

80th ANNUAL MEETING!

**POVERTY, FINANCIAL STABILITY GAIN DEEPER FOCUS AS UNITED WAY
CAMPAIGN EXCEEDS \$2 MILLION**

Eaton Aerospace, Consumers Energy, UWUA Local 101 Receive Special Awards



A deeper focus on issues surrounding poverty in Jackson County will lead to more households reaching financial stability. That was the message to more than 100 attendees at United Way of Jackson County's annual meeting, held tonight at Ella Sharp Museum.

"Eighteen percent of Jackson County residents live in poverty. Twenty-three percent more are barely able to stay out of poverty. That means nearly 25,000 households in our community are financially insecure," said Ken Toll, president and CEO of United Way of Jackson County (UWJC).

“Working together, we can create a community that offers every opportunity for every person to achieve financial stability,” Toll said.

To that end, UWJC will look at its work and partnerships through the lens of financial stability, according to Toll. “We’ll ask ourselves, ‘Are the programs we’re supporting helping people become more financially stable? How do our partners measure that impact? How do we report our progress to the community?’” he explained. “Most of our work and partnerships already do this. We’re simply looking for ways we can go deeper with community partners to create greater, more sustainable outcomes.”



The annual meeting included presentations from Cradle2Career, the Health Improvement Initiative and other efforts with which United Way is involved. Each touched on the success and challenges the community faces in creating more financially stable households.

Since 2014, UWJC and United Ways across the country have directed more energy at financial stability, driven by a report on households that struggle financially yet technically are not in poverty. Known as ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed), the report found four in 10 households in Jackson County

face an array of complex issues that keep them from being financially stable.

Toll said UWJC is partnering with the Nonprofit Network to hold a series of community conversations on where financial stability efforts are best directed. Those conversations will lead to a long-term community goal. Toll said he expects to know what that goal is by the fall of 2016.

Also as part of the annual meeting, UWJC announced that generous supporters from across Jackson County pledged \$2,066,048 to United Way during the 2015 annual campaign.

“The compassion and generosity of Jackson County residents is the fuel that drives the engine of meaningful impact and changed lives,” said Cheryl Norey, 2015 campaign chair.

Consumers Energy and Utility Workers Union of America Local 101 jointly earned UWJC’s 2016 President’s Achievement Award for achieving the one of the highest-ever levels of giving it has ever made to United Way of Jackson County—\$1,063,146. Eaton Corp. Aerospace Division received the Rising Star Award, honoring year-over-year progress in its workplace campaign.

The Women’s Leadership Council also held its annual meeting as part of the evening. WLC reported more than 800 hours of community service by its members over the past year. Receiving support for WLC’s annual Power of the Purse event were Challenge Day, a program of the Jackson County Intermediate School District that educates students about bullying and works to create safer school environments; and the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative, which works to reduce the teen pregnancy rate and promote healthy relationships by educating and encouraging young people in Jackson County. CertainTeed Corp. received WLC’s Champion Award for their community involvement.

In addition to UWJC’s President’s Achievement Award, the top 20 business contributors to the United Way campaign received Awards of Excellence during the annual meeting. They included Consumers Energy; Michigan Automotive Compressor Inc.; Eaton Corp. Aerospace Division; Allegiance Health; TAC Manufacturing; Gerdau Special Steel HQ and Mill; Alro Steel Corp.; Jackson County Government; CP Federal Credit Union; Meijer Store No. 56; Jackson County Intermediate School District; Meijer Store No. 30; Western School District; Royal Adhesives & Sealants LLC; Comerica Bank; Flagstar Bank FSB; Industrial Steel Treating Co.; United Way of Jackson County; Michigan Center School District; and United Parcel Service.

Also honored at the meeting were Dennis Parshall, 2015 Volunteer of the Year; and Andrew Maynard and Hannah Locke, 2015 Youth Volunteers of the Year.

The 2016 campaign will be chaired by Ted Ykimoff, along with Chad Rumsey as

vice chair. It's scheduled to kick off on Sept. 9 with the annual "What Floats Your Cardboard Boat?" competition at Cascade Falls Urban Fishery in Jackson.

Thank you to News Talk 970 WKHM and JTV for covering our 80th Annual Meeting.