

# Housing programs key target for United Way Fox Cities

Jen Zettel, USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin 2:54 p.m. CT April 25, 2017

## STORY HIGHLIGHTS

- United Way Fox Cities gave more than \$610,000 to housing and shelter programs in 2016.
- Of those who got help through United Way-funded programs, 72 percent found permanent housing.



APPLETON - The Fox Cities are not immune to homelessness.

Of the people Homeless Connections serves, an increasing number are families, said Jerome Martin, executive director. In 2016, families spent an average of 67 nights with the organization, compared to just under 60 in 2015 and about 45 in 2014.

Martin and Joe Mauthe, executive director of the Housing Partnership of the Fox Cities, highlighted the increasing occurrence of homelessness among families at the United Way Fox Cities annual Report to the Community on Tuesday.

**RELATED:** [United Way highlights reading program](#)

While families tend to have the desire for their children to succeed, stronger support systems, fewer addiction issues and less chronic homelessness than individuals, they present their own challenges when facing homelessness, Martin said.

"Families are more complex. They tend to present with more barriers to self-sufficiency. Providing services to them is more complicated," he said. "When a family experiences homelessness and they come in to shelter, it totally disrupts what their typical day looks like."

United Way Fox Cities plays a significant role, providing support to the Fox Valley Warming Shelter, Homeless Connections, Harbor House Domestic Abuse Services, Christine Ann Domestic Abuse Services, Villa Hope, the Fox Cities Housing Partnership and Habitat for Humanity, Mauthe said.

In total, United Way Fox Cities gave \$610,422 toward housing and shelter programs in 2016, said Nanci Micke, vice president of marketing and communications.

Figures show the organizations make a difference. Of those who received housing assistance through United Way-funded programs, 72 percent increased their level of income or employment and were able to move into affordable, permanent housing.

"This is important work for us to be doing. The Fox Cities is a great place to do the work. As you can see, although we have a lot of resources and a lot of things going for us, we're not immune," Mauthe said.

**RELATED:** [K-C, Amazon fill void from diaper bank theft](#)

**RELATED:** [Diaper bank, K-C, awarded for partnership](#)

**RELATED:** [Kids in Crisis inspires school mental health plan](#)

The annual event also highlighted other 2016 efforts, including a successful campaign that raised \$8.6 million for United Way programs, more than 300,000 diapers distributed to babies in need through the Fox Cities Diaper Bank and the continued outreach of the PATH counseling program for students.

Jean Maurice Boyer and Sue DeCaro received the Wes Urch Service Award, which is given to individuals who are dedicated to volunteerism through the United Way Fox Cities.

The organization's partnerships and innovations in the Fox Cities wouldn't be possible without support from the community, said Jim Kotek, United Way Fox Cities board of directors chairman and president and CEO of Menasha Corp.

"We are grateful for the support of the Fox Cities community, and I'd like to extend my thanks to each and every one of you for investing in building a better life for all of us. You are truly making a difference in the community," he said.

*Jen Zettel: 920-996-7268, or [jzettel@postcrescent.com](mailto:jzettel@postcrescent.com); on Twitter [@jenzettel](https://twitter.com/jenzettel)*