

# 2017 Campaign Kickoff

## COMIC CHARACTERS PADDLE LOCAL WATERS IN ANNUAL CARDBOARD BOAT RACE

*Sixth Annual Event Kicks Off United Way Campaign*



JACKSON, Michigan [Sept. 8, 2017] – The sixth annual What Floats Your Cardboard Boat? Race embraced a comic book theme as 16 entrants took to the water to kick off United Way of Jackson County’s fall fundraising campaign.

Michigan Automotive Compressor Inc. (MACI) paddled to victory at the urban fishery pond at Cascade Falls Park. Second place went to Walton Insurance Group

Title sponsor Molina Healthcare presented this year’s race. WLNS-TV (Lansing) was the media sponsor.

Ken Toll, President and CEO of United Way of Jackson County (UWJC), said the teamwork symbolized by the race symbolizes what's needed to eliminate poverty in the community. "I'm a firm believer that Jackson County has the commitment and compassion to come together and help all people achieve financial stability," he said.

In 2016, UWJC announced it would channel efforts to helping Jackson County residents overcome poverty and economic instability—the common link across the community's greatest social issues. Its long-term goal is to help 5,000 residents develop a pathway to financial stability by 2025.

The cardboard boat race serves both as a community event and the launch of United Way's annual campaign. Besides the winning team, award winners at this year's event included Walton Insurance Group for Judges' Choice, EXIT Realty for People's Choice, Henry Ford Allegiance Health for Best Representation of Theme ("The Flintstones"), and TAC Manufacturing Inc. for Most Spectacular Sinking. About 300 people turned out for the event.

Other organizations that entered the race were Aladdin Electric, Consumers Energy, Comerica, County National Bank, Flagstar Bank, Jackson County Government, Jackson County Medical Care Facility, MedExpress Urgent Care, Old National Bank, Target, and Western School District.

Chad Rumsey, Commercial Loan Officer for County National Bank and this year's United Way campaign chair, said UWJC's focus on poverty makes the community's support more important than ever.

"When a cardboard boat team is pulling for the same goal, they're much more likely to succeed. That's true for our community, too," Rumsey said. "If we focus on how we can work together to eliminate poverty, including investing in crucial programs through United Way, we're going to help more people and create a stronger, lasting community."

To underscore the need, the work and the partnerships, UWJC is posting information online. This includes the 2017 campaign video; video testimonials titled “Letters from Poverty”; and ongoing installments of the blog series, “Stories of Impact.” Links are available at [uwjackson.org](http://uwjackson.org) and on UWJC’s social media channels—Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram.

To find out more or to make a gift to United Way, go to [uwjackson.org](http://uwjackson.org) and click on “Donate,” or call 517-784-0511.