

Frequently Asked Questions



United Way of Jefferson &
North Walworth Counties

Why should I donate to the United Way campaign?

United Way offers a number of advantages to our donors that aren't necessarily available through a donation made directly to another organization or program. We are a strong community partner and collaborator. We work with 28 local nonprofits, multiple school districts and city municipalities, and various community groups and organizations to focus on our mission to "fight for the health, education and financial stability of every person in our communities."

- **Payroll deduction:** Donors have the option to pledge through payroll deduction, which provides a lower, direct impact to the donor while still providing the same high level of support for agencies and community programs and projects.
- **Accountability:** As part of our application and interview process, our United Way (executive director, board of directors, and community volunteers) review full financial documents from every agency. We also review their success stories, growth, and clients served – ensuring that United Way funds are being used effectively and locally. United Way assumes the responsibility of due diligence and provides donors the satisfaction that their contribution will be used in an impactful way.
- **Partnership Benefits:** All United Way partner agencies benefit from support and promotion of their programs and events (social media, website, emails, newsletters). Our annual campaign also allows partner agencies to do less direct fundraising themselves and focus more on their programming.
- **Range of Impact:** Our United Way support extends throughout many areas of our community (nonprofit grants, pillar grants, online volunteer platform, Ride United, United Grove community garden, 2-1-1 resource database). We track the total local users of all of our programs on an annual basis, as well as those directly served locally by the agencies we support. In 2016, the total number of people served by United Way programs and supported agencies was 32,368 (73% of our service population). A donation to United Way is truly "*An Investment for All.*"

What percentage of funds donated is actually allocated for local grants and local programs/projects?

A total of 82% of the 2016 campaign donations (less uncollectible AR pledges*) was allocated directly to LOCAL agencies, pillar grant projects, and United Way supported programs – for a total of \$243,944. The allocation breakdown is listed below (full details are contained in the annual report):

\$207,847	28 local partner nonprofit agencies
\$ 11,597	13 non-partner donor-designated agencies
\$ 21,000	9 community-based pillar grant projects/programs
\$ 3,500	3 United Way supported community programs

What is a "non-partner designated agency?"

Any donor is able to make a designation to any organization they choose, whether it's a United Way partner agency or not. Partner agencies are the organizations that apply for, and are awarded, quarterly grant funding. The 13 non-partner designated agencies we provided funding to for 2017 received that funding as a result of a specific request by a donor(s). Of those 13 designated non-partners, five of them were still local organizations.

Are funds ever allocated outside of the communities United Way serves?

The only instance when grant funds are allocated outside of our communities is when specifically designated by an individual donor (as noted in the "non-partner" explanation).

Can I designate my donation to an organization not listed on the United Way pledge form?

Yes. A donor can designate their donation to any organization. Many United Ways apply a processing fee for designations made to non-partner agencies. Our United Way only applies that fee (10%) to designations made outside of the communities we serve. Any local designation is honored and distributed without a fee.

What is our local United Way's relationship with United Way Worldwide?

Each year we pay 1% of our campaign total in dues to UWW to maintain our membership. We receive an incredible amount of support and resources from our membership – from education opportunities for our staff, to campaign marketing materials, to access to a nationwide database to learn from other United Ways our size. The relationship with UWW is one of support for our United Way, but they are not at all involved in the day-to-day operations of our organization, how we run our campaign, or our grant allocation process – our staff, board of directors and volunteers (all LOCAL people) make those decisions. So although we are affiliated with a national organization, our organization operates on a local level – and the funds we raise in our communities stay within our communities!

What effort does the United Way make to keep expenses low?

We understand the importance of keeping our overhead and expenses low and constantly evaluate our costs to see where we can save so that we can increase our support as much as possible. Our local office is run by a staff of one and our office is located in a discounted, shared nonprofit rental space. A number of local businesses offer in-kind discounts on many needed services (accounting, web development, and audit). Also, our affiliation with United Way of Wisconsin and United Way Worldwide (dues = 1.4% of the total budget) provides access to heavily discounted marketing and educational materials. We also receive annual corporate sponsorship funding to help support our campaign marketing efforts.

How often will our local United Way ask me to donate to their organization?

Our United Way runs one annual campaign (approximately September – January). We have other fundraising opportunities throughout the year (business hosted cook-outs, annual Chili Cook-off, etc.) but we directly solicit individuals and businesses once a year during our campaign.

Are there ways I can get involved with United Way outside of a campaign donation?

Absolutely! We understand that not all individuals are in a position to financially contribute to the United Way, which is why United Way focuses on the mission “Give. Advocate. Volunteer.” Our communities need support well beyond strictly financial investments.

- **Invest in advocacy:** Promote United Way and our partner agencies and encourage others to get involved whenever possible.
- **Invest in volunteerism:** Utilize our online volunteer platform (www.volunteermain.com) to find volunteer opportunities with local organizations and nonprofits – one volunteer hour is the equivalent of a donation of \$23.06!
- **Invest your green thumb at our United Grove Community Garden:** Our community garden has space for approximately 45 local individuals every spring.
- **Invest in our grant process:** Every February, we look for 10-12 community members to serve on our agency grant interview teams.
- **Invest your taste buds at our Chili Cook-off:** Volunteers will be needed for the annual event (November 11, 2017) for set-up, clean-up, judging, and food/ticket sales.
- **Shop on AmazonSmile:** Anytime you shop on Amazon, head to their “Smile” site and set-up our United Way as your charity of choice. We will receive a portion of your purchase donated to us from Amazon. Our direct link: <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/39-6046361>

Please visit our website at www.uwjnwc.com for further information about our organization and who we serve.

Any additional questions or concerns can be directed to Megan Hartwick, United Way executive director at unitedway@idcnet.com or 920.563.8880.

**Less uncollectible AR pledges refers to the payroll deduction pledges (average of 10%) that are ultimately not received by United Way due to employees leaving their job, revising their donation amount, or being terminated.*