

Giving Tuesday: Nine charities in region get four-star ratings

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(Photo: Dan Powers/USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin)

You've done your shopping for Black Friday, Small Business Saturday and Cyber Monday. But don't forget the most important one of all — Giving Tuesday.

Giving Tuesday arrives each year on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving weekend, an effort for nonprofits to find a voice amid all the holiday shopping noise.

There is no shortage of great charitable organizations in the Fox Cities. But there are some that get a nod above the rest according to Charity Navigator, a leading website for evaluating charitable giving. Eight Fox Cities-based charitable organizations and one from New London earned the site's four-star rating, its highest level.

The site [rates charities](#) across the globe for financial and administrative transparency and spending habits. A four-star rating means an organization spends the vast majority of its expenses on its core cause rather than administrative overhead and is transparent about its organization and its practices. You can search these ratings at www.charitynavigator.com.

Scores start at 100 and charities get point deductions from there for various criteria, like not publishing names of board members or how it publishes its latest financial statements. A 90+ score earns a four-star rating for "exceed(ing) industry standards and outperform(ing) most charities."

Note that not all charities in the area have been rated if they're not required to fill out certain financial statements or are lacking enough data for Charity Navigator to evaluate it.

Here are the nine charities in the region that have earned a four-star rating from Charity Navigator:

1. The Boys and Girls Club of the Fox Valley

[Rating](#): 95 out of 100

Its mission statement: "The Boys and Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley's mission is to inspire and enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens."

2. Community Foundation of the Fox Valley

[Rating](#): 92 out of 100

Its mission statement: "We strengthen our community for current and future generations by helping people make a difference in the lives of others."

3. Greater Fox Cities Area Habitat for Humanity

[Rating](#): 97 out of 100

Its mission statement: "Our mission is straightforward and to the point: to make simple, decent and affordable housing available to those who need it the most. This belief is what drives us in our work with Habitat for Humanity— when families have decent housing they can afford, many of life's other challenges become more manageable."

4. Homeless Connections

[Rating](#): 92 out of 100

Its mission statement: "Ending homelessness by connecting individuals and families to resources that promote self-sufficiency and prevent future homeless episodes."

5. LEAVEN Fox Cities

[Rating](#): 90 out of 100

Its mission statement: "LEAVEN stabilizes and empowers people in financial crisis by providing financial assistance, referrals, and case management to address their near-term and long-term basic needs."

6. Rawhide Boys Ranch (New London)

[Rating](#): 90 out of 100

Its mission statement: "Being dependent on God, we inspire and equip at-risk youth and families to lead healthy and responsible lives through family-centered care, treatment, and education."

7. Tri-County Community Dental Clinic

[Rating](#): 91 out of 100

Its mission statement: "Tri-County Dental is a volunteer-based dental clinic whose mission is to provide quality oral health care in a caring and compassionate manner. We serve individuals in Calumet, Outagamie and Winnebago counties whose access to dental health care is limited due to low income or receiving Medicaid benefits."

8. United Way Fox Cities

[Rating](#): 93 out of 100

Its mission statement: "United Way Fox Cities improves lives by bringing diverse people together to build a stronger, more caring community for everyone."

9. YMCA of the Fox Cities

[Rating](#): 94 out of 100

Its mission statement: "To put Christian principles into practice by promoting youth, adult and family activities that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all."