

COMMUNITY



AWARDS

LEADERSHIP

## DAVID L. BLAYDES

### Volunteer of the Year



**David L. Blaydes:** “It’s not about finding the means; it’s about finding the meaning.”

**F**or David Blaydes, providing financial planning to people with cancer is a calling.

“I’m not going to say it’s easy. It’s emotionally draining, but it grabs at your heart,” he said.

Mr. Blaydes, a certified financial planner, is chief executive of Retirement Planners International Inc. in Naperville, Ill.

For more than 10 years, he has provided pro bono services for the Wellness House in Hinsdale, Ill., advising about 500 people a year. The agency offers a comprehensive array of free programs for cancer patients and their families, including classes, counseling, support groups, social events and professional services.

“We help reduce the financial stress so they can focus on their health,” Mr. Blaydes said.

He helps patients and families deal with such issues as being unable to work and losing income, accessing retirement plans without incurring penalties, obtaining disability benefits and estate planning.

Cancer has deeply touched Mr. Blaydes’ life, claiming his two best friends and his mother.

His volunteer work imbues a greater sense of purpose into his professional life.

“In our business, we’re always looking for ways to make more money and get more clients,” he said. “But it’s not just about finding the means; it’s about finding the meaning.”

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