

Corporate Champion Circle: Celebrating those who Support our Community

United Way of the Tri-Valley Area launched its Corporate Champion Circle (CCC) in the summer of 2018. CCC members partner with United Way for one year, support their community, and receive unique marketing benefits. Corporate Champion Circle members contribute at one of three giving levels - Platinum (\$5,000), Gold (\$3,000), and Silver (\$1,500). To recognize CCC members, and to get to know those who are passionate about United Way, we have started a series that profiles these dedicated businesses. Please welcome Merrill's Garage owned and operated by George and Justin Merrill located in Jay, Maine.

In 2016 George Merrill and his son Justin Merrill founded Merrill's Garage (open M-F 7am-4pm). Father and son have worked together since 2004 in the family business, Merrill logging, which formed into George Merrill & Son Logging, LLC in 2008.

Merrill's Garage is founded on the principal of great customer service, treating each customer how they would want to be treated at a place of business. Since opening the garage in 2016, they have added a store front to sell heavy truck parts, steel welding, chainsaw supplies and hardware. Merrill's Garage has 3 full time employees, other than George and Justin and 4 full-time employees for the George Merrill & Son logging business, which both George and Justin still own and operate.

When asked what challenges and opportunities Justin replied, "It is a challenge recruiting and retaining skilled, dedicated and motivated employees, despite a friendly, flexible and incentivized work environment. "We are in a time where work ethic is suffering." Justin talked about the great opportunities of owning a small local business saying, "we pride ourselves on our customer service and personal touch. Justin went on to say, "We are able to provide the mechanical repair/maintenance for our customers at the garage or remotely on site, as we are working with heavy duty trucks that can break down anywhere!" He also went on to talk about the opportunities for small business growth, businesses being able to expand with the current "good economy".

When asked about becoming a CCC member, Justin immediately said "being a member of United Way is another way to give back to the community and it provides a much greater reach, United Way does many great things in the community, it is natural to partner with them."

Justin lives in Jay with his wife Katie, daughter and son that participate in local sports. Justin explains that there are a lot of recreational opportunities in Franklin County, Livermore and Livermore Falls, the community needs to be more informed about them and he is hoping with the help of UWTVA more people will be privy to the opportunities. Justin likes to snowmobile and go "upta" camp in his spare time.