

# Our Opinion: Helping area UW agencies makes community stronger

Editorial staff | Posted: Wednesday, April 13, 2016 8:20 am

United Way of Monroe County made its goal of raising \$1.3 million this year by \$128.

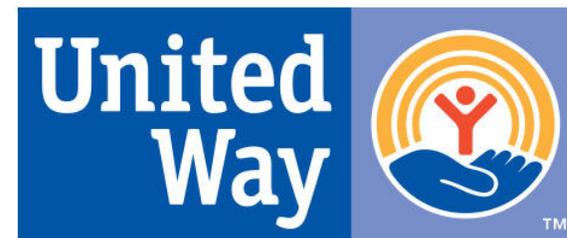
You know how people say every vote matters? This is an example of how every donation matters.

If you pledged \$3 a week to United Way, your pledge put the campaign over the top. For less than one fancy drink at Starbucks, your weekly donation was enough to make the difference between United Way making its goal or falling just short.

It was important for the umbrella fundraising organization and community partner to meet its goal, which actually was lower than last year's target. But the calculation was realistic and will now be allocated to United Way's 25 member agencies and other nonprofits designated by donors.

United Way funds are channeled toward the fundamentals of improving lives, which include education, earnings to create financial stability and having the essentials such as food and housing.

United Way tracks how effectively donated dollars are used, and the results are impressive. It notes, for instance, that 98 percent of high school seniors enrolled in mentoring programs at its member agencies graduated; that 1,328,750 meals and 194,821 bags of groceries were provided to community members at risk of hunger in Monroe, Owen and Greene counties; that 1,682 elderly neighbors were able to stay safely in their homes because affordable housing, home-based nutrition, visitation and repair services were provided by member agency Area 10 Agency on Aging; and that 1,832 uninsured, low-income adults received 5,384 free primary and preventive care medical visits and 15,000 prescriptions through member agency Volunteers in Medicine.



**United Way  
of Monroe County**

**Campaign: \$1,300,000**

**Exceeded  
the goal**

**Raised: \$1,300,128**

United Way April 2016

H-T Graphic

Other success stories can be documented, as well, many of which help lead people to self-sufficiency.

It's important to note United Way's focus has shifted somewhat away from fundraising, which is being done more and more by individual organizations, and toward identifying community needs and playing a leadership role in getting them met. One of those areas is early childhood education, which helps get kids ready to start school and thus gives them a better chance at success as they grow older. The entire concept of self-sufficiency, as noted above, is also a major emphasis.

Would raising more money be helpful? Of course it would. But setting a realistic goal and meeting it is a victory that came one donation at a time.

For more information about United Way, go to [www.monroeunitedway.org](http://www.monroeunitedway.org).