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WHY GIVE TO UNITED WAY?

You may be asked this question or want to write about it to your fellow co-workers. Here is a quick list of 10 reasons why donating to United Way is an effective way to impact other’s lives:

10 Ways Your Gift to United Way of Monroe County Creates Change

1. **Your gifts create results.** Gifts to United Way help people become self-sufficient members of our community. Your support helps United Way address today’s needs and work to reduce dependency on safety net needs in the days ahead.

2. **Your gifts stay local.** Contributions stay in our community. People living in Monroe, Owen and Greene counties are the recipients of funding through United Way, either through direct support of United Way member agencies or through special outreach projects, programs and initiatives.

3. **Your gifts help the most people.** Your gifts to United Way have a broad outreach. When combined with those of your friends and neighbors, they touch 1 in 3 people in our area each year.

4. **You put the “fun” in fundraising.** United Way campaigns can be a fun, morale-building effort among your peers and co-workers and are used as team-strengthening exercises, which benefit not only your workplace, but others outside of your organization.

5. **Your gifts bring people together.** Gifts to United Way bring together business, government, education, and social services to address the most pressing community needs for the long term. Your gifts create a bridge for those who need a little help toward a better future for themselves and their children.

6. **Your gifts inspire others to do more.** Feel good about giving, knowing that your donations directly help those who need help the most. We all want to know that we’re making a difference and helping create change. This is the perfect avenue for building a sense of community and purpose.

7. **Your gifts demonstrate your care about our community.** Your gifts help United Way focus on people and issues close to home: food, housing, health care, emergency services, children and youth, employment, people with disabilities, and older adults in our three-county region - in other words, the big issues. Your gifts demonstrate your own commitment to the health of our community.

8. **Your gifts are used efficiently.** Low administrative and fundraising costs mean more money goes to services in the community. Donations are wisely invested in high-quality, results-oriented programs through the social service sector, and projects reach people in high need areas of the tri-county region when emergency situations arise.

9. **Your gifts create a partnership.** You want your neighbors to enjoy the quality of life that comes from a caring community. For more than 60 years, United Way of Monroe County has been here, working in partnership with others in the community to improve people’s lives.

10. **It’s the right thing to do.** Simply put, giving to United Way is the right thing to do for the long-term health of our community. Your contributions ensure that people have an opportunity to break the cycles of poverty, violence, and hopelessness and replace them with self-sufficiency, security, and hope.
THE IMPACT OF YOUR DONATION

United Way and our 24 partner agencies do so many things and touch so many lives, sometimes it’s hard to cover it all! Below are a few examples of how your gifts create change.

- $2/week can provide a person recovering from substance misuse disorder with 8 case management sessions
- $3/week can provide short-term shelter and supportive services for a person experiencing homelessness
- $4 a week can provide a family with high-quality childcare for a week
- $5 a week can provide 6 weeks of family mental health therapy
- $10 a week can provide a backpack of weekend food to a low-income child for a year

For more examples, visit our website: www.monroenitedway.org/dollarimpact.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who runs United Way?
A volunteer Board of Directors and professional staff ensure that United Way is working effectively and efficiently to improve people’s lives. Hundreds of local volunteers help keep United Way a dynamic, growing, and responsive organization.

How much of my contribution is actually applied to program services?
Administrative and fundraising costs are kept very low because of the large number of volunteers involved in raising and allocating funds. In 2018, this allowed 88¢ of every dollar to be used for programming. Without United Way support, agencies would need to spend more of their own money and energy on their respective fundraising initiatives.

How are campaign funds distributed?
The United Way Vision Council, consisting of United Way Board members and other volunteers, reviews applications from member agencies that seek funding to support community programs. These volunteers use priorities from the most recent community needs assessment to decide where funds can have the greatest impact.

What is the value of giving to United Way when I can donate directly to an agency?
With over 60 years of experience in Monroe County, United Way focuses on people and the issues close at hand: food, housing, health care, substance misuse treatment, emergency services, children and youth, employment, earnings stability, and older adult programs. Services funded by United Way have a broad reach – touching 1 in 3 community members each year.

When you give to United Way of Monroe County’s Community Action Fund, you invest in high-quality, results-oriented programs managed by United Way’s member agencies. Nonprofits are also able to use United Way allocations from the Community Action Fund as matching funds for state, federal, and private grants. Because our member agencies don't need to spend as much money fundraising, more money goes into community services.
United Way also offers resources, materials, professional development opportunities, and technical support to strengthen the ability of all local agencies to serve their clients most effectively. Low administrative costs here and reduced fundraising costs at our member agencies mean that 98% of funds raised stay in the community.

What records should a donor keep to meet IRS rules?
Campaign donors should keep a copy of the completed pledge form for their tax records. They will also need a copy of their pay stub, W-2, or similar document showing the amount withheld and paid. They should consult their tax advisor for more information. United Way will send a receipt for all cash, check, credit card, and stock donations over $250, and gratefully acknowledge all pledged gifts.

Can I give to the Community Action Fund, but exclude a certain agency?
Yes, fundraising records are carefully kept and audited. Whether donating online or completing a printed pledge card, you can specify which agency should not receive your donation.

What can I say to my co-worker who doesn’t want to give to United Way because Planned Parenthood is a member agency?
Planned Parenthood provides valuable health services to the community, and United Way supports only their health and education services: cancer screenings, infertility counseling, teen peer education, and basic health services such as diabetes testing. The majority of Planned Parenthood’s clients live at or below 150% of the federally mandated poverty level. On the pledge form, donors can indicate that their funds should not be distributed to a particular member agency.

How much of a donation stays local?
Over 98% of your gift remains in your community helping families, neighbors, and co-workers. We voluntarily pay dues to our state and national associations in exchange for valuable information and referral services, consultation, supplies, trainings, and grant opportunities. Networking with other United Ways allows us to share ideas, materials, and other resources. As always, all of our decisions are made locally by staff members and a volunteer board of directors who know this community and its needs.

Have additional questions? Visit our full FAQ’s online at: www.monroeunitedway.org/faq
DONOR CHOICE QUESTIONS

Can I designate a particular agency to receive my donation?
The Community Action Fund helps donors address a wide range of community issues with one gift. As an additional option, United Way offers a Donor Choice program, which allows contributors to direct all or part of their gift to a specific member or non-member agency or a United Way in another county. Directions are on pledge cards. In order to keep processing costs low for our donors, designated gifts must be at least $25 per organization or they will be directed to the United Way Community Action Fund.

What are the standards for member and non-member agencies?
Member agencies must meet strict standards of governance, program effectiveness, and financial accountability; they are evaluated regularly as part of a volunteer-driven certification process. Agencies that aren't members are not monitored by United Way, but we do verify their tax-exempt status.

Does United Way assess processing fees?
There is no fee for member agencies to receive designations. Non-member organizations are assessed a 12% fee on all donations to reimburse United Way's processing expenses. This is very low compared to most agencies' internal fundraising costs, and we establish eligibility at no charge. Non-cash designations are reduced by an allowance, currently 6%, to account for uncollectible pledges.

What types of non-member agencies are eligible to receive donor designations?
Organizations must have Section 501(c)(3) designation from the IRS; have local impact or a local presence; work in the areas of human service, the arts, or the environment; and be able to document a minimum one-year record of service. Federations, religious congregations, government units, and capital drives are not eligible. If the organization is not eligible for designations, United Way staff will discuss other funding options with the donor.
CAMPAIGN TOOLKIT

Visit our online toolkit to find electronic copies of most of our campaign materials. You can also find sample campaign emails, social media posts, web banners, photos, logos, printable thank you notes, and more! Visit www.monroecountyunitedway.org/toolkit.

United Way supplies promo tools in your campaign bag, which is provided to you in advance of your campaign:

- Posters
- Pledge cards
- United Way t-shirts for your ECC/Campaign Team – upon request with sized indicated
- United Way t-shirts for promotional giveaways – upon request with sized indicated
- Thank-you cards

United Way provides promo tools from our Online Toolkit, which can be accessed as needed:

- Table tents
- Thank-you cards
- Sample social media posts
- Sample campaign emails
- Other items by request or as available
SPECIAL EVENTS & CAMPAIGN THEMES

THEMES
You can personalize your campaign to your workplace or establish a theme that generates related activities or special events. By involving more employees, your company’s campaign becomes their campaign and creates a fun activity to look forward to each year. The options are endless, but here are a few to get your creativity going.

Be a Lifesaver
Write “Be a Lifesaver, Please Give” on a sticker and wrap it around a roll of Lifesavers. Continue the theme throughout the campaign by providing facts and real-life stories about people who have been helped by the “lifesavers” in the community.

Chip in for United Way
Place chocolate chip cookies on employees’ desks with a note attached announcing the start of the campaign and asking employees to “Chip in for United Way.”

United Way 007
Clues are given to employees in the form of riddles. The department of the individual who figures out all the riddles receives a prize at the end of the campaign.

SPECIAL EVENTS
Special Events are a great way to raise awareness and extra funds while having fun in the workplace. Below is a short collection of ideas, but the sky is the limit so think about what would interest your co-workers.

Auction
Send out an email message to employees announcing an auction and outlining the items available. You could also post flyers with the same information, so they have a constant reminder. Ask employees to donate items or ask your generous vendors for goods or services. Determine what items will be auctioned off and how long the auction will last. Possible auction items could include football tickets, symphony tickets, concert tickets, dinner for two, round of golf, etc.

Candy Jar Guessing
Fill a jar with candy or other items and display it in the office or employee break room. For $1 per chance, the employees can guess how many items are in the jar. At the end of your campaign, the employee that has the closest guess wins the jar and its contents.

Casual Day
Sell Casual Day badges that allow employees to dress casually on certain days. Employees purchase badges for $8 for a week or $2 a day. The badges carry an expiration date, depending on the amount donated.
**Chili Cook-off**
Have a chili cook-off for all those people who think they make the best chili. Let the judges decide who has the Best in the Midwest. Offer prizes for the winner and gifts for the other participants. Why should the judges be the only ones enjoying the feast? Charge admission and have a chili lunch for your company’s campaign kick-off. Another option may be for the company to reimburse each chili entrant up to $10 for the cost of ingredients.

**Crazy Video Contest**
Invite employees to create their own home or work videos. Charge an entry fee at a viewing party. Offer a prize for the best video and have the audience vote on the winner.

**SAMPLE EMAILS**
Visit our online campaign toolkit to download these messages so you can easily cut and paste. www.monroeanitedway.org/campaigntoolkit

**Sample 1: Senior Staff Kick-off Email**

Subject: Are You In?

Our 2019 United Way campaign is kicking off! Join me in learning how gifts to United Way impact our community and create lasting change.

United Way of Monroe County and its 24 partner agencies work together to address the most pressing issues facing our community ensuring that families have opportunities and everyone can meet basic living needs.

Giving to United Way is the best way to help the most people in need in our community. One gift of any size has the power to transform lives across the community when joined with the gifts of co-workers, friends, and neighbors.

As little as a $2 a week donation can provide a person recovering from substance misuse disorder with 8 case management sessions. And $3 a week can provide short-term shelter for a person experiencing homelessness.

Thank you for caring about our community and supporting this year’s United Way of Monroe County annual campaign. Together, we have the power to create great change!

Sincerely,

(Senior Staff Name)
Sample 2: Employee Campaign Coordinator Emails

Subject: Change Begins with You!

On (DATE), we will kick-off our United Way Campaign. Your gifts have the power to change the world, right here at home through this campaign. Last year, we raised (AMOUNT) to assist United Way of Monroe County and the 24 local nonprofit member agencies that address some of our community’s most pressing problems. This year, we are aiming even higher in order to create a broader community impact.

This is a great opportunity for you to get involved in building the strongest community possible. I will be contacting you soon with more details. Thanks in advance for your participation because Change Begins with You!

Sample 3: Announce Campaign Kickoff – from Employee Campaign Coordinator:

You are invited to a/the (EVENT NAME) as we kickoff our 2019 IU United Way campaign.

  Date:
  Time:
  Location:

Don’t miss this opportunity to learn how you can help create change through your gifts to United Way. (NAME OF UNITED WAY STAFF/VOLUNTEER) will be joining us to explain how United Way works in our community and how our gifts make a big difference. Change Begins with You!

Please RSVP by XXXX.

Sample 4: United Way Campaign Progress Email:

Congratulations!

We’ve reached _____% of our goal. Last week’s (SPECIAL EVENT NAME) was a great success thanks to your participation and (insert highlight from the event).

Please don’t forget to turn in your pledge cards by (DATE) so that we can achieve our final goal of (AMOUNT).

If you haven’t done so yet, please join me in creating change by making a gift to United Way. I’m proud to be part of this exciting effort that means so much to thousands of people in our community who benefit from our combined campaign gifts. Every single gift has the power to change lives right here at home.

If you have any questions about donating, I’d be happy to answer them!
Sample 5: The Power of Your Gift Reminder Email

Your gifts to United Way work round the clock, every day of the year. When you can’t be present to serve a homeless person a warm meal, or help care for someone else’s child, or drive a senior to a medical appointment, United Way is there working in your stead.

Did you know:

• $2/week can provide a person recovering from substance misuse disorder with 8 case management sessions
• $4 a week can provide a family with high-quality daycare for a week
• $10 a week can provide a backpack of weekend food to a low-income child for a year

Please join me and other co-workers in supporting the 2019 United Way campaign. Your donation is so important to this community. Please remember to return your pledge card today! Change Begins With You!

Sample 6: Thank you for Creating Lasting Change in the Lives of Others!

Thank you for your generous donation to this year’s United Way campaign! Because of your generosity, and that of our co-workers, we raised (total campaign dollars your company/organization raised) to create a better community for everyone. We also reached (XX) percent participation in the campaign this year. You can feel good about your participation!

Together, we are changing the stories of thousands of people, which is no small task. It takes a little bit from all of us to make those positive changes for so many, both families and individuals.

Feel great, pat yourself on the back and know that every day this year, your donation is helping create a new path for someone who needed a new direction in life. Change Begins with You!

Sincerely,

(CEO Name or ECC)
To read about how your donation is fighting for our community, visit monrounittestedway.org/MyImpact.

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