



UNITED WAY NEWSLETTER

IMPACT IN THE CHIPPEWA VALLEY

Volunteers sorting personal care products for 2nd Annual Shoebox Project

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Jan Porath, Executive Director
United Way of the
Greater Chippewa Valley

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR *“The Beating of Many Wings”*

The turning of a new year offers the opportunity for reflection. If I were to select only one quote to paint the picture of the past twelve months at United Way, I would share the following: “It is a fact that in the right formation, the lifting power of many wings can achieve twice the distance of any bird flying alone.” (*Author unknown.*)

This particular quote was shared with me a few months ago by a United Way staffer. It has been with me since that time and it comes to mind when I think about the amazing amount of work that can be achieved when we all come together.

Because of all of this synchronized wing flapping, I am proud of the accomplishments achieved in 2012. With the steady hand of dedicated volunteers and—to my good fortune—a talented staff, United Way has experienced many successes, some for the very first time, some due to the foresight and perseverance of those, decades before, who established a strong foundation on which to continuously build upon.

The achievements run the gamut of increased participants at the golf tournament, increased communication with volunteers and donors (including the restoration of the print newsletter), additional corporate engagement opportunities through billboards and illuminated displays in high traffic venues, a grant award of \$14,100 through the Celebrate Children Foundation on behalf of the Governor’s Early Childhood Advisory Council (a first!), a challenge grant put forth to the community thanks to Jacob Leinenkugel Brewing Company, the highly attended community campaign kickoff, over 80 Day of Caring projects completed, 12 community conversations throughout the Chippewa Valley, and so much more.

My intentions aren’t to share this list as a self-serving pat on the back; I share it as a testament to the caring power of a community, to the board of directors, to the devoted committees and to all of the volunteer leadership that try new things and create an environment for innovation. It has been a joyful 2012 and I look forward to an exciting 2013.





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UNITED WAY RANKS #1 IN FORBES MAGAZINE'S LIST OF TOP 100 CHARITIES

Named a Top-Five "All-Star"

United Way Worldwide announced its selection by Forbes magazine as the largest U.S. charity. In addition, United Way has been named one of "Forbes Picks: All-Star Charities," a newly created category that reflects the organization's dedication to quality programs, community impact and organizational efficiency.

"It is an honor for United Way and the thousands of community impact professionals working throughout our network to be recognized as a top charity for our resources, community impact, program quality and organizational efficiency," said Stacey D. Stewart, president of United Way U.S.A. "After 125 years of creating long-term change in communities, United Way continues to create opportunities for a better life for all throughout the United States and around the world."



"This announcement is further encouragement and support for our United Way to continue its concerted effort alongside many dedicated volunteers to advance our community impact model in the greater Chippewa Valley," says United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley Executive Director Jan Porath. "Results of United Ways both in Wisconsin and nationally are demonstrating the positive effect community impact is having on addressing key issues in their local populations, and Forbes calling out United Way as an All-Star Charity is further recognition of this."

For inclusion on the Forbes list, United Way was judged based on the amount of private donations made to the organization; either by individual donors, corporations, partnerships and other nonprofits. Forbes included United Way as a financial efficiency all-star based on the overall percentage of donations used in program implementation.

UNITED WAY DISCONTINUES DIRECT PARTICIPATION IN TASTE OF THE VALLEY



For 6 enjoyable years, United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley has been involved with Taste of the Valley (originally Taste of Eau Claire). Made possible by the support and hard work of volunteers, area businesses, and—for the last several years—in partnership with Eau Claire Press Company, Taste of the Valley has been a labor of love for all involved. The tremendous support and backing of Eau Claire Press Company has been deeply appreciated by our United Way and our volunteer planning committee.

On November 16, 2012, at a United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley Board of Directors meeting, the decision was made to cease United Way's direct involvement in Taste of the Valley. This decision did not come quickly or easily, and was made based on the best interests of the community in regard to United Way's primary initiatives to advance the education, income and health of our community. The decision to step away

from Taste of the Valley, regardless of how positively we view the event, was made after acknowledgement that the time required to help plan and organize the event simply did not equate to the number of dollars raised for the community. Our primary concern is, and always must be, to ensure that time invested by staff and volunteers yields an appropriate return in either dollars raised, or accomplishments made, for our area.

Everyone involved with United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley extends sincere appreciation and thanks to Eau Claire Press Company for their hard work and support, and truly hope that Taste of the Valley can continue to succeed as a signature Chippewa Valley event.

Those with questions or wishing more details regarding United Way's decision can call our office at 715-834-5043, or e-mail us at info@uwgcv.org.

COMPANY SPOTLIGHT

Scheels All Sports - Eau Claire

Scheels All Sports had its beginnings in Sabin, Minnesota in 1902 when a German immigrant named Frederick Scheels opened his small hardware and general merchandise store. Today, Scheels boasts 24 stores in 10 states, which includes the Oakwood Mall location in Eau Claire. This employee-owned, privately held business has not only provided an impressive selection of sporting equipment, clothing and accessories, but also an outstanding culture of community involvement that includes a close partnership with United Way.

Jared Diemert, assistant store leader for the Eau Claire Scheels store, says that the conviction for supporting United Way and the community, "... begins at the top and trickles down to each associate. Scheels tries to help people understand how important United Way is to the community."



Also significant, however, is how important Scheels has been to our community. Besides being a Business Best 25 in their campaign contributions, local Scheels associates are amazingly active and

giving to the community. Back in May, they ran one of the top business food drives for Stamp Out Hunger, and in October, they were one of the hosts for our Super Bowl Ring fundraising promotion.

As for other community support throughout the year? "There's so much that our associates participate in," says Samantha Berg, event coordinator for Scheels, "it's hard to remember it all." But, just to name a few, throughout the year associates take part in various volunteer and fundraising activities for Boys and Girls Club,



Big Brothers Big Sisters, Special Olympics, Make-A-Wish Foundation, and local food pantries. In December, Scheels hosted the live radio broadcast on WAXX of the Last Minute Santa Auction to raise money for United Cerebral Palsy. Samantha, who is also the Employee Campaign Coordinator for the Scheels United Way campaign, organized their kick-off which included a raffle fundraiser in August and finished with a LIVE UNITED T-shirt day and chili cook-off in December, raising many thousands extra on top of their primary campaign pledges. "We see prominent associate support," Sam states with appropriate pride.

"Speaking only for myself," Sam says, "I appreciate United Way because the money we give stays local. It helps my neighbors and my community, and I can personally see the results of that."



UNITED WAY 2012 ANNUAL REPORT RELEASED

Highlights activities from 2011 fiscal year

The United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley 2012 Annual Report is now available online for public review. This report not only includes financial information for our 2011 fiscal year, but also details community engagements, initiatives and primary activities that took place from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012.

2012 United Way Annual Report
and 990 available online at:
www.uwgcv.org/accountability

Donors, advocates and volunteers of United Way are encouraged to take time to review this comprehensive report to see how community donations are being invested, and key initiatives that our United Way is implementing to improve our community.

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SPECIAL MEETING OF EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Council, United Way staff meet with public health and human services representatives to forward Successful Children's Network initiative

On December 4, 2012, 5 members of the Education Advisory Council, along with Dave Gordon, vice president of transition and United Way executive and mobilization staff, met with both public health and human services representatives from Chippewa and Eau Claire counties. Representing were Jean Durch, public health director for the Chippewa County Department of Public Health, and Roy Sargeant, director of Eau Claire County Department of Human Services, as well as Kitty Rahl from Eau Claire City-County Health Department and Larry Winter from Chippewa County Department of Human Services, both of whom are members of the Education Advisory Council. This meeting was arranged to further advance the Successful Children's Network initiative developed by the Education Advisory Council.

This initiative is a comprehensive model that will bring together early learning providers, health care, government, family support services and volunteers to encourage early childhood development and family support so that children will enter school ready to succeed. Targeting children from birth to five years old in households below 200% of poverty guidelines, the Successful Children's Network plans to bridge the achievement gap for 4,890 children in over 1800 Chippewa and Eau Claire county families.

The goals of this meeting were to share information about the newly developed service model with Public Health and Human Services representatives so that coordination of health and education services could be explored, and to understand the current intake, coordination and referral systems for children in Chippewa and Eau Claire counties. This meeting also served as a first step for ultimately determining appropriate civic and private programs to help fulfill the health coordination role of the



Successful Children's Network model.

Those in attendance investigated whether or not the Successful Children's Network could fulfill health-related service coordination for the target population by working with the Eau Claire City-County Health Department and an existing network called Western Regional Center for Children with Special Health Care Needs (a joint initiative of the Chippewa County Department of Public Health and the Chippewa County Department of Human Services). Future discussion and study will determine the viability of the Successful Children's Network model being advanced through these or alternative agencies or programs.

SUCCESSFUL CHILDREN'S NETWORK AWARDED GRANT

The Successful Children's Network has been awarded an Investing Early grant by the Celebrate Children Foundation, a public charity which helps communities across the state to create effective early learning for all children.

The \$14,100 grant was awarded by the Celebrate Children Foundation on behalf of the Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council to support Wisconsin programs that work to improve the quality of early childhood development. These funds will be applied to Successful Children's Network planning expenses between December 1, 2012 and May 31, 2013.

This grant will help fund costs associated with designing a long-term governance and partnership structure for the Successful Children's Network, planning for long-term capacity and sustainability, and developing an implementation plan. The Education Advisory Council will also establish key partnerships, obtain signed agreements, and produce and distribute the finalized community action plan.

For more information about the Celebrate Children Foundation, please visit: www.celebrate-children.org.





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UNITED WAY
IN THE CHIPPEWA VALLEY**

**CELEBRATING 100%
PARTICIPATION IN THE
UNITED WAY 2012
COMMUNITY CAMPAIGN!**

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KELLEY BOYLE - LENDING A HAND TO MAKE HER COMMUNITY BETTER



"We could have our own school district," Kelley Boyle quips when referring to her family. She mentions this in reference to having a grandfather, mother, father, and sister all working in or retired from academic professions.

Her mother recently retired as a special education instructor in the Stanley-Boyd school district. Perhaps the passion and dedication her mother showed to children with special needs was an early seed to Kelley's amazingly active volunteerism in the community. "Our family always volunteered for Special Olympics."

But Kelley's first adult experience with volunteering began with United Way's Day of Caring. CliftonLarsonAllen, where Kelley has worked for over six years, strongly encourages their employees to give back to the community. When a team was being put together for Day of Caring, Kelley signed up. "I think that first project was landscaping along the river at Owen Park." As with many Day of Caring participants, that experience helped foster what is now an extremely active volunteer lifestyle for Kelley.

"But really, the IMPACT Tours had a strong effect on me," Kelley adds in explaining her draw to actively helping others. (IMPACT Tours are day-

long tours of United Way partner programs so donors can see their dollars at work.) "Especially hearing about how things come full circle." Kelley refers to a story the Chippewa Valley Free Clinic shared about a man who was an independent painter struggling with health and financial issues. He was cared for at the clinic, and later came back to paint their facility in gratitude.

And so began Kelley's increasingly active roles with United Way and the community. Her involvement in 2012 alone includes participating in Day of Caring, Taste of the Valley, The Community Table, Young Professionals, Leadership Eau Claire, and helping plan the recent Emerging Leaders Shoebox Project as an active member of Emerging Leaders. "I'm lucky to work at CliftonLarsonAllen because we're allowed to work in the community and support what we believe in."

Kelley has also been an essential volunteer for United Way as an Account Executive for 4 years running. "I'm very passionate about United Way. It takes care of identifying the needs of the community."

As for what she receives from volunteering? While recognizing the element of self-gratification that comes with volunteering, she also finds it rewarding to "... work with other professionals and see how the community works. It's also great when you're volunteering at a place like Community Table and someone just comes up to you and says, 'Thank you.'"



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United Way Hurricane Sandy Recovery Fund

Larger United Way network coordinates for greater local impact

United Way Hurricane Sandy Recovery Fund:
www.uwsandyrecovery.org

United Way has established the United Way Hurricane Sandy Recovery Fund. Contributions to the Fund will be used by local United Ways along the Eastern Seaboard to address the near and long-term recovery needs of communities that FEMA has declared disaster areas.

The United Way system is uniquely equipped to respond to disaster because of each local United Way's in-depth knowledge of their community's needs, ability to draw on the resources of area network of leaders in the corporate and social service sectors, and long-standing partnerships with key private, public and nonprofit stakeholders in each community.

At the request of and in coordination with United Way U.S.A., United Way of New York City will manage the Fund and ensure that all funds are used efficiently and effectively to serve those needing assistance. One hundred percent of donations received (less any credit card processing fees) will be granted to charities that are addressing the recovery needs of communities most affected by the hurricane, and will be used to bolster United Way's community partners that serve hurricane affected individuals and families, some of whom were already vulnerable and experiencing chal-

lenges in meeting their most basic needs.

Where some organizations support relief efforts of an immediate nature by providing food, clothing, blankets, and short term shelter in the days and immediate weeks following a disaster, this Fund is intended to complement the work of these organizations by meeting intermediate and longer term recovery needs that are not covered by insurance or government programs.

The efforts and coordination of Eastern Seaboard United Ways demonstrate the effective power and immediate impact the larger United Way network can have while still maintaining complete focus on each organization's local community. United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley applauds the actions and significant impact already taking place by those communities affected by hurricane Sandy.

To learn more about the United Way Hurricane Sandy Recovery Fund and to give, please visit UWSandyRecovery.org.

**TUESDAY,
MARCH 5TH, 2013**

**5:00 P.M.
TO
7:30 P.M.**

**RSVP Online at
www.UWgcv.org**



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS - GOLD AWARD

Help us recognize individuals and non-profit organizations who have done exemplary work for the community in 2012.

Nominations are now being accepted for the United Way Gold Awards which will celebrate our 2012 community campaign on Tuesday, March 5th at The Florian Gardens. Please participate and place your nominations for the following awards:

Outstanding Emerging Leader – recognizes an individual for their remarkable dedication to the Emerging Leader Society through a mixture of leadership and volunteerism

Humanitarian Award – Honors an individual for their efforts to make the Chippewa Valley a better place to live by action, philanthropy, volunteerism or involvement.

Senn Award – Established in 1998 by Kaye and Steve Senn, this award honors an individual for their professional excellence and achievement in the nonprofit sector

Nonprofit Excellence Award – Honors a nonprofit agency for their efforts to make the Chippewa Valley a better place to live by demonstrating superior performance, quality and consistency in pursuit of its mission.

To nominate an individual or organization, please visit our website and follow the Gold Awards link in the “UPCOMING EVENTS” tab, or go directly to this link: uwgcv.org/gold-awards-nomination-forms.

Nominations are due by Wednesday, February 6th.



2ND ANNUAL SHOEBOX PROJECT EXCEEDS GOAL

Each fall, United Way Emerging Leaders collect shoeboxes filled with personal care items so they can be given to homeless and financially insecure individuals in our community. Shoeboxes are delivered to Chippewa Valley shelters and agencies so these essentials can be provided to those in need at a time when struggling families and individuals can be challenged by colder weather and rising utility costs, and nonprofits see higher demand for services.

For the 2012 Shoebox Project, an ambitious goal was set to collect 700 shoeboxes. This was a significant increase from 2011's total of just over 500 boxes collected. After boxes were fully tallied, and taking into consideration bulk donations of items, the equivalent of over 700 shoeboxes were given to 13 area nonprofits to distribute to individuals and families in need of their services. A conservative estimate puts total dollar value on these donations at \$17,000 worth of personal care and other useful household items.

Special thanks to BMO Harris Bank, Country Jam, Macy's, and Wal-Mart for being dropoff locations, and to America's Best Value Inn for providing their conference room for sorting shoeboxes. Thanks also to the many volunteers who helped sort shoeboxes.

These 13 area nonprofits received shoebox donations to distribute to their clients who are homeless or otherwise struggling financially:

- Beacon House
- Bolton Refuge House
- Boys and Girls Club
- The Community Table
- Chippewa Valley Free Clinic
- Open Door Clinic
- American Red Cross
- The Salvation Army
- Sojourner House
- Starting Points
- United Cerebral Palsy
- The Wellness Shack
- Western Dairyland



SUBMIT YOUR NOMINATION:

Visit www.uwgcv.org/gold-awards-nomination-forms

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SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH

Dental Health Promotion Subcommittee works under Eau Claire County Healthy Communities Initiatives

Working under the Eau Claire County Healthy Communities Initiatives, the Dental Health Promotion Subcommittee is working to raise awareness and educate area children on oral health. Subcommittee members include representation from United Way, local dental and dental hygiene organizations, Junior League of Eau Claire, Marshfield Health Systems, Chippewa Valley Technical College Dental Hygiene Program, Eau Claire City-County Health Department public health nurses, and area school districts. Their primary initiative, "Rethink Your Drink," targets elementary children to promote the dangers of consuming too many sweetened beverages.

To help promote February as Children's Dental Health Month, the

Dental Health Promotion Subcommittee ran a poster contest in October and November, where children could design a poster that encouraged dental health. 12 posters will be selected by a jury of community members to be featured in a special calendar.

The committee recently received a Colgate Community Outreach Award for \$2,000, which they used to award prizes and help cover the cost of producing the calendars.

Poor dental health continues to be a pervasive issue in our community and across the nation. Not only can it lead to serious health issues, but dental pain and discomfort can adversely affect a child's academic performance.

IN BRIEF

- Special thanks to **WEAU 13 News** for producing our **Leinenkugel's LIVE UNITED Challenge** public service announcement, and to both **WEAU 13 News** and **WQOW 18** for airing the PSA in November and December. Additional thanks to **Maverick Media** for producing and airing a PSA challenge spot in December. As of December 21, the Leinie LIVE UNITED Challenge grant raised an additional \$14,050 for the community. These dollars would not have been possible without the generous \$20,000 donation by **Jacob Leinenkugel Brewing Co., Inc.** and the support of **WEAU, WQOW and Maverick Media.**
- Thanks to **Red Robin Gourmet Burgers** of Eau Claire for donating \$200 worth of gift certificates to help us reach our goal for the Leinie Challenge. The special incentive was responsible for \$900 of donations raised since the promotion began on Monday, Dec. 17th.
- **Amy Maziarka**, director of finance and operations for United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley, has been elected as a co-chair of the planning committee for the United Way Worldwide Annual Finance Forum. The forum's intention is to strengthen operations and fiscal responsibilities for all United Ways. This position will only benefit our United Way and her role as director of finance and operations. United Way staff are extremely proud of Amy for this recognition.
- United Way congratulates the **Chippewa Valley Technical College marketing management students** for organizing the **Serving United Way Volleyball Tournament.** 11 teams of 6 players each participated in the tournament, held at Loopy's in Chippewa Falls. Together, the event helped to raise \$3,800 for the community. Congrats to students **Carly Ruffedt, Linda Gilasevitch, Lucas Halverson** and **Ryan Gallagher** for putting on a great event. Special thanks also to the event sponsors: **Loopy's, Jacob Leinenkugel Brewing Company, Northwestern Bank, Fries Financial Group, Sacred Heart Hospital, Chippewa Sand Company, Town of Wheaton** and **River Bend Vineyard & Winery.**

- The United Way community Mobilization staff has recruited the following professionals to **the Health Advisory Council:**

Jean Durch, Chippewa County—Public Health
 Jessica Barrickman, Chippewa County—Human Services/ADRC
 Wade Pilloud, Chippewa Falls Area Unified School District
 Maribeth Woodford, Chippewa Valley Free Clinic
 Linda Bohacek, RDH, Independent Contractor
 Brett Geboy, Eau Claire Chamber of Commerce
 Shayna Schertz, Eau Claire City-County Health Dept.
 Angela Weideman, Coalition for Youth/Children's Hospital of Wisconsin—Community Services
 Jerry Wilkie, Eau Claire County Board
 Roy Sargeant, Eau Claire County—Human Services
 Jerry Matysik, Eau Claire Police Dept.
 Ken Van Es, Eau Claire YMCA
 Geri Segal, Family Support Center
 Amanda Runnoe, Heritage Assisted Living
 John Stedman, JONAH
 Lisa Bruhn, Marshfield Clinic
 Traci Schoonover, Mayo Clinic Health System—Bloomer
 Ed Wittrock, Mayo Clinic Health System—Eau Claire
 Katherine Rhoades, Open Door Clinic

The Health Advisory Committee is chaired by Rhonda Brown, regional director of Community Health Development HSHS (Western WI) division and director of CHIP - St. Joseph's Hospital, and currently meets on the first and third Thursday at the **Goodwill Store** (Community Room) in Lake Hallie. Special thanks to the **Goodwill** for offering their facilities.

- **Girl Scouts of Northwestern Great Lakes** will honor area women who demonstrate a commitment to serving their communities at a **banquet on Monday, April 1, 2013.** Cost is \$60 per person, \$600 per table. For more information and to register for this event, please visit www.gsnwgl.org or contact Amy Underwood at 920-955-3384 .



FAMILYMEANS CONSUMER CREDIT COUNSELING SERVICE

Providing tools and education so families can regain financial stability

Founded in 1963 in Stillwater, Minnesota by area community leaders, FamilyMeans CCCS provides a wide range of counseling and support services to individuals and families facing challenging times. Branch offices are located throughout the Twin Cities metro area, southeastern Minnesota and western Wisconsin. 19 years ago, the Eau Claire office first began offering budget and credit counseling services to residents. FamilyMeans is one of 9 specific United Way program partners (along with 9 other basic needs/emergency service partners) offering crucial services to help support financial stability in the greater Chippewa Valley.

Wayne Jennings, a certified consumer credit counselor for FamilyMeans CCCS in Eau Claire, reports that, on average, one-quarter of his clients receive debt management counseling, another quarter require pre-filing bankruptcy counseling or pre-discharge bankruptcy education, and the remaining half of clients receive budgeting assistance.

Individuals and families typically need financial counseling because of too much debt caused by a variety of reasons that include—but are no way limited to—job loss, divorce, medical, and inflation. “I’ve had clients all across the socioeconomic strata, from doctors to low-income wage earners,” Wayne explains, adding, “I’ve been seeing more of what would be considered middle class wage earners in recent years.”

Of all the causes for a household needing financial guidance, Wayne sees medical debt often becoming “the last straw on the back of the camel. Just too much debt.” One reason for this is because, in recent years, medical institutions have become more aggressive with debt collection than in the past.

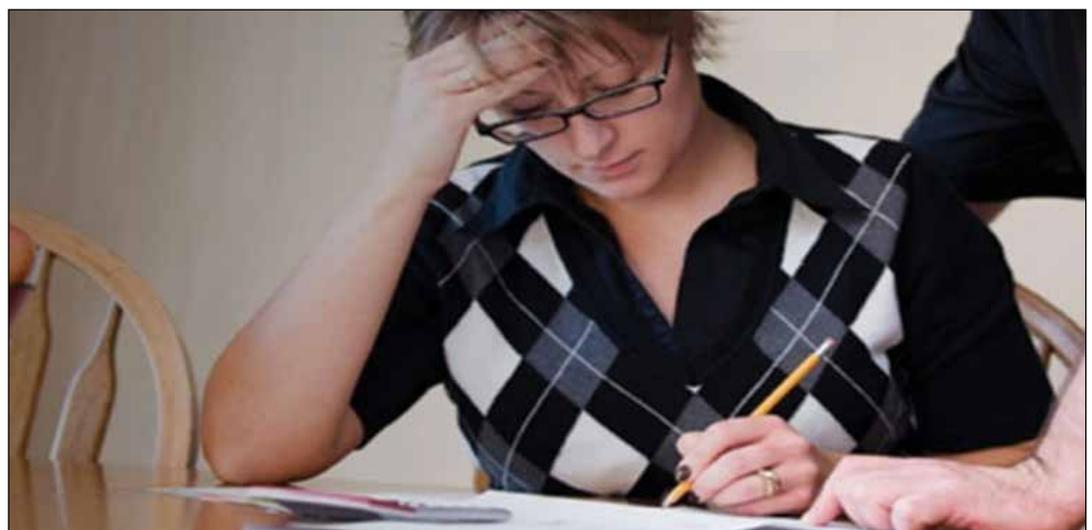
By offering free budget and credit counseling, FamilyMeans can give these struggling community residents the money management skills and possible debt repayment options to put them on the road to financial stability. A recent story

from another western Wisconsin FamilyMeans office gained national attention when the Hildebrandt family of New Richmond reduced their personal debt by \$106,000 and became debt free after following the management plan developed by a FamilyMeans manager at the Stillwater office.

On average, those who receive help with credit debt from FamilyMeans are facing interest rates between 22-25%. However, those who borrow from a payday lender face interest rates between 400-600% on average. “The highest I’ve ever seen,” Wayne says regarding payday lenders, “was 1833.3% interest. And this wasn’t hidden in the fine print. This was clearly stated.” Usually, someone resorting to a payday lender feels they have no other option because they are unable to pay essential bills such as rent or utilities. During consultation with these individuals, Wayne explains to them that there are other, better alternatives, such as negotiating with a landlord or service provider.

Besides direct counseling, FamilyMeans CCCS also offers educational programs throughout the year at local credit unions to their customers, at high schools, and as add-on support for other area agency programs such as Beacon House residents and to parents in Western Dairyland’s Head Start program.

Locally, FamilyMeans served 105 Eau Claire County residents and 36 Chippewa County residents in 2011. FamilyMeans CCCS is a perfect example of how financial stability can be achieved in our community by empowering people through the guidance, education and sound practices offered by effective programs.



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EVERY CHILD NEEDS A CHANCE

A personal perspective on early childhood development

By Amy Maziarka, Director of Finance and Operations, UWGCV

As I reflect on the year, I cannot help but be thankful for where I work and the feeling that each day, maybe—hopefully—I made a positive change in the life of someone who needed help. When I witness firsthand the passion of our executive director, my colleagues, and our extensive base of volunteers who believe in our mission, it is an inspiration beyond words.

Over the course of the last year, I have seen so many folks committed to making a difference right here in the Chippewa Valley. Whether it be volunteering at our Golf Tournament or taking part in it, taking shovel or hammer in hand during Day of Caring or delivering lunches to volunteers, selling tickets or concessions at an event or helping clean up after, no one is looking for recognition. Rather, they are asking, “How can I make a difference?” But there’s an even bigger picture—the work being done in the areas of income, health, and—close to my heart—education.

My family contributes to United Way—not because I work there, but because we truly believe in United Way’s mission. Our lives have been impacted because we have a fourth grader who at one time even struggled with the ability to talk (now he doesn’t stop). When he was born, due to his size, he was deprived of oxygen for approximately 30 seconds. At the time, my husband and I were just happy he was alive, and not for a moment did we think about any future implications that 30 seconds was going to have on him later in life.

When our son was three years old, he was not talking yet. We were very concerned and shared this with his pediatrician. We were able to get him the help he needed. When he was in Kindergarten, he was not able to pronounce his “R’s” correctly, and again we were fortunate that he was able to receive the assistance he needed. To this day, we continue to monitor and are heavily engaged with his education. As we anxiously await the results of his fourth grade state tests, we will know how he is progressing. We are confident that, because of both the professional and family attention he received, our son will have a normal and productive life.

My husband and I know that we were fortunate that we were able to get our son the help he needed. What about the parent facing similar problems who doesn’t have the insurance, support group or resources to help make sure their child will succeed in school and life? What about the parent with a normal, healthy child, but has to work nights just to put food on the table and often does not have even five minutes to spend time reading to their child? What about

the parent who cannot financially afford to put gas in the car to take their child to a library? What about the parent who due to health reasons cannot read to their child?

The education programs United Way funds, and the Successful Children’s Network initiative being advanced by our Education Advisory Council, are specifically serving these at-risk children and their families. By helping to nurture a child’s environment, health and early learning, these programs are preparing a better future for all of us.

There is nothing I love more than when you see the pure excitement of a child when you say, “Do you want to read a book?” Or, “Read a story to me.” Kids are like sponges—read to them and they will soak it up. You are not only spending some really great quality time with them, but giving them a lifetime of knowledge. The very idea that, for some children, these magical moments might not be happening, is devastating.

Some may read my story, and say, “Well, she has a vested interest.” The question I have for you is “shouldn’t we all?” Children—mine, yours or theirs—are our future. How do we know that the child we see walking down the street without a coat, hat, or shoes, may be our next astronaut, doctor, teacher, etc.? As a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, or neighbor, how can we all ensure that each child has a fighting chance from birth to high school? We can all come together and give every child the chance to succeed.

“To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children . . . to leave the world a better place . . . to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson





Tim Pomietlo
Chippewa Falls School District



Paulette Magur
EC County – Health Department



Matthew Kulasiewicz
Eau Claire School District



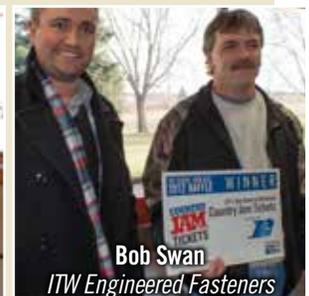
Matt Johnson
Ken Vance Motors



Amanda Hoard
Alliance Bank



Kristi Hartman
Mayo Clinic Health Systems



Bob Swan
ITW Engineered Fasteners

The 2012 DO GOOD. WIN BIG. RAFFLE reveal took place at our United Way office on Friday, November 16th at 3:00 P.M. Craig Olsen from Clifton-LarsonAllen attended as our volunteer to draw the winning names while Director of Resource Development Dustin Olson turned the barrel and supervised the raffle reveal.

Prizes were delivered between November 20 and December 6 on location to the lucky winners. Congratulations to all our raffle winners, and thank

you to everyone who participated. Special thanks also to the businesses who donated our raffle prizes:

CHARTER BANK COUNTRY JAM FESTIVAL FOODS
JACOB LEINENKUGEL BREWING CO., INC.
RCU SCHEELS WAL-MART

2012 COMMUNITY CAMPAIGN UPDATE

As the United Way Campaign continues to move forward, we're taking a brief look back at all the work that has happened thus far. Our Pacesetters got things rolling early in August and a Kick-off in September at Leinie Lodge generated over \$100,000 in early pledges. In the months to follow, volunteers distributed thousands of pledge cards, coordinated company-wide kickoffs, jeans days, chili cook-offs, dunk tanks, organized Impact Tours, held Leadership Breakfasts, participated in the Shoebox Project collection and much much more. As in years past, we have been humbled by the community response. Thousands of gifts and pledges, ranging from \$5 to \$50,000, have been given from generous individuals

and organizations throughout Eau Claire and Chippewa counties. As of December 21, 2012, our community campaign has achieved a total of \$1,710,990 and places us at 75% of our goal, which is slightly ahead of last year. Thanks to the efforts and generosity of thousands of donors, volunteers and organizations, we know that we'll be able to invest the vital resources needed to advance our work in education, income and health. We look forward to celebrating all the successes of this past year's fundraising efforts and those who made them possible at the Gold Awards on March 5!

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**United Way of the
Greater Chippewa Valley**

3603 N. Hastings Way, Suite 200
Eau Claire, WI 54703



**UPCOMING
EVENTS**
FEBRUARY - MAY



FEBRUARY

Emerging Leaders 5th Annual Wine Tasting Event

Feb. 21, Eastridge Center, Eau Claire
Organized by UW Emerging Leaders Society
Wine, food, live band and auction. \$30 per person/\$50 per couple.
RSVP at www.uwgcvc.org

MARCH

Gold Awards Ceremony

Mar. 5, Florian Gardens, Eau Claire.
Celebrating our 2012 Community Campaign.
\$30 per person or \$210 for a table of eight. Proceeds to benefit United Way.
5:00 P.M. start.
RSVP at www.uwgcvc.org

MAY

Stamp Out Hunger

Saturday, May 11
The National Association of Letter Carriers will once again hold the largest single day national food drive. Leave non-parishable food items by your mailbox. Also a fun, family volunteer opportunity! Watch for details on our website.

To learn more about these and other United Way events, visit us at:
www.uwgcvc.org



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**United Way of the
Greater Chippewa Valley**

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.

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