

United Way Fox Cities invested more than \$7 million in the community in 2018

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APPLETON - Business has the power to be the biggest driver of good in the world.

That's a philosophy Barry-Wehmiller CEO Bob Chapman lives by, and it's the advice he gave as keynote speaker at the United Way Fox Cities' report to the community at the Red Lion Hotel on Tuesday.

"Leadership is not a job," said Chapman. "It is a privilege and with that privilege, you have got to have the courage to care as opposed to using people for your success."

United Way Fox Cities takes those words to heart by investing in the community.

In 2018, United Way provided shelters for families, encouraged youth leadership and provided mental health counseling to schools.

"We're really excited to be able to share a wonderful message with all of these people," CEO Peter Kelly said. "This past year, we had a successful fundraising campaign. We've invested over \$7 million in the community, engaged hundreds of people in different things, given back to people in this community. We've got some great initiatives on the way on school based mental health, early literacy, some real important issues in this community that were trying to make some traction on."

Here are five ways United Way Fox Cities benefited the community in 2018:

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Community grants

With help from donors, United Way invested more than \$360,000 in innovative and general grants that helped address community needs. The money went to improve academic achievement of African American youth in the Scholars on Target to Achieve Results program at the Boys and Girls Club, provided food services for St. Joseph Food Program, aided in youth mental health and suicide prevention research and gave winter boots to children through the Community Clothes Closet.

Encouraging leadership

United Way Emerging Leaders is a program that's grown from just a few members to over 1,000 last year. The goal is to encourage young men and women to make a lasting impact in their community. Emerging Leader volunteers have provided in excess of 8,700 meals to residents at Pillars Adult and Family Shelter and have hosted Valentine's Family Festival for 10 years. The program aims to provide thousands of families with a free, family event including books, arts, crafts and healthy snacks.

Solving problems

Investment in Results-Based Accountability have provided a disciplined way of thinking and taking action on improving the lives of children, youth, families and adults — as well as the community as a whole. The process is data-driven, but accessible in its understanding. It focuses on creating a plan to improve the quality of life in the Fox Cities.

2-1-1 program

The United Way 2-1-1 program introduced chat and live two-way texting to give people easy access local resource community specialists. When Wisconsin was hit by a series of thunderstorms and flooding rains last fall, 2-1-1 handled 589 damage report calls and provided several communities with instant information and resources. Additionally in 2018, the Wisconsin Addiction Recovery Helpline was created as part of the Wisconsin Department of Health Services to combat the opioid crisis.

Early literacy

Reach Out and Read Partners - Fox Cities provides books during a child's well-checkup. The program has reached 87% of kids from 6 months to 5 years old, with more than 50,000 books distributed to families. Reach Out and Read is designed to build strong literacy skills in early youth and prepare children for their school years.

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