bridges
Navy/Army/Army Reserves
1988–2005

Damone Brignac
Army • 2001–2004

Ben Canales
Navy • 1984–2008

Gilbert Casimire
Air Force • 1992–1996

Ronald Chiasson
Father of Karl Chiasson
Air Force • 1966–1970

Mike Cisneros
Air Force • 1988–2002

David Cloute
Air National Guard • 1991–2007

Gregory Cooper
Marine Corps • 1978–1983

Gerald Cosentino
Father of Jason Cosentino
Navy • 1969–1974

Christopher Costanza
Army • 2002–2005

Christopher Cousler
Son-in-law of Ronnie Millet
Air Force • 2008–Present

Christopher David
Coast Guard • 1986–1990

Keenan DeFrisco
Son of Roy DeFrisco
Air Force • Currently Serving

Gary Disotell, Jr.
Army National Guard
2010–Present

Wayne Dobard
Air National Guard
1975–1981

Barry Domio
Marine Corps • 1984–2000

Elizabeth Dow
Sister of Landon Melton
Army • 20+ years of service

Jesse Dunn
Navy • 1977–1983

Vince Edwards
Army • 1982–1992

Lorenzo Ennis
Army • 1993–1997

Darren Esteve
Air National Guard
2016–Present

Bill Faulkner Sr.
Father of David Faulkner
Navy • 1950–1972

Francis J. Flood
Father of Gerald Flood
Army WWII • 1941–1945

Anthony Fuentes
Navy/Navy Reserve • 1983–2001

Harold “Johnny” Fussell
Grandfather of Joshua Hinton
Army • 1944–1946

Norman (Trey) Gaubert III
Son of Leslie and Pee Wee Gaubert
Army National Guard • 2002–Present

Cliff Gendron Jr.
Father of Cliff Gendron
Marine Corps • 1954–1956

Charles Georgel
Navy • 1993–1997

J. Kirby Giroir Sr.
Father of John K. Giroir Jr.
Navy • 1945–1946

Wes Gripshover
Navy • 2001–2008

Mark Guarino
Army/Army Reserve 1984–1990

Kita Harry
Army Reserve • 2002–2006

Edward Hernandez
Army National Guard • 2004–2005,

Ed Hetherington
Air Force • 1970–1974

Robinson Hetherington
Father of Ed Hetherington
Air Force • 1948–1955

Robert Hill
Navy • 1963–1967

Kim M. Jackson
Army Reserve • 1991–1995

Stanley Johnson
Army National Guard • 1980–1986
Internships
Open Pathway to Employment

Do you have any experience?

That might be the most difficult question to answer when you apply for a job, especially if you have yet to secure that first position. If you can answer, “I served as an intern in the field,” you can respond with confidence.

Each November, Shell Norco opens applications for process operator and maintenance technician internships, offering a jumpstart to experience and potential full-time employment. Norco Human Resources Account Manager Lizette Vallejo recently explained the internship selection method and the intern experience at a meeting of the Norco Community Advisory Panel.

Vallejo emphasized that prospective interns participate in testing, interviewing and evaluating procedure Shell uses to hire full-time operators and technicians. “It’s a process that can be intense,” she says. “But for those selected, an internship is often the first step in becoming a Shell employee. Interns who successfully complete our 12-week summer program are frequently offered a job contingent on their completion of an accredited degree in Process Technology.”

Information about the internship program and requirements are highlighted in this Newsline article.

The internship application process is open November 1 through 15 each year.