

The Community Work that YOU Are Fueling



2-1-1 is the community's hotline to help – dial 2-1-1 from any phone, 24/7, and you'll connect with a specially trained call specialist who can access a comprehensive database of health and human services, and find you the help you need.

FEMA/Basic Needs – Every year United Way manages \$70,000-\$100,000 in FEMA funding for food pantries, shelters, and other basic needs. We also convene and facilitate the community's Basic Needs Coalition, keeping all of those providers informed, and connected, in their efforts to serve those who need the most basic things in life.

Energizing Education is a school-based mentoring program that has consistently helped about 50% of participating elementary students catch up to grade level reading before fourth grade, so they are prepared to succeed in school. Currently operating in four County districts.

ALICE is a report about the large population of Asset Limited, Income-Constrained Adults. Nearly 25% of Jackson County's households are working one, or more, jobs – yet still not earning enough income to achieve financial stability. This important analysis helps us better understand the situation and develop targeted strategies, so those who are working hard have a better shot at making it.

Bridges out of Poverty is a leading national program that provides a family of concepts, workshops, and products to help employers, community organizations, social service agencies, and individuals address and reduce poverty in a comprehensive way. United Way has supported several Bridges training sessions, and has helped hundreds of Jackson County residents and leaders (to date) take advantage of this eye-opening experience.

CARE low-income utility assistance is a growing body of work for our United Way. We received \$8.5mil last year to provide utility assistance, and some self-sufficiency services, for Consumers Energy customers in Jackson and across the state. This year, we are anticipating \$11 mil and we will be providing much more of the financial stability work – helping enrollees develop a household budget, connecting them with money management courses, and providing an array of other services to help them leverage this utility assistance into lasting improvements in financial stability.

JobSTAR is one of the most exciting things to hit Jackson in YEARS! Seven companies are utilizing the new JobSTAR program, which gives all their employees access to a "success coach". That coach can help the employees navigate and resolve virtually any challenges they're having at home, so they can be successful and productive employees at work. It's a win-win-win, for the employees, the company, and the community.

Race Forward is the nation's leading organization working to build awareness, solutions, and leadership for racial justice. United Way is working with our community's three big Collective Impact networks to send a large cadre of community members to its annual conference in Detroit this fall.

Stuff the Bus is a new way for us to support education this year. School supplies are not cheap – in fact, the cost of an average kids' supplies has increased 47% in the past decade, and is a real burden to low income households. We have seen several smaller 'school supply drives' working in Jackson each autumn; this year, we brought them all together and set a goal of stuffing an entire school bus full of donated supplies. We expect to far exceed that goal.

Financial Education is another new area of work for United Way. Several credit unions and banks have trained financial educators who are ready and willing to teach others these important skills, but there has not been a coordinated way to connect those in need with this service. We are working to create such a system, because the more low-income people have this knowledge, the more likely they are to achieve financial stability.

Financial Stability Network is our community's newest Collective Impact network. Nearly forty organizations – nonprofits, government, workforce development, legal and others have joined together to work on new strategies to improve financial stability across the County. United Way helped build this network, and provides half of the financial support necessary to employ a network coordinator.

DHHS Integrated Service Delivery Platform: MI Bridges. DHHS has created an online system which allows all Michigan residents to conveniently seek and apply for public benefits, and also to explore additional resources which could help them resolve issues they are having (with income, food insecurity, quality housing, and a host of other needs). Bridges is an easy-to-use interface that connects directly with our 2-1-1 resource database. United Way is a "Navigation Partner", meaning that anyone who wants to use Bridges can come to United Way; we have computers and specially trained staff available to assist them.

...and, last but not least, the 23 other essential community programs that couldn't do what they do without United Way's financial support, including

- Sheltering Domestic Violence victims and helping them get back on their feet, safely
- Returning nearly \$5mil each year to low-income Jackson households through the VITA program
- Legal services, helping those facing eviction, loss of benefits, etc. have their due process
- Housing supports, so those living in subsidized housing can get additional supports they need
- Subsidized housing for the elderly, at John George and Friendly Homes
- Teen Pregnancy Prevention – our County's rates are down over 40% since we started this work!
- Child Care Scholarships so struggling families have a safe place for their kids while seeking work
- Programs to help kids get through school – especially targeting those at risk of the school-to-prison pipeline

The logo consists of the words "LIVE UNITED" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, set against a dark blue rectangular background. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located at the top right of the word "UNITED".

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