If you want to go fast, go all

United Way works every day to improve lives and create lasting change in our community. If you have given, advocated, or volunteered, you are part of the stories featured throughout this year’s annual report. Your contributions address our community’s greatest needs, including helping children succeed in school, building healthy families, assisting people in meeting their basic needs, and improving access to mental health services. You have generously joined us in our work. Let’s continue to go far together, let’s continue to LIVE UNITED.
Piloted by St. Elizabeth Hospital, and now being expanded by the Appleton Public Library, Reach Out and Read is putting books in the hands of children when they visit their healthcare providers.

As part of our efforts to ensure that children enter school ready to learn, United Way Fox Cities is supporting the local Reach Out and Read program with a $335,000 multi-year grant.

“We are on cloud nine after receiving the decision regarding United Way’s continued funding of the expansion of Reach Out & Read Partners – Fox Cities. We have learned so much from our journey, from our partners, and from the guidance United Way Fox Cities has provided us.” — Colleen Rortvedt, Director of Appleton Public Library

OFF TO A GREAT START

Dr. Kelly Meyer, Partnership Community Health Center, reads to Jainsley Vander Wielen
“I am proud of my classmates who made it to graduation with me. We learned a lot during our time in Thrive Career Academy. I especially enjoyed our time teambuilding, and traveling to area businesses to learn about jobs. I worked hard and can proudly say that I have a job on the UW-Fox Valley campus.” — Alex, a recent graduate of Thrive Career Academy

Valley Packaging Industries’ Thrive Career Academy was designed to help individuals with disabilities obtain and sustain employment in the community. 12-week courses are taught by Thrive Career Academy Instructors on the University of Wisconsin-Fox Valley campus.

United Way Fox Cities is supporting Thrive Career Academy with a $100,000 grant.

The Greater Fox Cities Area Habitat for Humanity’s neighborhood revitalization initiative, Rock the Block®, invests in neighborhoods struggling with decreasing property values and an increasing number of rental properties.

“The Greater Fox Cities Area Habitat for Humanity’s neighborhood revitalization initiative, Rock the Block®, invests in neighborhoods struggling with decreasing property values and an increasing number of rental properties.

United Way Fox Cities is supporting Rock the Block® with a $300,000 grant.

“We cannot thank United Way Fox Cities enough for what you have contributed to our neighborhood revitalization effort. Your gift is doing the work of angels this year. You believed in us and we are proud to report that your belief is paying off in the work done on 31 homes and in the neighborhoods to come.” — John Weyenber, Executive Director Greater Fox Cities Area Habitat for Humanity
Todd, a Marine

Corps veteran, was helped by organizations in the Fox Cities Housing Coalition. The coalition is a network of non-profit and government agencies in the Fox Valley providing shelter, housing, legal representation, job counseling, and other services to those working toward self-sufficiency. Todd is currently employed part-time as an Organizational Support Representative at the Housing Partnership of the Fox Cities.

**United Way Fox Cities** supports agencies that are a part of Todd’s story:
- Fox Valley Warming Shelter
- Homeless Connections
- Housing Partnership of the Fox Cities

United Way also is a member of the Fox Cities Housing Coalition and provided a grant for **Project RUSH** (Research to Understand and Solve Homelessness).

"I went from being **homeless to** having an apartment. Then, I became a **homeowner** within a period of two years. At the moment I was experiencing it, I was being handed from one set of helping hands to the next. I realized later how the chain was working and **it’s phenomenal**. What’s successful in this area is a lot of folks are joining forces. I wouldn’t have been able to do it without help from many people."
We believe that together we get

United Way looks at the whole picture. We address our community’s greatest needs through a well-researched, targeted, and comprehensive approach.

**Health and Healing**

We are committed to supporting education, access, and delivery of mental health services along with improving access to medical and dental care.

*Results:* 91% of those participating in a United Way-funded program received an initial appointment for mental health services within five days.

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**Strengthening Families**

We are focused on improving parenting skills and supporting families through programs that address a variety of needs for all family members.

*Results:* 99% of parents participating in a United Way-funded program reported using more positive discipline techniques.
when we work more done...

**BASIC NEEDS AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY**
We support programs that provide families with food, shelter, clothing, and transportation as they work to become more self-sufficient.

**RESULTS: 66%**
of clients in United Way-funded programs increased their level of income or employment and were able to move into affordable permanent housing.

**Results: 95%**
of children in United Way-funded early childhood programs increased their language and communication skills.

**CHILDREN AND YOUTH**
We are committed to improving early learning opportunities for young children so that they are able to start kindergarten ready to succeed.

Shari Steeno, Children and Youth Volunteer

Susan Conzelman, Basic Needs Volunteer
Assess Needs & Develop Strategies
We do our homework, so we know where to target resources to make the biggest impact. Volunteers spend more than 1,200 hours studying the issues, identifying community needs, and determining ways to meet those needs.

Invest Resources
We put your gift to work addressing our community’s greatest needs through a network of over 100 programs, initiatives, and grants serving more than 100,000 people in the Fox Cities.

Create Solutions
We recruit the people and organizations from all across the community who bring the passion, expertise, and resources needed to support our strategies.

Improve Lives
Your investment stays in the Fox Cities, helping to build a stronger, more caring community for everyone.

Promote Independence for Persons with Disabilities

Ensure School Readiness

Mentor and Tutor Youth

Improve Self-Sufficiency

Support Older Adults
Support Mental Health Services

Improve Access to Transportation

Address Homelessness

Address Adverse Childhood Experiences
“I have a hard time paying my bills so I am grateful I can get diapers every month for my son.” — Single mother on disability served by the Fox Cities Diaper Bank

The Fox Cities Diaper Bank, an initiative of United Way, collects, stores, and helps distribute diapers to struggling low-income families.

“After losing my job I didn’t know where else to turn. Thanks to the referrals made by 2-1-1, I received help paying my bills and applied for energy assistance through the county.” — 2-1-1 caller from rural Calumet County

United Way 2-1-1 is a free, confidential information and referral phone number anyone can call, 24/7 to connect to health and human services.

“I took a pledge to maintain a healthy weight. I’m now lifting weights 3-4 times per week.” — Joe Martin, City of Appleton Alderperson

United Way Fox Cities and Oshkosh Area United Way are providing direction and support for the Weight of the Fox Valley as the initiative works to build a community that achieves and maintains a healthy weight at every age.

“Counseling helped with my urge to commit suicide.” — Middle school student served by United Way’s PATH

United Way’s PATH (Providing Access to Healing) for Students is a school-based program that improves access to mental health services for children and youth.
Youth Board

“I love being involved with United Way Youth Board because I am able to volunteer, develop leadership skills, and meet new people from the community.”

— Thomas Hermsen, Youth Board Co-Leader

United Way Fox Cities Youth Board engages area high school students who are interested in becoming leaders in their school and community.

United Way and organized labor work together to help members learn about available health and human services, and place members of organized labor in volunteer activities. In addition, special projects, like the National Association of Letter Carriers Food Drive collected more than 2.6 million pounds of food for Wisconsin pantries in 2015.
More than 80 volunteers spent Make a Difference Day with United Way Fox Cities to help promote literacy. The volunteers packed 1,000 kits with new Scholastic books and information for caregivers regarding the importance of reading to their children. The project was possible thanks to a grant provided by Depend, a brand of Kimberly-Clark and United Way Worldwide.

“All efforts to improve literacy skills in our children advance our goal of meeting the needs of every student, every day. Thank you for the generous donation of books and bags to our children.”

— Chris VanderHeyden, Superintendent of the Menasha Joint School District

Literacy kits were distributed to children in:
- Menasha Joint School District
- Even Start Family Literacy Program
- YMCA of the Fox Cities 4-year-old kindergarten programs

Mission Statement
United Way Fox Cities improves lives by bringing diverse people together to build a stronger, more caring community for everyone.

Vision
The Fox Cities is a diverse and dynamic community, where people willingly share the responsibility of ensuring a safe and healthy community for all.

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