

LIVE UNITED



GIVE.

ADVOCATE.

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March 2025

Mobilizing the Caring Power of our Community | www.unitedwaycemo.org

A Strong, Vibrant, Thriving United Way – And Our Goals for 2025



Lee Knernschild, United Way President

At our Annual Meeting a few short weeks ago, we celebrated our accomplishments, our volunteers, and the donors who helped us mobilize the caring power of our community. We set ambitious goals in 2024 by prioritizing three strategic objectives to guide our efforts. Our significant highlights for last year included strengthening our commitment to early childhood, evaluating our internal staffing structure, gaining a greater understanding of the Phelps County social service landscape, and growing our campaign to support the work of our 26 agency partners. Our efforts were designed to further strengthen and support our strong, vibrant, thriving United Way. This year we have set equally ambitious goals while keeping in mind our commitment to the following strategic objectives:

- Be the trusted steward of community resources used to provide positive impact and create lasting results.

- Mobilize the community by identifying human service needs and facilitating solutions.

- Grow our revenue to enable continued support for the counties and agencies we serve.

In 2025, being the trusted steward of community resources translates into a deeper dive into our resource alignment and further evaluating existing and new opportunities where United Way can and should be more actively involved. We owe it to our community to be good fiduciary stewards of their investments. Being accountable to our donors as we allocate resources and fund our partner agencies is our top priority.

Our collective accomplishments are visible through our strong agency network and our ability to identify needs and work toward solutions. Our dedication to youth continues to be a focus in 2025. This year we will work to understand the behavioral health crisis affecting our teens and young adults and determine the role United Way should play in supporting our adolescents. The rise in mental health issues among adolescents including depression, anxiety, and substance abuse is alarming. While we are proud to support a network of youth-focused partner agencies dedicated to nurturing and developing children, none are solely focused on addressing the mental health crisis we have found our teenagers experiencing. With the assistance of educators, counselors, faith-based representatives, and experts in the field, United Way is committed to

influencing community awareness of this important crisis and determining how we can create a positive change in our community.

Last year thanks to our giving community, we exceeded our campaign goal by nearly \$200,000. As the needs of our agency partners continue to grow thankfully so does the generosity of our community. Our agencies rely on United Way funds to provide stability within the organization and expand programming. Meeting the critical and basic needs in our nine-county service area can be daunting but in our 100-year history, we have never backed down from confronting our community's toughest challenges.

Our exploration this year will focus on the Lake of the Ozarks community. We have supported Morgan, Miller, and Camden Counties through community support grants and the work of our agency partners but we know there is more we can do to affect this neighboring community. Through a committee of volunteers, we will meet with local leaders and agencies to better assess how United Way can provide additional support and care for those who need us most.

It is only through the caring of every volunteer, donor, and advocate that United Way continues to meet the needs of the most vulnerable, and creates a community where all individuals and families can achieve their human potential. With your support, I know we can improve lives, strengthen families, and create lasting change.

Building A Healthier Future

By Eric Maze & Sally Moore, Capital Region Medical Center/ MU Health Care

The history of MU Health Care's Capital Region Medical Center spans back to the 1940's beginning with the Charles E. Still Osteopathic Hospital, and, in the 50's, with Memorial Community Hospital.

In 1994, Memorial Community Hospital and Still Regional Medical Center merged to become Capital Regional Medical Center (CRMC).

In 1997, Capital Region formed an affiliation with the University of Missouri Health Care.

Finally, in 2024, Capital Region Medical Center fully integrated into the MU Health Care system. This integration combines the strength of an academic health system with the strengths of a community-based hospital to provide the best care for mid-Missouri.

As a community-based hospital, Capital Region Medical Center is committed to improving patient access to preventative services, reducing obstacles to reaching optimal health for disadvantaged populations and improving the overall quality of life for all community residents.

In order to achieve these goals, Capital Region continually supports and collaborates with local organizations whose mission align with ours.

Why CRMC supports United Way, and why it's important to give back

MU Health Care's mission to save and improve lives aligns with the mission of the United Way. The MU Health Care team lives its mission both inside and outside the walls of its health care facilities. As a community hospital, Capital Region Medical Center is committed to giving back to the communities it serves.

Capital Region Medical Center's partnership with the United Way of Central Missouri has spanned decades. Hospital team members have served the United Way through participation in many United Way committees and initiatives including Fund Allocation, Governing Body, Mobile Market volunteer opportunities, Power of the Purse, and the United Way Board of Directors.

In 2020-2021 Capital Region was thrilled to have its team member serve as a community campaign co-chair. Currently, the first chair of Women United is also a Capital Region team member.



Capital Region Medical Center/MU Health Care was awarded the 2024 Pacesetter of the Year at the United Way of Central Missouri Annual Meeting for its outstanding campaign and support of the United Way through its 2024 workplace campaign.



Capital Region Medical Center/MU Health Care staff support cardiologist Dr. Jacob Hayden as he models a purse at United Way's signature Power of the Purse fundraiser.



Pictured above and right: Capital Region Medical Center/MU Health Care staff have fun while raising funds for United Way with activities like Rock, Paper, Scissors contests and dunking booths.



From a financial perspective, Capital Region's contributions to the United Way have increased exponentially over the years. In 2004, Capital Region's campaign total was just shy of \$20,000.

Now 20 years later, Capital Region surpassed its \$55,000 goal by raising nearly \$65,000, a 20% increase over the 2023 campaign total. This significant increase earned Capital Region the 2024 "Pacesetter of the Year" award from the United Way of Central Missouri.

Since integrating with MU Health Care last year, Capital

Region Medical Center has added additional beds and services, has performed new procedures never before offered in the community, and has opened a new urgent care location with expanded hours.

All of this growth is accompanied by its steadfast commitment to serving the Jefferson City community through the summertime Food 4 Kids program, supporting mobile markets, offering community health talks and maintaining a presence on the board of the Jefferson City Area Chamber of Commerce.

Together with the United Way, Capital Region Medical Center is building a healthier future for Jefferson City and beyond.

Needs Are Closer Than You Think



Bob Gilbert, United Way Board Chair Bartlett & West

At the recent Annual Meeting for the United Way of Central Missouri, we celebrated our community campaign and leaders across the broad spectrum of business supporters, individual givers, our 26 partner agencies, and our dedicated staff at the United Way. As I step into the role of Board Chair this year, I'm amazed by the generous community I live in, and I'm excited about the year ahead!

As I sat at the luncheon and watched the 2024 campaign video again, I saw a neighbor in one of the scenes featuring the work of our agencies. I had not realized they were served by the Special Learning Center, but it served as yet another example of how needs are all around us. You see, I had been planning to make some remarks at this meeting

as the incoming chair, and wanted to share how after giving in workplace campaigns for years, our family ended up needing and then benefiting from the services of not 1, not even 2, but 3 partner agencies in Central Missouri!

My wife and I decided to start our journey as foster parents in 2012 and went through the training and certification processes. We had three biological children of our own at that time and decided to open up our home to one more. We had two boys and a girl, and with the help of bunk beds in the kids' rooms, we figured our little family would be perfect with one more girl. Well, it did not turn out to be that simple. We fostered a young girl, 6 years old at the time. She ended up going back to her biological family in 2014, but later in the year, we started fostering an infant girl. It turned out that our first foster child came back into care later that year as well and the state called us to take her back in. We of course said "Yes!" but like I said, that wasn't exactly what we had planned. Time for a larger vehicle...and time to figure out even more dynamics with 5 kids at home.

That's when we realized we needed help. Fostering children from hard places isn't easy. They have not had the luxury of things we take for granted - support from both parents and extended family, good nutrition, homes free from addiction and abuse, ability to focus on learning, and more. The Central Missouri Foster Care and

Adoption Association (CMFAA) offered free classes to support our journey and ways to learn more about the complicated process of fostering, but also about how to be better parents to children from such backgrounds. Then another partner agency, the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), came to our children's side as well. They are "extreme" volunteers as I call them. They are equipped by the staff of CASA to learn the ways of the court system and be the voice of the child in the courtroom, but also during the monthly Family Service Team (FST) meetings with the state case workers, juvenile officers, biological and foster families and more attorneys than I could count. We were our eldest foster child's fifth foster home, but she had only one CASA volunteer on her multi-year journey to permanence. And then, the Rape and Abuse Crisis Service (RACS) also provided counseling services to our young daughter to help her process her past and adjust to a different life in our home. All of these partner agencies were by our side through it all, and we didn't even know we would need them when we entered foster care! Like I said, while we had been giving in workplace campaigns prior to this, we never expected that we would need the help. But there they were when we needed it most!

We realized then that the needs are closer than we thought, and while enjoying lunch with many friends and colleagues recently celebrating the work of the United Way and our 26 partner agencies, I realized what a blessing it is to be part of such a generous community. Even though needs are all around us, I'm confident that support for one another is strong. We look forward to another great year of raising awareness of these needs, tackling the emerging challenges our community is facing, and mobilizing the hearts of this generous community to come together for each other! I hope you will join me in supporting the United Way and our partner agencies through your volunteering, giving, and advocacy efforts in 2025. Let's go!



United Way Board Chair Bob Gilbert and his family are grateful for the services and resources available to them through United Way member agencies like Central Missouri Foster Care & Adoption Association, Capital City CASA, and Rape & Abuse Crisis Service (RACS).



Dreams to Reality Celebrates 25 Years of Empowering Women with New Dare2Dream Mentoring Program

By Jaime Walz,
Dreams to Reality

Dreams to Reality (DTR), a proud United Way agency, is celebrating 25 years of empowering women in mid-Missouri with the launch of its new Dare2Dream Mentoring Program—a transformative initiative designed to foster career confidence, job retention, and professional growth.

A Legacy of Empowerment, Strengthened by United Way

Since 2000, Dreams to Reality has been dedicated to helping women achieve economic independence by providing professional attire, interview preparation, and development tools for long-term career success. What started as a small effort to supply donated interview clothing has grown into a powerful force for change, thanks in large part to our partnership with United Way.

As a United Way agency, Dreams to Reality (DTR) benefits from essential funding, collaboration, and a strong network of community support. By working in concert with other United Way agencies, DTR ensures that women not only receive professional attire but also access additional resources—such as resume and interview skills, career searching tools, and financial literacy—that address the many challenges they may face on the path to self-sufficiency.

“It is because of this partnership that Dreams to Reality has grown into the amazing organization it is today,” Paige Rackers, DTR Board President shared. “United Way’s support allows us to provide our services at no cost, ensuring that every woman who walks through our doors has the tools she needs to succeed.”

Growing to Meet the Needs of Women in the Workforce

Over the years, DTR has evolved to meet the changing needs of women in the workforce. The organization now provides a full week’s worth of professional attire, suitable for a variety of industries, and has expanded its services to support women facing different degrees of hardship.

In 2016, the agency moved to 500 Jefferson Street, adding a retail boutique to serve the community with affordable workwear. Donated items that do not fit the immediate needs of clients are sold at reasonable prices, and all proceeds help fund essential employment items—such as steel-toe/non-skid shoes, industry scrubs, and specialized workwear—that are often difficult to source through donations.

Introducing Dare2Dream: More Than Just Mentoring

Now, as Dreams to Reality marks 25 years of impact, the agency is expanding its mission with Dare2Dream Mentoring—a program that goes beyond job readiness to provide women with ongoing professional development, mentorship, and a strong support network.

This nine-month program, launching in mid-September, requires only 2-4 hours a month and provides one-on-one mentoring for career growth and confidence-building. More than just a mentoring initiative, Dare2Dream is a movement—one that challenges societal norms and creates equitable

access to professional advancement.

“In a world where women still face barriers to achieving career confidence and financial independence, Dare2Dream stands as a beacon of hope,” Paige Rackers added. “This program is about igniting a spark within every woman—to dream bigger, reach higher, and achieve more.”

A Community of Support and Growth

At its core, Dare2Dream is built on the belief that when women support each other, incredible things happen. Every client referred to Dreams to Reality meets with a trained Professional Image Consultant to select attire that meets employer dress codes and helps them feel confident for interviews and new job opportunities. Now, with Dare2Dream, women can also receive mentorship, career guidance, and networking opportunities—all in a safe and empowering space.

The impact of Dreams to Reality would not be possible without United Way’s unwavering support. By working alongside other United Way agencies, DTR ensures that women receive a comprehensive, wraparound network of services to help them thrive in work and life.

Looking Ahead: 25 Years and Beyond

As Dreams to Reality celebrates 25 years of empowering women, the organization remains committed to growing its services, expanding opportunities, and fostering lasting career success for women across mid-Missouri. With the launch of Dare2Dream, DTR is setting the stage for even greater impact—ensuring that every woman, regardless of background or circumstance, has the opportunity to turn her dreams into reality.

Because when women succeed, we all succeed.

SHE Leads
FASHION SHOW

Save the Date
November 8, 2025

Capital Bluffs Event Center
Benefiting Dreams to Reality

Sponsored by:

Rusty DREWING

the Zeal
OF THE HEEL

GFI
DIGITAL

MOBILE MARKET SCHEDULE IN THE UNITED WAY OF CENTRAL MISSOURI SERVICE AREA

March 2025

The Food Bank for Central & Northeast Missouri will be providing food at no charge to those in need at the following locations. Please confirm any location, date and/or time changes for this month on The Food Bank website at sharefoodbringhope.org. For questions, call The Food Bank at 573-474-1020.

Mobile Market Tips:

- Remain in your vehicle for distribution; it is a drive-thru process.
- Clear space in your trunk or back seat to receive food.



(SAT)	1	CATHOLIC CHARITIES 1015 EDMONDS ST, JEFFERSON CITY 9:00 - 11:00 AM
(FRI)	7	SOUTH CENTRAL SHRINE CLUB 15792 COUNTY RD 5200, ROLLA 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
(TUES)	11	TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH 13007 ROUTE C, RUSSELLVILLE 1:30 - 3:30 PM
(THUR)	13	KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS 1822 TANNER BRIDGE RD, JEFFERSON CITY 3:30 - 5:30 PM
(FRI)	14	THE CHURCH AT OSAGE HILLS 5237 OSAGE BEACH PKWY, OSAGE BEACH 1:00 - 3:00 PM
(SAT)	15	CAPITAL WEST CHRISTIAN CHURCH 1315 FAIRGROUNDS RD, JEFFERSON CITY 8:30 - 11:30 AM
(WED)	19	BOYS & GIRLS CLUB 11105 LAFAYETTE ST, JEFFERSON CITY 4:00 - 6:00 PM
(TUES)	25	FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF BELLE 203 2ND ST, BELLE 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
(WED)	26	ST. MARTINS CATHOLIC CHURCH 7148 ST. MARTINS AVE, ST. MARTINS 4:00 - 6:00 PM
(THUR)	27	ANNUNCIATION CATHOLIC CHURCH 310 MILLS ST, CALIFORNIA 4:30 - 6:00 PM

Updated: 1/15/2025

MISSOURI RIVER REGIONAL LIBRARY & ABE
(ADULT BASIC LITERACY EDUCATION)

Used Book SALE

March 12-15, 2025

ADMISSION
\$10 ADULTS
\$5 KIDS including small children in arms and strollers.

MARCH 12 WEDNESDAY 4:00-8:00PM

STOCK REPLENISHED BEFORE OPENING THURSDAY

free ADMISSION

MARCH 13 THURSDAY 9:00AM-8:00PM

MARCH 14 FRIDAY 9:00AM-8:00PM

MARCH 15 SATURDAY 9:00AM-1:00PM

ST. MARTINS KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS HALL

DIRECTIONS
From Jefferson City take Hwy. 50 West to the St. Martins/Lohman Exit, Go North on Rt. T 1.1 miles to the St. Martins Knights of Columbus Hall.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
☎ (573) 634-2464

ABLE Missouri River Regional Library
Adult Basic Literacy Education

YES! I want to support our community! My total annual gift is \$ _____
Gifts to United Way of Central Missouri are tax-deductible. For information about the tax advantages for including United Way in your will and estate planning, please call 573-636-4100. United Way provides no goods or services in consideration for this contribution.

Name _____ Phone _____
Address _____ City _____ State _____
Zip Code _____ E-mail Address _____

I would like to remain anonymous in any publications regarding my donations to United Way of Central Missouri.

Payment Option 1: Cash or Check

Include your cash/check donation with this cutout and mail to the United Way of Central Missouri at 205 Alameda Drive, Jefferson City, MO 65109.

Please use my donation to benefit all of the United Way of Central Missouri partner agencies, allowing me to make a greater impact in our community.

DESIGNATIONS: Please designate my donation to the following partner agency(s). Minimum designation amount is \$25.00. Designations to agencies not a part of the United Way of Central Missouri network will be directed to our general campaign fund.

Payment Option 2: Online

Make your donation online by going to our website at www.unitedwaycemo.org or scanning the QR code below:



To support our community cut out the form, complete the information, and mail it to the United Way of Central Missouri at 205 Alameda Drive, Jefferson City, MO 65109.

Partner Agencies

- | | |
|---|---|
| 4-H Youth Program | Dreams to Reality |
| ABLE | Girls Scouts |
| American Red Cross | Homemaker Health Care |
| Big Brothers Big Sisters | Jefferson City Area YMCA Child Development Center |
| Boys & Girls Club | Little Explorers Discovery Center |
| Capital City CASA | Rape & Abuse Crisis Service |
| Capitol Projects | Salvation Army |
| Catholic Charities | Scouting America |
| Central Missouri Foster Care & Adoption Association | Senior Nutrition Council |
| Common Ground Community Building | Special Learning Center |
| Community Health Center | The Sneaker Project |
| Compass Health Network | Tri-County YMCA |
| Council for Drug Free Youth | UCP Heartland - Gibbs Center for Independence |



What's Happening



CMFCAA is committed to providing essential services and support to the kinship, foster, and adoptive community in Central Missouri.

You are cordially invited to attend the

Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony

of CMFCAA's new Traveling Trunk

1704 Christy Court, Jefferson City, MO 65101

Thursday, March 13
from 2-3 p.m.

There will be a tour of the new mobile closet, refreshments, and a short presentation.

Please call **573-298-0258** or email us at info@CMFCAA.com with questions.

Building beautiful family trees across Mid-Missouri since 2007



Celebration CONCERT



DOUGLAS LADNIER



SYLVIA FERGUSON



AMELIA LUFKIN

Come join us for a candlelit evening of music & community

FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 2025 | 6PM

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
324 Madison St, Jefferson City, MO 65101

Tickets: \$15.00/person

More Information & Purchase Your Ticket



www.cgcb.org

SPONSORED BY: **HITACHI** Inspire the Next
Hitachi Energy

SLUGS & BUGS LIVE!

IN CONCERT
March 29, 2025
2-4:30p • concert begins at 3 pm
Special Olympics • 305 Special Olympics Drive

KID ZONE
open 2-3 pm

- Fun Activities For Kids
- *face paint
- READY POPPED
- Drinks & Snacks Available

\$5^{++tax}
Ages 3 & up
Scan the QR code for tickets



The Healing House and New Beginnings Inc.

SLM SPORTS LOCKER MAGAZINE

MISSOURI CHILDHOOD COMMUNITY LEADERS

CONNECTING MISSOURI FAMILIES & CHILDREN TO RESOURCES

SCHOLASTIC

RedemptionInsideTheWalls.com

thrivent

Special Learning Center

CS C&S Employment SOLUTIONS



ANNUAL COMMUNITY RESOURCE FAIR

This event is free and open to the public

FRIDAY March 21, 2025 **TIME** 10 AM - 1 PM

1015 Edmonds Street
Jefferson City, MO 65109

REGISTER FOR A BOOTH



info@cccno.org

SPRING TRIVIA FUNDRAISER

FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 2025

TICKETS \$25.00 PER PERSON | 8 PEOPLE PER TABLE

DOORS OPEN AT 6 P.M.
TRIVIA BEGINS AT 7 P.M.
SILENT AUCTION
BOTTLED WATER AND TRAIL MIX PROVIDED




Funds raised will go toward the purchase of new beds and bedding for our shelter.

TO DONATE A GIFT BASKET TO OUR SILENT AUCTION EMAIL
MELINDA.JENNINGS@USC.SALVATIONARMY.ORG

THE SALVATION ARMY
CENTER OF HOPE





LITTLE EXPLORERS DISCOVERY CENTER

Thursday, March 20, 2025

TRIVIA NIGHT

Capital Bluffs Event Center
1616 Oilwell Road
Doors open at 6:00 PM
Trivia starts at 6:30 PM

\$160 PER TEAM OF 8
Bring Snacks, Silent Auction, Raffle, Cash Bar, Prizes!

Company/Team Name: _____
Contact Name/Phone: _____
Email: _____

I'm unable to attend, but I want to support LEDC with my enclosed donation
All proceeds benefit Little Explorers Discovery Center, a United Way Agency

For registration & further information Contact Donna Scheidt 573-636-6461

Return registration to:
Director Donna Scheidt
Little Explorers Discovery Center
1002 Myrtle Avenue
Jefferson City, MO 65109

Meet Our Board: Greg Callahan



and Strategic Planning Committee Chair, JC Regional Economic Partnership Board Member, Missouri Chamber member, Jefferson City Area Chamber member, Callaway Chamber member, Columbia Chamber member.

Why did you say yes when asked to be on the United Way Board of Directors:

Who could say no to this incredible cause that serves so many in our community? I've been passionately involved with the United Way in various locations over my career over the past 20 years. I'm deeply motivated to help others and knew that as a large

Employer:
Hitachi Energy Jefferson City

Community Involvement:
United Way of Central Missouri Board Member

employer in this area, we had the opportunity to make a notable impact in central Missouri.

As Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, why do you feel it's important for our United Way to have a Strategic Plan?

A strategic plan provides the framework and vision for the team. As the Vice President of Operations in North America, Hitachi Energy deploys a strategic planning process on an annual basis to assure we stay aligned with our key priorities. From Human Resources to Marketing, each team comes together with a focus on setting a clear direction, improving decision-making, enhancing operational efficiency, facilitating effective risk management, promoting market

competitiveness, boosting employee morale through alignment, and enabling measurable success by identifying key goals and tracking progress towards those goals. It is equally important for an agency like the United Way to have a clear Strategic Plan to be the trusted steward of the contributions that this community so strongly provides. I'm honored to serve in this capacity for the United Way.

Favorite thing about United Way:

My favorite thing about the United Way is the comprehensive nature of their impact and extensive service area. When I give to the United Way of Central Missouri, my dollar reaches further (to over 30

other organizations!) than when I support a single organization.

Favorite thing about our community:

My favorite thing about our community is simply how philanthropic central Missouri is. This community has raised more money for the United Way of Central Missouri than other larger cities! We continue to support those who need it most, year after year.

Number one on your bucket list:
Go to the Masters golf tournament.

Fun fact about you:

I love learning and leadership. I just returned from Paris,

France where I had the opportunity to participate in a class with the Hitachi Academy and completed a new certification: Global Advanced Program for Leadership Development. I know that a true leader helps others see their strengths and inspires through connection and communication, and this course re-energized me to empower my team.

Words you live by:
Determination: Ability may get you to the top, but it takes character to keep you there.

Meet an Agency Leader: Angela Hirsch, RACS



My husband and I have two amazing kids who have grown up to be amazing adults and I could not be more proud of the lives they are living.

Tell us about RACS

RACS is a dual domestic and sexual violence agency that provides services to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking throughout Central Missouri. We have an amazing team of advocates, counselors, case managers and volunteers who are dedicated to ensuring that survivors have a safe place to go when it isn't safe for them at home. Our mission is to support survivors through advocacy, counseling, and shelter

services in a space designed for healing and hope.

Tell us about the latest happening at RACS

We are fortunate to have such incredible support from the community and different community organizations. In February, the Z-Club members put together a special Valentine's Day party for the children residing in the RACS shelter and it was a huge hit. The kids loved the specially designed games and we loved having the Z-Club with us.

What is your favorite thing about RACS?

My favorite thing about RACS

is that our agency is a beacon of light for those who find themselves in darkness and fear. We have the privilege of walking alongside survivors as they heal and determine what choices are best for them and their children. Knowing that I have had the opportunity to impact someone's life for the better, no matter how big or small that impact is, is an awesome experience and one that I do not take lightly. We not only change lives, we often save time.

Do you have any upcoming events/programs?

On May 12, 2025, the 4th annual Driving Out Domestic Violence golf tournament will be held at

the Jefferson City County Club. Register your team today! And on June 19, 2025, local photographer, Nichole Manner, will be showcasing dance portraits at the Capital City Cinema. All proceeds from the showcase will go to support RACS clinical and counseling services. Come see some amazing photography and support RACS at the same time!

What is a fun fact about you?

This is not my first job at RACS. When I originally moved to Jefferson City my first job was as the volunteer coordinator and then the court based victim advocate for RACS. I worked for the agency for five years before I moved on,

but I have always given RACS credit for laying the groundwork for my career. When I had the opportunity to come back to RACS as the Executive Director 20 some years later, it felt like coming home.

What are you most looking forward to this year?

I don't know about this year, but 2026 will be RACS' 45th anniversary and I am looking forward to celebrating 45 years of healing and hope.

Our Community Is Planting Trees

By Kurt Hafley,
United Way of Central Missouri



Emily Sabourin/NCC – Social Media & Content Development photo: Early Childhood Professions Students from Nichols Career Center (center) pose with, (from left), NCC Assistant Director Brian Jobe, Hitachi Energy Community Relations Ashley Varner, United Way of Central Missouri Early Childhood Program Director Kurt Hafley, NCC Early Childhood Programs Instructor Jennifer Eldringhoff, and (far right) JC Schools Foundation President Debra Kaiser, JC Schools Foundation Administrative Coordinator Gloria Hansen and JC Schools Foundation Executive Director Peyton Leary.

"Blessed are the people who plant trees under whose shade they will never sit."

I read this proverb a few weeks ago and it really got me thinking. We as humans often make choices to receive instant happiness or satisfaction. It seems we look for an outcome that has the shortest path to receive the biggest reward. I know I'm guilty of this almost every day. However, once the shine wears off my instantaneous prize, I am often left with an empty feeling. A feeling that can't be overcome by the shortest of routes with the largest return. Often times I have to remind myself that some of the best things in life are worth planning and waiting for. The waiting won't be a quick process and we may never be able to cash in on the return but we need to plant trees whose shade we will never sit under. We need to make a change that may never benefit us personally but will make things better for those yet to come.

Over the few last months I have been very lucky and blessed to work at the United Way of Central Missouri. At the United Way we are constantly looking toward and planning for the future. In the short time that I've been a part of this team as the Early Childhood Program Director, my goal has been to reach out to our early childhood learning centers, local businesses, and other important and invested groups and leadership. Through this process I've been able to see the ever-changing needs, challenges, and strengths of our community. One of the major strengths that I saw was the Early Childhood Professions class at Nichols Career Center (NCC) in Jefferson City. This class and the instructors who teach it are certainly trying to get a head start by training and preparing a younger generation with leadership skills to better help our youngest learners for years to come.

The Early Childhood Professions class is a relatively new program that gives high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to learn the skills needed for a future career in the early childhood education field. A large part of these skills come from the field

training experience they receive. Over 120 hours are spent in the classroom along with over 480 hours of direct instruction that is spent working with children at local early childhood centers. After completing the class and the "real life" experience with the children in the centers, the soon-to-be instructors are also gaining a Child Development Associate Credential (CDA). The CDA is a nationally recognized credential and a great first step in early childhood education. It is valid anywhere in the country and will lead to more job opportunities and higher salaries for these future teachers.

Earlier this year it came to my attention that many of the students in the Early Childhood Professions class would like to attend the Conference on the Young Years hosted by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education at the Lake of the Ozarks. I also realized that NCC would need help in order to send these students to the conference. Here is where this story really gets good. After a few emails - and a couple of calls and texts - I found partners who were more than willing to help. Once our community sees a need, they jump into action and make things happen.

In short order and in partnership with United Way of Central Missouri and Nichols Career Center, Hitachi Energy and the JC Schools Foundation stepped up to join the cause. Within a couple of weeks, all of the students who wanted to attend the conference were registered and their lodging and accommodations were secured. Due to the efforts of this small but wondrously generous group, the

NCC students will be able to attend the conference for two days at no cost. This experience will definitely be a highlight of their high school experience and one that they will remember throughout their lives. I can't express how thankful I am for the support Hitachi Energy and the JC Schools Foundation provided. I'm also very excited to be a part of the blossoming Early Childhood Professions program at Nichols Career Center and I look forward to more partnering opportunities in the future. This program is certainly trying to solve a problem. We need more early childhood educators and the Early Childhood Professions program is doing just that.

This collaboration is just one of the countless connections that are made each day in every corner of our community. There are so many people who volunteer time, talents, and dollars to help fix our current challenges, while looking forward at what investments can be made for what the future may hold. I've seen the painstakingly hard work that's done each day by the dedicated people at our partner agencies as they champion those who need our community's support the most. I've witnessed firsthand the care given to so many of our friends, family, and neighbors. I think the partnerships we help to build, the relationships we nurture, the introductions we facilitate, the connections we make, and the people that we stand with shoulder to shoulder are the deeper, underlying charge of our work. I know this community is ready to help with what needs attention now, and I also know we are going to plant some trees for the future together!



United Way of Central Missouri photo: Early Childhood Professions students from Nichols Career Center and their instructor Jennifer Eldringhoff "rock out" at the Conference of the Young Years.

What is Fund Allocation? Why Should I Care?

By Janet Wear-Enloe,
Fund Allocation Chair

When you donate to a charity, you hope your donation is used to make the best possible impact – but how can you be sure? United Way of Central Missouri volunteers complete the Fund Allocation Process to do just that!

Fund Allocation ensures transparency into the process of how United Way agencies operate and spend funds that are given to them by community members and organizations. Panels meet once each week, visit each agency in person, and review the lengthy agency application.

- Fund Allocation by the Numbers
- >70 volunteers
- Dedicating 10-15 hours per person
- Process takes 5 weeks from late February to the first of April
- 6 panels

- Each panel reviews 4-5 agencies or initiatives

After Fund Allocation panels review United Way partner agency operations, programs, and finances, they recommend how much money should be allocated to each agency the following year. Funding recommendations are presented to the United Way Board of Directors for review and final approval.

About the Volunteers

The volunteers come from various backgrounds, using their respective areas of expertise, offering suggestions to help the agencies become the best stewards of their funds and efforts. For example, marketing professionals may provide tips on ways to improve communication about what an agency is doing to serve clients. Another example, quality control professionals may scrutinize the agency processes to ensure compliance with best practices.

The strength of utilizing volunteers from multiple disciplines provides optimal guidance to United Way agencies.

Why Fund Allocation Matters

The work of volunteers ensures that donor dollars are used to achieve the greatest impact in the areas of health, education, financial stability and basic needs – and that United Way of Central Missouri is accountable to its donors.

If you are interested in participating on a Fund Allocation panel, or have questions regarding the Online Grant Management System or the Fund Allocation process, please contact Theresa Verslues at 573-636-4100 or theresa.verslues@unitedwaycemo.org.

Fund Allocation Committee

PANEL 1

- Jonathon Prouty - Chair
- Chip Webb - Vice Chair
- Jennifer Bauer
- Pete Brightwell
- Chris Ebright
- Casey Gentry
- Dr. Randy Haig
- Kelli Jeffries
- Amanda Kelley
- Matt Kujath
- Pete Langston
- Bill Naught
- Travis Stephens
- Janet Wear Enloe
- Donna White

PANEL 2

- Mark Baker - Chair
- Peter Grefrath - Vice Chair
- K.C. DeBoer
- Trent Dudenhoeffer
- Jim Hickman
- Pat Hubbs
- Mark Kaiser
- Lori Kempker
- Jeff Kremer
- Becky Miller
- Jay Moore
- Chris Schrimpf
- Crystal Tellman
- Ronna Wilson
- Ed Zagorac

PANEL 3

- Britt Smith - Chair
- Brad Oxenhandler - Vice Chair
- Seth Freeman
- Adrian Heckman
- Michael Huber
- Janel Luck
- Gail Metz
- Holly Nunn
- TJ Ralston
- Tina Shannon
- Cassandra Sundermeyer
- Lee Temmen
- Arlene Vogel

PANEL 4

- Ryan Towner - Chair
- Tyler Luebbert - Vice Chair
- Dakota Baumhoer
- Stacy Brown
- Kristi Campbell
- Tammy Chute
- Mike Ely
- Diane Gillespie
- Carlos Graham
- Aubrey Krcmar
- Joy Ledbetter
- Jeremy Morris
- Stu Murphy
- Lynnette Robinson
- Holly Schroer
- Chief Eric Wilde

PANEL 5







- Dan Haug - Chair
- Kathy Pabst - Vice Chair
- Julie Gates
- Pam Harrison
- Julie Henley
- Lauren Hogue
- Eric Hubble
- Valerie Huhn
- Austin Johnson
- Jeff Moore
- Josh Moore
- Sally Oxenhandler
- Nancy Samp
- Michelle Varcho

PANEL 6

- Mindie Friederich - Chair
- Michael Love - Vice Chair
- Drew Biddle
- Aaron Cooper
- Colby Forrest-Dietzel
- Bret Gerard
- Tammy Hartley
- Alden Henrickson
- Luke Holtschneider
- Beth Light
- Madeline Matson
- Jim Perch
- Shelby Reed
- Lindsey Rowden
- Tom Sadowski
- Kirk Schreiber

100 YEARS OF CARING

1925 1930s 1940s 1950s 1960s 1970s 1980s 1990s 2000s 2010s 2020s 2025

<p>1925</p> <p>The first Community Chest campaign goal was \$17,500. Community exceeded goal, raising \$18,095 and funding three agencies: Red Cross, Boy Scouts and The Salvation Army</p>	<p>1930s</p> <p>The Community Chest was focused on supporting agencies helping the poor and unfortunate during the Great Depression; Several campaigns included a War Fund</p>	<p>1940s</p> <p>The now iconic "Red Feather" Campaign was created to increase awareness of The Community Chest; Slogan 'Give a Day's Pay for a Year's Service' was created</p> 	<p>1950s</p> <p>The Community Chest separated from the Chamber of Commerce and became the United Community Fund; the first Executive Secretary was hired; the now-known process of Fund Allocation was developed</p> 	<p>1960s</p> <p>Ruth Meloy was hired as Executive Secretary and the United Community Fund was officially incorporated</p>	<p>1970s</p> <p>The organization renamed to Jefferson City Area United Way and raised over \$200,000 for the first time</p> 	<p>1980s</p> <p>The Jefferson City Area United Way broke the \$1 million mark and created the "Speaker's Bureau", a group still used today dedicated to informing the community of the United Way's impact</p> 	<p>1990s</p> <p>In response to the Great Flood of 1993, Jefferson City Area United Way established Mid-Missouri Unmet Needs Committee to network and share resources - a group that still meets monthly at the United Way office; in 1996 the organization renamed to United Way of Central Missouri</p> 	<p>2000s</p> <p>United Way of Central Missouri Foundation was formed in 2003; the Early Childhood Initiative was formed in 2005; the LIVE UNITED slogan was adopted, focusing on education, income and health</p>	<p>2010s</p> <p>United Way relocates to its current address on Alameda Drive; The Campaign breaks the \$2 million mark in 2017; the EF3 tornado tears through Miller and Cole counties in 2019, and United Way responds with disaster relief support and the formation of the Cole County Community Organizations Active in Disaster (CC-COAD)</p> 	<p>2020s</p> <p>United Way provides assistance and relief from the global COVID-19 pandemic; Women United forms; outlying counties become a focus and are supported through additional grant funding; A deeper approach is taken on Behavioral Health Needs</p>
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1920s | 2025 - 100 Years of Caring!

CELEBRATING A CENTURY OF CARING

United Way of Central Missouri is celebrating its 100th anniversary in central Missouri this year. In 1924-1925, the United Way of Central Missouri was born. United Way was first known as the Community Chest, formed to combine the fundraising efforts of the charity campaign and the welfare campaign into one. "The object of the Community Chest is to unify all nine causes which are now soliciting funds through a duplication of drives. This will be the beginning of a consolidated supervision of charity and welfare work in the county, which will mean maximum economy; and elimination of duplication," stated an article in The Daily Capital News, December 6, 1924.

100 years later we still have the same goal--to unite the fundraising efforts for multiple agencies and programs. The estimated goal for the 1925 Campaign was \$17,500. Some of our current agencies were on the list to receive funding in 1925, including Red Cross, Boy Scouts (now known as Scouting America) and The Salvation Army.

Over the years the United Way of Central Missouri has mobilized campaign volunteers to assist with the annual fundraising efforts. In 1925, the volunteers were divided into divisions such as professionals, schools, industries & utilities, state employees, men's club and women's division. Today's campaign is similar, with 7 divisions including Pacesetters, Nonprofits & Associations, Special

Givers, Small Business, Public/Private Sector, State Government and Major/Large Firms.

In the early years, the Community Chest drive was an intensive four-day campaign. Today, the fundraising campaign takes place July through November.

The late 1920s and early 1930s focus was on agencies that served the poor and unfortunate in our community due in part to the economic condition of the country as a result of the Great Depression. According to an article in the Jefferson City Post Tribune on December 7, 1932; the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts voluntarily reduced the amount of their Community Chest allotments in order to provide more funding to relief agencies. These two agencies were commended and praised for the good work they do and their generous offer to assist relief agencies. In the 1940's, several of the Community Chest campaigns included a War Fund.

In 1945 the goal was increased to \$53,236 to support 9 local community agencies and 21 war relief agencies. Also in the 1940's, a "Red Feather" campaign was a popular symbol to represent the efforts of the campaign for eight local agencies as well as the United Service Organizations (USO) of Jefferson City. People were asked to wear the "Red Feather" proudly in support of the Community Chest. One of the slogan's from the 1940's was, "Give a Day's Pay for a Year's Service". That idea has carried through to the present, and is now known as "Fair Share" giving, which is 1% of a supporter's annual salary or 1 hour of pay per month. Early in the 1950s the "Red Feather" campaign was replaced with the United Community Fund Torch, as a symbol of "one solicitation" for all agencies.

In 1954 the organization

operated separately from the Chamber of Commerce and was called the United Community Fund. The organization hired its first paid Executive Secretary, Mrs. E. A. Belden, in 1954. The United Community Fund (UCF) had a Quotas and Admissions Committee that reviewed the budgets and requests from the agencies. Their job was three-fold: to determine what the campaign funds quota to be raised should be; to determine what agencies should be included in the UCF fundraising activities; and to appraise and reappraise the work of the participating agencies so as to determine whether actual human needs are served without too much overlapping of functions. After all these years, this process still remains in place, but is now known as the Fund Allocation process. Through this process, an army of volunteers provide an in-depth review of the funding requests from agencies. Also in the 1950s, the UCF Drive had a residential component where area women would go house-to-house for solicitations. The door-to-door campaign was phased out in 1968 when the UCF staff felt that most people can be reached where they work.

In 1962 Ruth Meloy was hired as Executive Secretary, and under her direction the United Community Fund was officially incorporated and the organization's first By-laws were established. Ms. Meloy later became the Executive Director and remained in that role until her retirement in 1981. In 1968 Capitol Projects (Sheltered Workshop), was added as a United Way partner agency. Many current United Way of Central Missouri partner agencies began their partnership in the 1960's, including Extension Council - Cole County Youth (today 4-H), Cole County Dental Program, Services for Special Needs Children, Shoes for Needy School Children, and Community Center Nursery

School.

In the 1970s and the 1980s the United Way continued to grow and support various causes. In 1981, a "Speaker's Bureau" was formed to help the community understand the role of the United Way in the community. It was comprised of United Way staff and volunteers. The intent was to inform the public of the who, what, when, where, how and why of the United Way. After 30 years, the United Way still utilizes a Speaker's Bureau to inform businesses as to what United Way does. However, today's Speaker's Bureau not only includes United Way staff and volunteers, but also United Way partner agencies. Hearing a heartfelt story from an agency helps people understand who is being helped through United Way partner agencies.

The flood of 1993 mobilized the community to help those affected. The United Way set up a Flood Relief Fund to give emergency aid organizations an opportunity to share their assessment of unmet needs and accessible resources so that the community could continue to offer the best and quickest flood relief services available. All of the money collected went directly to flood relief; no administrative cost was incurred. Any church or non-profit organization could apply for flood relief services. Agencies and organizations across the community came together to assist families affected by the flood. Thirty years later this committee, now known as "Unmet Needs", still meets monthly to share resources, discuss case management needs and coordinate services.

The turn of the century, 2000 to 2009, marked an abundance of growth as well as new programs and initiatives for the United Way. The United Way of Central Missouri campaigns continued to grow from \$1.4 million dollars to \$1.6 million. The United Way of Central Missouri Foundation was established in September of 2003 to build a permanent, sustainable avenue of support for the future through gifts, bequests and

planned giving. The Foundation was created to provide a safety net in the event of a catastrophic or unforeseen event in our community. The United Way embraced the new mantra "Live United" and "Advancing the Common Good" by focusing on Health, Education, Financial Stability and Basic Needs. In addition, United Ways across Missouri launched the United Way 2-1-1 initiative. United Way 2-1-1 is a toll free number to help people find health and human service assistance for everything from food and shelter to job counseling services, health resources, as well as everyday needs. In 2005 our local United Way also launched its Early Childhood initiative to support the needs of Early Childhood in our community by identifying unmet needs and providing support to Early Childhood professionals.

The next decade, 2010-2019, saw a lot of growth, with campaigns results increasing from \$1.625 million in 2010 to \$2.283 million in 2019 - breaking the \$2 million mark in 2017. A catastrophic EF3 tornado and severe flooding impacted central Missouri in May of 2019 and marked the beginning of a five-year recovery journey. In likeness to the 1993 flood, the Unmet Needs Committee quickly came together. Out of that committee, response and relief agencies formed the Short-Term Recovery Committee and eventually transitioned to the Long-Term Recovery Committee. In addition to campaign fundraising that year, another \$340,000 was raised in 2019 through the United Way Disaster Recovery Fund to support response, recovery and relief efforts. Today, the United Way is still heavily involved in disaster work, taking the lead role in forming the Cole County Community Organizations Active in Disaster (CC-COAD) - a community-wide effort to plan and prepare for the next disaster while we are in 'blue skies'.

At the start of the current

decade, 2020, we were met with another catastrophic challenge - not just for our community but across the globe as the COVID-19 pandemic affected all corners of the world. The already formed Short-Term and Long-Term Recovery Committees stood ready to help with response and recovery efforts, holding bi-weekly virtual meetings to support community needs for all 3 events: the tornado, flooding and the pandemic. Through these efforts, significant COVID relief grants were distributed to support local health agencies, restaurant and service workers, healthcare employees, and essential workers, including masks and medical supplies for hospital. The next few years were less eventful as the community continued to return to its new normal after the tornado, flooding and pandemic - allowing United Way to once again shift more of its focus to the annual fundraising campaign as disaster needs were met.

100 years of caring later, the United Way of Central Missouri continues to be a strong community collaborator bringing agencies, people and resources together to make our community thrive. In 2024, we supported 26 member agencies and raised over \$2.79 million through the annual fundraising campaign. As we embark on our 100th year in 2025 and celebrate our history and milestones, our United Way stands ready to continue serving central Missouri for the next 100 years and beyond!

United Way Celebrates 2024 at Annual Meeting

United Way of Central Missouri officially closed the 2024 business year with its Annual Meeting, sponsored by Bartlett & West, held earlier today at Capitol Plaza Hotel. During the luncheon event, elections were held for the 2025 Governing Body and Board of Directors, and supportive businesses and individuals were recognized for their incredible commitment to the United Way.

“We are so grateful to have so many friends of the United Way here today to celebrate the

successes of 2024 and envision all we can accomplish in the new year,” said Gregg Bexten, 2024 United Way Board Chairman.

During the program, twenty-two members of the Governing Body were elected to three-year terms, and ten Governing Body members were reappointed to a second three-year term.

Five new members of the Board of Directors were elected to their first three-year term:

- Dr. Troy Hogg, Jefferson City School District
- Aubrey Krcmar, Ameren Missouri
- Stephanie Lehmen, C&S Employment Solutions
- Kyle Shimmens, Osage Ambulances

- Chief Eric Wilde, City of Jefferson

Two board members were reappointed to a second three-year term:

- Cassandra Atchison, Modern Litho
- Pat Tatum, Community Volunteer

Additionally, United Way of Central Missouri honored five outgoing Board Members for their service and dedication to the organization:

- Sharon Campbell, Missouri Farm Bureau Insurance
- Lori Hoelscher, Ameren Missouri
- Brenda Leydens, Mid America Bank
- Bryan McGraw, Jefferson City

School District

- John Moseley, Lincoln University

The 2024 Board Chair, Gregg Bexten (Hawthorn Bank), was recognized for his service; and Bob Gilbert (Bartlett & West), presented closing remarks as the 2025 Board Chair. 2024 Campaign Co-Chairs; Doug Hagenhoff (Hawthorn Bank) and Renee Duenckel (Jefferson Bank) were honored for their service and for exceeding the \$2.6 million goal and raising a projected unprecedented \$2.79+ million total for the 2024 Campaign. Doug Hagenhoff was honored for his two-year dedication as campaign co-chair. Renee Duenckel will serve her

second-year term in 2025, and it was announced that Jeremy Morris, Williams-Keepers will be joining her to co-chair this year’s campaign.

In addition to the aforementioned honorees, several individuals and businesses were recognized for their outstanding service to the United Way of Central Missouri (see photos and captions below for award winners).

To close the program, United Way of Central Missouri announced it will be celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. Lee Knernschild, President/CPO of United Way of Central Missouri, said “The year ahead is sure to be even more special

as the United Way of Central Missouri will be celebrating 100 years in our community! Every one of you has played a role in our 100 year history, and we thank you for shaping our legacy.”

United Way of Central Missouri extends its deepest gratitude for the central Missouri community. Thanks to the incredible support of over 7,000 individuals and businesses, United Way continues to help people live their best possible lives and looks forward to the 2025 year ahead.



Ann F. Bax Award: Angela Hirsch, Rape & Abuse Crisis Service
This award recognizes a deserving United Way agency director who exemplifies strong leadership.



Linda E. McAnany Award: Kaitlin Mallow, Volunteer for Rape & Abuse Crisis Service (RACS)
This award recognizes a Volunteer of the Year for Distinguished Service.



Live United Award (Corporate): Hitachi Energy
This award recognizes a business for its exemplary support of the United Way and the community.



Ruth C. Meloy Award: Angela Nix, Little Explorers Discovery Center
This award recognizes a staff member of a United Way agency whose work and dedication exemplifies the mission of the United Way of Central Missouri.



Outstanding Campaign Coordinator: Ashley Varner, Hitachi Energy
This award recognizes a Campaign Coordinator for their standout efforts during their business’ United Way Campaign.



Live United Award (Individual): Cassandra Atchison
This award recognizes an individual for their exemplary support of the United Way and the community.



William W. Quigg Award: Osage Ambulances
This award was named after an individual who was not only a strong supporter of the United Way of Central Missouri but also the entire business community. This award recognizes an exceptional business whose philanthropic spirit is inspiring.



Pacesetter of the Year Award: Capital Region Medical Center/MU Health Care
This award recognizes an exceptional business supporter in the Pacesetter Campaign division.

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