



**UNITED IS THE WAY™**

**2026-2027**

**EMPLOYEE CAMPAIGN COORDINATOR GUIDE**



**UNITED WAY**  
Johnson and  
Washington Counties



United Way of Johnson  
and Washington Counties

160 Southgate Ave Suite A  
Iowa City, IA 52240

[UnitedWayJWC.org](http://UnitedWayJWC.org)



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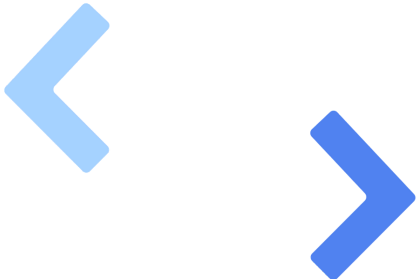
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**Thank you** for serving as an Employee Campaign Coordinator (ECC) for the '26 - '27 United Way of Johnson & Washington Counties Campaign for Our Community!

As an ECC, you have the unique opportunity to harness the generosity, talent and energy of your workplace to give back to our community and help United Way's efforts in building a stronger, healthier community.

The information in this guide will help you plan and execute a smooth, successful United Way campaign. We encourage you to take advantage of the materials we've provided and know your United Way is always ready to support you!



**Thank you for Uniting in Purpose and joining our United Way Team**

# WHAT DOES UNITED WAY DO?

## COMMUNITY NEEDS AND THE UNITED WAY IMPACT



### COMMUNITY NEED PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING AND SAFETY

Many local residents struggle to access essential health care. Over 1 in 5 Johnson County residents lack a primary care provider, and 17% haven't seen a dentist in more than two years, often due to cost. Meanwhile, many are food insecure, and pantry usage is at record highs. Serious mental illness is a leading contributor to homelessness and emergency system use.

United Way's Health and Safety initiatives, along with our investments in a variety of community partners, are committed to making a positive impact on the emotional and physical well-being of the whole person.

### MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH CONCERNS AMONG ADULTS

Depression  
Frequent mental distress  
Fair/poor health status  
Frequent physical distress

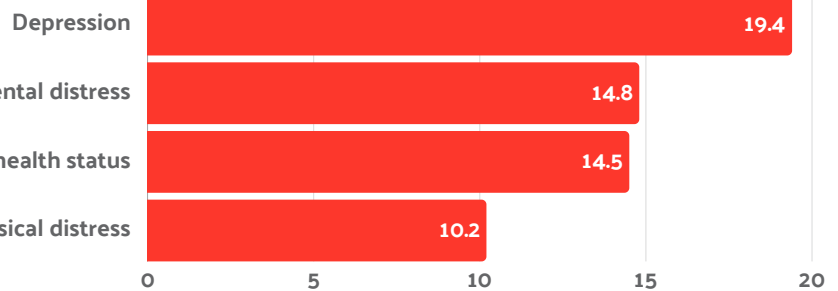
### Barriers to a Healthy Community



the highest share of **UNINSURED PEOPLE** are working adults



**11.5% ARE FOOD INSECURE**



### UNITED WAY IMPACT

United Way improves community health by funding programs that expand access to dental, mental, and primary care. We support school-based clinics, mobile health units, and food security programs. We advocate for policies that ensure everyone has the resources they need to thrive.

### We invest in Partner Agencies meeting community health needs:

- Abbe Center for Community Mental Health
- Domestic Violence Intervention Program (DVIP) & Rape Victim Advocacy Program (RVAP)
- Geriatric and Special Needs Dental Program
- Healthy Kids: School-Based Health Clinics
- Iowa City Free Medical & Dental Clinic
- Community & Family Resources
- Horizons: Meals on Wheels of Johnson County
- National Alliance on Mental Illness – Johnson Co.
- Aging Services, Inc./Pathways Adult Day Health Center
- Visiting Nurse Association (VNA)
- Joan Buxton School Children's Aid
- United Action for Youth (UAY)
- Table to Table
- CommUnity Crisis Services and Food Bank
- Coralville Community Food Pantry
- North Liberty Community Pantry
- Free Lunch Program

**14**  
Funded  
Partners

Provide food or meals as a part of their programming adding up to 5.4 million meals served

**13**  
Funded  
Partners

Provided free or low-cost mental, physical, or dental health care services

# WHAT DOES UNITED WAY DO?

## COMMUNITY NEEDS AND THE UNITED WAY IMPACT



### COMMUNITY NEED EARLY LEARNING, SCHOOL READINESS, BASIC NEEDS

Too many children in Johnson and Washington Counties are starting school behind and facing barriers to success. Nearly half of 3- and 4-year-olds are not enrolled in preschool. More than a third of local students rely on free or reduced-price meals, and nearly one-third of 8th graders aren't proficient in math. Youth in rural areas and those with disabilities experience significantly lower graduation rates.

United Way volunteers create various activities for early learners that are then distributed to children through kindergarten orientations, literacy nights, and other interventions in high-poverty schools.

### Educational Barriers



READING PROFICIENCY



LANGUAGE

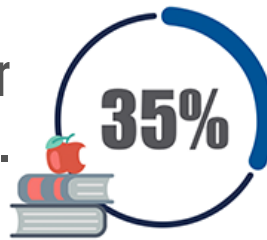


DIGITAL DIVIDE



DISABILITY, POVERTY, & HUNGER

35% of local students qualify for Free or Reduced-priced meals.



Experienced homelessness last school year

### UNITED WAY IMPACT

United Way advances Youth Opportunity by investing in early learning, mentoring, and academic support while advocating for equitable access to education, family resources, and career readiness programs that set children up for lifelong success.

We invest in Partner Agencies providing youth opportunities:

- 4C's Community Coordinated Child Care
- The Arc of Southeast Iowa
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Johnson County
- Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois
- Hawkeye Area Community Action Program (HACAP)
- Healthy Kids: School-Based Health Clinics
- Joan Buxton School Children's Aid
- The Housing Fellowship
- Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County
- United Action for Youth (UAY)

United Way Programs have supported:

**2,009** Students Served  
AT READY, SET, SCHOOL

**789**  
EDUCATIONAL KITS DISTRIBUTED

**94** Children went to  
Summertime on Scholarship

# WHAT DOES UNITED WAY DO?

## COMMUNITY NEEDS AND THE UNITED WAY IMPACT



### COMMUNITY NEED FINANCIAL SECURITY, AFFORDABLE HOUSING, CHILDCARE

As the cost of basic needs outpaces wages, 41% of Johnson and Washington County residents cannot afford the basic cost of living. The average cost of infant care exceeds tuition at the University of Iowa, while child care workers are among the lowest wage earners of any profession. Housing costs are high: over 50% of renters are cost-burdened.

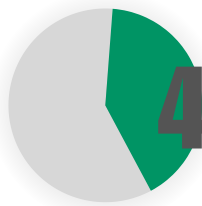
At United Way, our commitment to community success extends to fulfilling the basic needs of individuals and families. Through partner investment and a range of initiatives, we aim to bridge gaps to provide essential supports to all.

### Financial Barriers



4 out of 5 of the area's most common jobs pay below the survival budget

**78.5%** of children have all parents working



**41%** People in Johnson and Washington Counties cannot afford the cost of living.

### UNITED WAY IMPACT

United Way promotes Financial Stability by investing in programs that support affordable housing, child care, and job training, while advocating for policies that remove barriers and help families build long-term economic security.

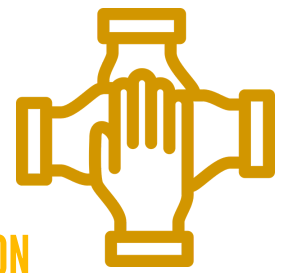
## We invest in Partner Agencies meeting family and individual needs:

- CommUnity Crisis Services and Food Bank
- Coralville Community Food Pantry
- Free Lunch Program
- Goodwill of the Heartland
- The Housing Fellowship
- Iowa Legal Aid
- Iowa Valley Habitat for Humanity
- North Liberty Community Pantry
- Shelter House
- Table to Table



# WHAT DOES UNITED WAY DO?

## COMMUNITY NEEDS AND THE UNITED WAY IMPACT



### COMMUNITY NEED

### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, TRANSPORTATION, CONNECTION

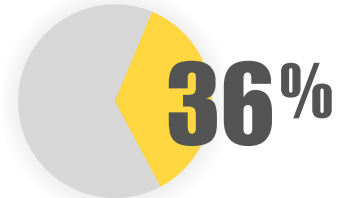
From severe weather to social isolation, many local households face increasing threats to their stability. One in five adults report feeling socially isolated. Households without reliable internet or transportation are at risk during emergencies. Newcomers may lack language access or knowledge of local resources. And climate-related disasters—from floods to winter storms—are happening more frequently.

At United Way, our commitment to community resiliency starts with our leadership. We bring together nonprofits, emergency managers, and neighbors to plan for and respond to crises.

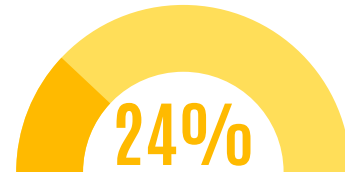


There are an average of **7** Billion-dollar disasters in Iowa each year compared to 3 per year in the last decade

### Barriers to Community Resilience



**36%**  
of adults in our region report feeling socially isolated



**24%**  
of residents say the cost of electricity prevents them from using their air conditioning

### UNITED WAY IMPACT

United Way improve Community Resiliency through our leadership of COAD and our 211 helpline, we ensure communities are supported before, during, and after emergencies. We also build social cohesion by investing in neighborhood hubs and culturally accessible resources that strengthen local networks.

We invest in community-wide programs that builds community resiliency:



**1,061 Calls Answered**

**15,000+ Volunteer Hours**

United Way mobilized volunteers to meet local needs and strengthen our community.

UWJWC supported 26 individuals with immediate care & resources after an apartment fire in 2025

**26**  
INDIVIDUALS

### **BLP** Board Leadership Program

The Board Leadership Program had **28 graduates** in our first year, and empowers emerging leaders for nonprofit board service. We host an annual **Board Fair** that connects them with causes to match their passion and expertise.

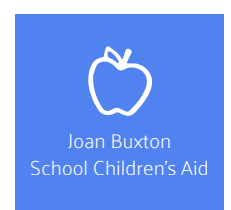
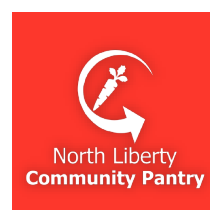
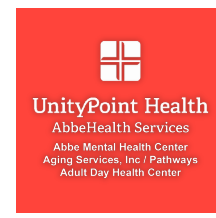
# PARTNER AGENCIES

## OF UNITED WAY OF JOHNSON & WASHINGTON COUNTIES

- 4Cs Community Coordinated Child Care
- The Arc of Southeast Iowa
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Johnson County
- Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa & Western Illinois
- Hawkeye Area Community Action Program
- Joan Buxton School Children's Aid
- Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County
- United Action for Youth
- CommUnity Crisis Services and Food Bank
- Coralville Community Food Pantry
- Free Lunch Program
- Goodwill of the Heartland
- The Housing Fellowship
- Iowa Legal Aid
- Iowa Valley Habitat for Humanity
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- Geriatric & Special Needs Dental Program
- Healthy Kids: School-Based Health Clinics
- Iowa City Free Medical & Dental Clinic
- Horizons: Meals on Wheels of Johnson County
- National Alliance on Mental Illness - Jo. Co.
- Aging Services/Pathways Adult Day Center
- Visiting Nurse Association



**UNITED WAY**  
Johnson and  
Washington Counties



# EMPLOYEE CAMPAIGN COORDINATOR BASICS

## CAMPAIGN TIMELINE

### 6 Weeks Before

- Attend ECC Training, hosted by United Way
- Review previous campaign's performance, determine opportunities & challenges
- Meet with your CEO to confirm their commitment
- Recruit and train a campaign team to help you run the campaign and plan fundraising events
- Develop campaign goals and strategies with your campaign team
- Develop campaign timeline, dates, and goals, report these dates to UWJWC

### 4 Weeks Before

- Plan your campaign theme and special events
- Set dates for employee meetings and agency tours or visits
- Contact United Way about speakers for kick off or employee meetings
- Download/Request digital support materials, including digital landing page, web-based pledge forms and brochures/one-pagers for all employees

### 2 Weeks Before

- Promote your campaign special events, meetings, and/or activities
- Conduct a leadership giving campaign (one of the best ways to increase the success of your overall campaign if through leadership giving of \$1,000+)
- Send communications from the CEO endorsing support and announcing the campaign

### Kickoff Celebration

- Launch your campaign at a group meeting or kick off event!
- Make sure all employees receive materials & have an opportunity to give in-person or online
- Conduct special events and activities
- Publicize interim campaign results and encourage accomplishing organizational goals
- Send follow-up emails every few days to keep up enthusiasm and build awareness; include community facts and success stories
- Have fun!

### After Your Campaign

- Wrap up campaign
- Calculate results and submit payroll numbers and any final reports to United Way
- Announce results to your team
- Ensure pledge payments are paid in full or set up for payroll deduction within HR or Payroll Dept.
- Thank all contributors with a celebration event, letter, email
- Conduct a campaign debrief with your team and develop a written summary for next year



# EMPLOYEE CAMPAIGN COORDINATOR BASICS

## COMMUNICATIONS & RESOURCES

**Consistent and clear messaging for your employees is key to a successful campaign.**

We've compiled sample messages and resources to help you throughout the entire campaign. Visit the Campaign Toolkit on our website to share our Campaign video, brochure, and infographics and use and customize throughout your campaign. The Campaign Toolkit also gives you access to additional digital support materials including videos, logos, and more!

### Campaign Materials

- Campaign Videos
- Brochures
- Pledge Forms
- Corporate Pledge Form
- PowerPoint Presentation

**Sign up for our eNewsletter!**

[unitedwayjwc.org/newsletter-signup](http://unitedwayjwc.org/newsletter-signup)

### Communications

- Campaign Kickoff Announcement
- List of United Way Community Initiatives
- Special Event List
- #Why I Give Card
- Social Media Templates
- Post-Campaign Thank You emails
- Email to Prospective Leadership Donors

### Company Website

**United Way Website:** We can create a digital home for your campaign. If requested, your company will have a private landing page with a webform pledge card! Visit [UnitedWayJWC.org](http://UnitedWayJWC.org)

### Workplace Campaign Support Team



**Kaila Rome**

Director of Development & Marketing

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@uwayjwc



@united-way-jwc



@UnitedWayJWC

# EMPLOYEE CAMPAIGN COORDIATOR BASICS

## EVENTS AND INCENTIVES

Campaign-focused events and incentives can be the keys to generating enthusiasm and interest among employees. Here are some fun ways to bring people together to increase participation and dollars raised.

### Suggestions and Ideas:

Food brings People Together! Whether you cookout or cook-off your initial campaign meeting needs to grab your employees attention and encourage them to attend.



#### Host a Cook-Off Fundraiser!

Ask your co-workers to bring in their favorite crockpot recipe. For a donation, employees can fill their plates and vote for their favorite dish. Bragging rights all around for the winning recipe.

#### A Penny Saved is a Penny Raised



Host a coin challenge - vote for your department with pennies, and subtract from others by adding dimes, nickels, and quarters!



#### Make it a fundraiser – with Team Sports!

Get the team on the field with a company kickball, pickleball, bowling, or bags tournament! Charge a team entry fee, boost funds by selling food or beverages, offer raffle prizes, organize a 50/50 drawing, or collecting donations from spectators cheering on the teams.

#### Make a Match

One of the most successful ways to grow your campaign is to offer a corporate match for employee giving. Sharing in the investment means sharing in the impact!



#### Containers for a Cause

Turn recycling into community impact! Place collection bins in your breakroom and encourage employees to recycle cans and bottles through your organization's Can Shed account. Direct the proceeds to United Way to support local programs. It's an easy, sustainable fundraiser that can continue year-round, not just during campaign season.



**can shed**  
plastic · aluminum · glass

## INCENTIVE IDEAS

Consider incentives for employees who:

- Make their pledge (portal or paper) on the first day, or during the kickoff event
- Give generously at the leadership level (\$1,000+)
- Donate for the first time
- Increase their previous year's donation

## OTHER IDEAS

Casual dress day, VIP parking spaces, PTO days (half or full), shirts/hats/other company apparel, one week of coffee delivery by the CEO, raffle baskets, awards, gift certificates to community businesses, event admission passes.

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## VOLUNTEER IDEAS

Workplace volunteering boosts your reputation, engages customers, and motivates employees, driving positive community change through convenient projects.

Onsite or at-home opportunities are impactful for volunteer groups and pair well with conferences, corporate settings & campuses. These often require funding for sustainability.

### SUPPORT OUR INITIATIVES AND PARTNERS BY ORGANIZING A FUNDRAISING EVENT

At home, with your co-workers, or alongside your family and neighbors, you can contribute to all of our initiatives, or choose one you are passionate about, by hosting your very own fundraising event. Try a bake sale, carwash, plant sale, or unleash your creativity to devise a unique concept!

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#### EDUCATION & SCHOOL READINESS

Join us in shaping success from the ground up. Research highlights third-grade reading proficiency as a predictor of academic achievement. United Way is committed to preparing our youngest community members for success. With varied volunteer projects, you can be instrumental in turning this vision into reality. Our initiatives cover Kindergarten orientation, literacy nights, and interventions in high-poverty schools, creating a direct impact on young lives.

**Literacy Kits** combine children's books and interactive activities to bring the joy of reading to life.

**Cost: \$8/kit**

**Alphabet Flash Cards** knowledge of letter names & shapes is a strong predictor of success in learning to read.

**Cost: \$3/kit**

**Magic Reading Carpets** vibrant Magic Reading Carpets inspire young readers and create mobile book nooks that spark excitement for books and reading.

**Cost: \$6/kit**

**Math & STEM Kits** diverse Math Kits foster interactive learning, while STEM Coding Kits use playful activities to introduce coding and problem-solving.

**Cost: \$4-\$6/kit**

**Organize a Book Drive:** boosts book access for young readers, collecting year-round and during our April event to inspire reading passion.

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**Cards for Homebound Seniors** A simple card holds the power to bring joy to someone's day. This idea emphasizes the significance of heartfelt gestures. Receiving a holiday or cheerful card can be a source of profound comfort for homebound seniors, reminding them that they're not alone and that someone cares.

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#### PHYSICAL, MENTAL & EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING & SAFETY

Your involvement in United Way's Social & Emotions Support and Health Access initiatives is an investment in the well-being of individuals across our community.

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# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## VOLUNTEER IDEAS

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### FINANCIAL STABILITY, SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES

At United Way, our commitment to community well-being extends to fulfilling the basic needs of individuals & families. Through a range of initiatives, we aim to bridge gaps and provide essential support where it matters most. Additionally, we recognize the importance of family moments and celebrations. Through our initiatives, we strive to uplift families in times of joy & create memorable experiences that resonate for a lifetime.

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**Hygiene Kits** provide basic self-care items like shampoo, soap, and deodorant to individuals facing poverty or crisis. This volunteer activity helps maintain their hygiene, dignity, and mental health.

**Cost: \$10/kit**

**Organize a Collection** host a collection drive to distribute vital resources in the community—essentials like winter wear, hygiene items, school supplies & more.

**Birthday Bash Bags** ensures every child's birthday is special by providing gift bags filled with party essentials, supporting families in shelters & food pantries.

**Cost: \$14/kit**

**Holiday Adopt-a-Family** unites partners to support families in need, spreading joy & making the season brighter.

**Cost: Varies by family**

### Local Volunteering: Connect with a Non-Profit Partner

United Way's Local Volunteering initiatives provide you with a direct path to creating positive change in your community. Whether you're looking for individual or group opportunities, UWJWC's team will connect you with meaningful ways to get involved.

### Volunteer Website: Your Gateway to Giving Back

Explore the breadth of local volunteer opportunities through United Way's online volunteer matching website. This platform features a comprehensive listing of one-time, ongoing, and event-based volunteer roles offered by nonprofits and organizations in your area. Visit [volunteer.unitedwayjwc.org](https://volunteer.unitedwayjwc.org) to discover how you can lend a hand where it's needed most.

### Volunteer Express Newsletter: Stay Informed, Make a Difference

Stay up to date with our community's pressing needs for one-time and event volunteers through United Way's monthly Volunteer Express Newsletter. This resource equips you with the latest information on ways to get involved and contribute meaningfully. [Sign up or view today](#) to stay informed about opportunities that align with your interests and availability.

### Group Projects: Uniting for a Greater Impact

Volunteering becomes even more rewarding when you do it together. Our United Way Volunteer Center simplifies group volunteering by matching substantial projects with groups. Whether your group is small or large – be it a corporation, a civic group, a place of worship, a public school, or a neighborhood association – we're here to connect you with impactful projects that bring people together for a common cause.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## What happens to my donation?



**Your donation will be multiplied with other contributions** and the total will be distributed across vetted agencies and collaborative initiatives to address critical community needs.

UWJWC is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and all donations are tax deductible. Community volunteers provide oversight of the investment of campaign funds, focused on meeting community needs. The United Way Community Impact Council reviews each funding request and makes recommendations for funding to UWJWC's Board of Directors.

## Is it possible to designate my gift?



**YES!** Pledge forms give you the option to designate your gift to a specific cause which you are passionate about or to designate to a local partner agency, a United Way serving another community, or to any other 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

Each designation must be a minimum of \$50. Unless otherwise designated, donations will be distributed as grants to our 28 partner agencies and go to fund United Way programs and initiatives. United Way provides oversight of the donation to confirm the organization is in compliance and has received a 501(c)3 nonprofit status determination from the IRS. A 15.5% admin fee is taken to process each designated gift.

## Why should I give to the United Way over giving directly to an agency?



Giving to United Way means your **gift goes further and does more**. United Way takes a broader, more strategic approach by identifying the most pressing needs across our entire community—then bring together partners, resources, and solutions to address root causes, not just symptoms.

United Way is the only nonprofit in our area that assesses community needs, invests in high-impact programs, and holds partners accountable for results. Your gift supports a coordinated network of services that no single agency can provide alone.

A gift to United Way is a gift to **everyone** in our community. It's how you can help the most people and make the greatest difference.

# UNITED IS THE WAY™

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## Does the United Way have an Endowment Fund?



**Yes, United Way Endowment Funds are held at the Community Foundation of Johnson County.**

**United Way Endowment Fund** – to build for the sustainable future of operations and community impact activities

**United Way Entrepreneurial Fund** – to build the pool of grant funds for innovative approaches to solving community priorities and addressing emerging issues

**Summerships Endowment Fund** - to provide scholarships for low and middle income youth to participate in out of school time programs and camps

**The Washington County Valentine Education Fund** - this fund supports education programs and resources for Washington County students and schools.

## What are admin & fundraising fees?



Based on the most recent IRS 990, **United Way's operating expense are 16% of total revenue, meaning 84 cents of every dollar goes directly to the community or designation.** This is competitive with the top 100 nonprofits in the U.S. and well below the industry standard & recommendations from the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance and Charity Navigator. United Way of Johnson & Washington Counties has earned its sixth consecutive 4 Star Charity Navigator rating. United Way keeps a close eye on expenses while making sure we have the talent, expertise, and systems to raise and invest resources for maximum impact.

## Is United Way of Johnson & Washington Counties a local organization?



**YES!** Volunteer community leaders form the governing Board of Directors of UWJWC, and each Board member serves on at least one of these Board Committees – Community Investment, Resource Development, Internal Operations & Finance. There are only **6 staff members** employed at UWJWC.

Volunteers also participate in making funding decisions and providing oversight of funded organizations through their service on the Community Impact Council. Local volunteers also provide leadership on the United Way Campaign Advancement Teams and Campaign Cabinet. **All funds raised locally, stay locally.**

# UNITED IS THE WAY™