



## "FUNdraising Good Times"

## Oakland native runs fundraising marathon in South Pole

By Mel and Pearl Shaw

What's unique about your organization or institution? Do you know how to take advantage of your uniqueness and your passion and share it with others?



Oakwood University (UNCF) in Huntsville, Alabama, knows how. The university's president Dr. Delbert Baker, born in Oakland, is a 56-year-old marathon runner.

Maybe you are a marathon runner, too. But have you — or anyone you know — used your passion to create a unique international fundraiser?

Baker and Oakwood University have created a Running for Scholarships campaign. The president has pledged to run a marathon in every state of the United States and on every continent under the slogans of "50 States for Students" and "Seven Continents for Students." Each race is underwritten by the Florida Hospital's CREATION Health Model,

allowing every penny raised to go to Oakwood University student scholarships and endowment. Every penny.

The unique fundraising program raises awareness about the importance of health, and it is raising awareness (and funds) for the university and providing Florida Hospital with a unique promotional opportunity. Other organizations and businesses are sponsoring the marathons, and Baker wears their logos on his running outfits. The program is so successful that 16 out of the 17 potential sponsors who were asked to participate said yes.

And these are not "easy" marathons. At the end of December Baker successfully completed the Antarctic Ice Marathon in Antarctica, running in temperatures of -12°C. He finished the race in just under seven hours, clocking in at 6 hours, 53 minutes and 15 seconds.

Baker described the race as "beautiful and brutal," remarking that it was the most difficult event he had ever attempted. He noted that this success was possible only with the inspiration of his wife, Susan, the students, faculty and staff of Oakwood University, and the generous donors who pledged more than \$80,000 in scholarship and endowment funds for the Running for Scholarships Endowment, if Baker completed the race.

With the completion of the Antarctic Ice Marathon, Baker has successfully completed six marathons on seven continents and 28 marathons in 50 states.



Melvin and Pearl Shaw

What is your passion? What is unique about your organization or institution? What about the people you work with? Anything unique about your board chair or CEO?

Put on your thinking cap and get ready for 2009. It is time to be creative, to think outside the box, to partner and to offer value to all parties.

*Mel and Pearl Shaw are the principals of Saad & Shaw – Comprehensive Fund Development Services and the authors of How to Solicit a Gift: Turning Prospects into Donors, available at [www.saadandshaw.com](http://www.saadandshaw.com) or by calling (510) 834-4310. Saad & Shaw provides clients with a unique brand of fundraising that combines marketing with fundraising fundamentals. Clients include hospitals, colleges and nonprofit organizations.* ©