

**United  
Way**  
Rock River Valley



# CAMPAIGN COORDINATOR GUIDE

Leading the Way to a Successful Campaign



Your workplace campaign will directly impact children and families in our community. With every dollar you raise, we lift Winnebago County together!

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 2 Letter from the CEO**
- 4 United Way of Rock River Valley Overview**
- 6 10 Steps for a Successful Campaign**
- 7 Planning: An In-depth Guide**
  - 7 Contact us
  - 7 Get approval
  - 7 Assemble a team
  - 7 Sample Team Structure
  - 8 Brainstorm
  - 8 Plan and Assign Roles
  - 9 Make the “Ask”
- 10 Executing: Methods and ideas**
  - 10 Provide staff with your donation method
  - 10 Inform Employees
  - 11 Have fun!
- 12 Wrapping Up: Congrats!**
  - 12 Announce the Impact
- 14 Volunteer & Engage**
  - 14 Take Action in Our Communities
  - 14 Boost Employee Engagement with Volunteerism
  - 15 Annual Day of Caring
  - 16 Current Volunteer Opportunities
- 17 Frequently Asked Questions**

# LETTER FROM THE CEO



## Dear Employee Campaign Coordinator (ECC),

Thank you for choosing to lead the way for your company's United Way of Rock River Valley (UWRRV) workplace giving campaign. We commend your dedication and commitment to improving our community and sincerely appreciate your contribution.

In your role, you'll educate your coworkers about how UWRRV mobilizes our communities to action so all can thrive. Currently, Winnebago County is facing a literacy crisis, with only 1/3 of third graders reading at grade level. This issue is significant because children who struggle with reading at this stage often encounter difficulties graduating from high school. Addressing this challenge requires a united front—no individual or organization can tackle it alone.

As an ECC, you have the unique opportunity to tap into the generosity, talent, and energy of your workplace to give back to our community through the United Way. Whether this is your first year as an employee campaign coordinator or if you are a campaign veteran, the information in this guide and Virtual Campaign Toolkit on our website will help you plan and execute a smooth and successful United Way campaign. Remember, your United Way Relationship Manager is always just a call away, ready to provide comprehensive support whenever you need it.

We are proud to work alongside you. Thank you again for joining our United Way team. Together, we can make a difference for every young child in our community.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Bosma  
President and CEO

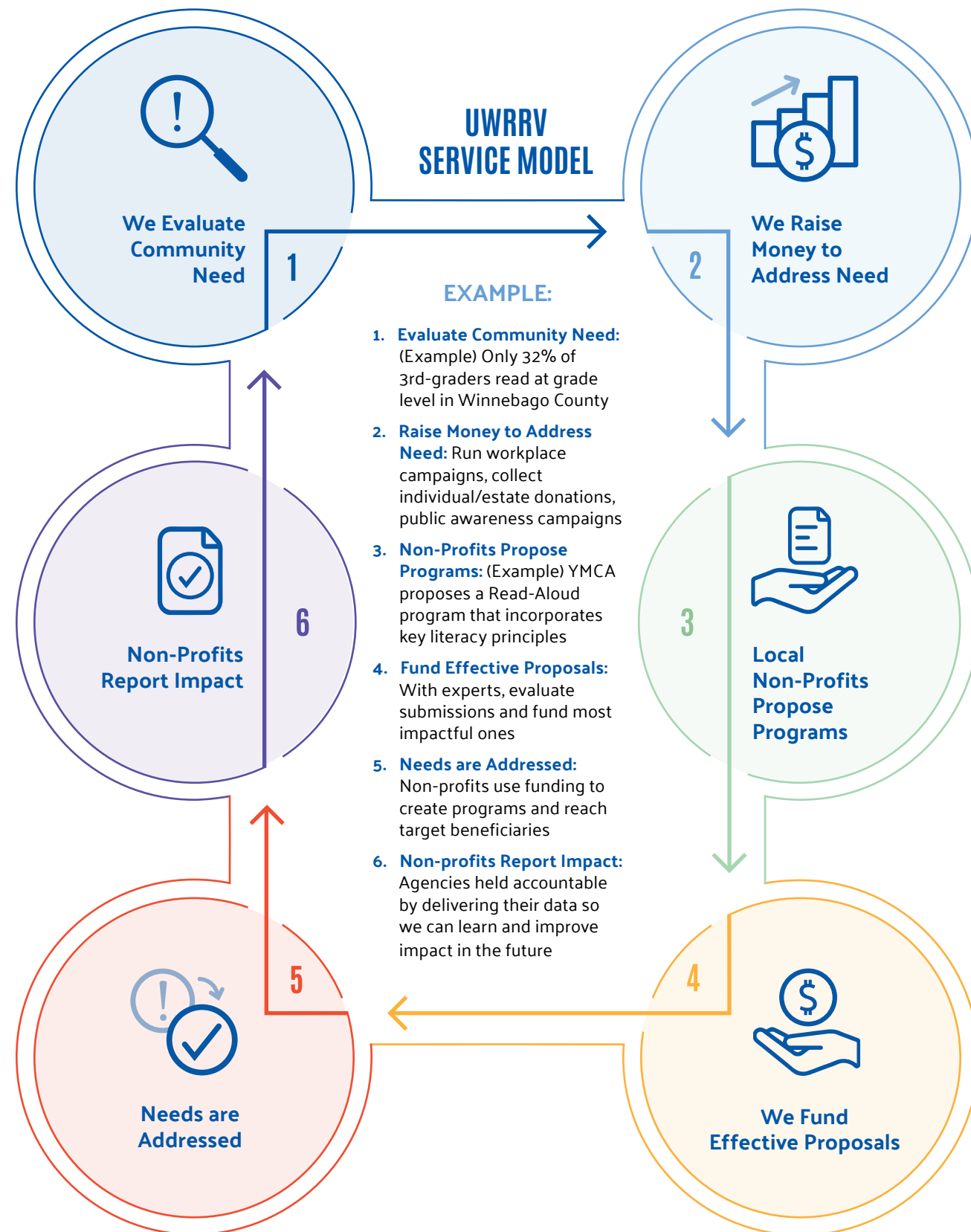
# THANK YOU!

## OUR MISSION

To unite the collective power of the community to improve lives.



# UNITED WAY. LEADING THE WAY.



## IMPACT FRAMEWORK FY25

The framework below is an overview of the initiatives and investments of United Way of Rock River Valley. From the top organizational level all the way down to the individual programs we support, this chart is a high-level look at where the money we raise is going this fiscal year. For more details about individual programs, feel free to reach out to your United Way representative with any questions,

Organization	United Way Rock River Valley					
Impact Area*	Youth Opportunity			Community Resiliency	Financial Security	
Initiatives	United for Literacy			211 Hotline	Strong Neighborhoods	Emergency Food & Shelter Program
Audience	Children	Parents/Guardians	Community	People in Need	Residents in House Neighborhoods	Winnebago County Organizations
Funded Programs & Resources	Read-Alouds and Independent Reading In School and After School Programming Community Storytimes Book Distribution Tiny Turners - Birth to 3 years Page Turners - Early Childhood Dolly Parton Imagination Library - Birth to 5 years Reach Out & Read- Birth to 5 years (goal for 2024)	Family Literacy Nights Engagement Materials Training / Outreach	Training & Professional Development Advocacy Public Awareness Bonus Book Distribution	Call Center	House Locations: 8th Avenue House 908 8th Avenue, Rockford Irving Avenue House 312 Irving Avenue, Rockford Marie Avenue House 825 Marie Avenue, Machesney Park	Managing EFSP Board & Allocations UW Day of Caring Workplace Days of Caring Indv. Volunteer Opportunities WeVolunteer.org

**\*Impact Area Definitions**

**Youth Opportunity:** Helping young people realize their full potential.  
**Community Resiliency:** Addressing urgent needs today for a better tomorrow.  
**Financial Security:** Creating a stronger financial future for every generation.

## SECURING A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL

United Way of Rock River Valley (UWRRV) mobilizes communities to action so all can thrive.

With more than a century of community collaboration and experience, we see how our communities' most significant challenges are connected – and how to bring people and resources together to address them.

United Way is always listening and ready to respond. Working together with our neighbors, we're strengthening community resilience, youth opportunity, and financial security for all.

Every day, our communities show that change is possible when people unite to take action. Together, we're creating a future where everyone, everywhere, can reach their full potential

## AREAS OF IMPACT

### Youth Opportunity

Literacy lays the foundation for lifelong learning, critical thinking, and academic success. Reading proficiently early on is linked to better grades, higher graduation chances, career advancement, and long-term financial security.

### United for Literacy

UWRRV's primary focus is increasing childhood literacy rates in Winnebago County and ensuring every child enters kindergarten ready to read. Research indicates that reading below the expected level in third grade is highly linked to future academic challenges and dropout, incarceration, and poverty rates. Only one in three public school children in our area read at grade level by third grade.

United for Literacy partners with organizations and agencies and invests in programs for children, parents/guardians, and the community. This allows us to systematically increase access to resources to help families learn and grow together.



### Community Resiliency

Addressing urgent needs today for a better tomorrow

#### 211 Helpline

Winnebago County's 211 Helpline, supported by UWRRV, is a critical resource that connects thousands of people to trained specialists offering help with crisis and emergency counseling, disaster assistance, food, health care and insurance, stable housing and utility assistance, employment services, veteran services, and childcare and family services.

#### Strong Neighborhoods

Through collaborative partnerships with other local impact organizations, we provide a pathway for community residents to gain education, mental health, and additional support through programs and services offered in our Strong Neighborhood Houses.

### Financial Security

Together, we can meet people's most basic needs and create a stronger financial future for every generation

#### Emergency Food & Shelter Program

United Way manages the EFSP board for Winnebago County made up of social service agencies, government and community members to determine how funds for food, shelter, and homeless prevention are allocated.

# 10 STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN



## PLANNING

- 1. Contact us** – we're here to help! Call or email your United Way Relationship Manager to customize your campaign, ask questions, and access more resources.
- 2. Get approval** from senior leadership on an attainable fundraising and participation goal, staff communications, and time allowed for virtual or in-person events.
- 3. Assemble a team!** This is a great team-building project. Meet virtually or in person to brainstorm, plan, and assign roles.
- 4. Brainstorm** the strategies you'll use to reach your goal. Consider in-person or virtual events or challenges to encourage participation.
- 5. Plan and assign roles** for announcing your campaign start and end dates, distributing pledge forms or links, staff events or meetings, and email communications.
- 6. Make the "Ask."** Asking people for their support is one of the most critical but often overlooked aspects of fundraising.

## EXECUTING

- 7. Provide staff with your Donation Method:** paper pledge forms, a fillable PDF, or an email link to give online. Start with your Leadership donors (\$1000+) who can lead by example!
- 8. Inform employees** about our communities' issues and the impact we can make together. For ideas, work with your United Way Relationship Manager.
- 9. Have fun!** Whether in-person or virtual, encourage participation and enjoy some charitable team building.

## WRAPPING UP

- 10. Announce the impact** of your colleagues' collective generosity! Thank donors, award prizes, and remit funds to the United Way of Rock River Valley, which works with communities in Winnebago County.

# PLANNING: AN IN-DEPTH GUIDE

## 1. CONTACT US

Meet with your United Way representative to create a campaign timeline, engagement activities, and messaging.

Visit [unitedwayrrv.org/workplace-campaigns](http://unitedwayrrv.org/workplace-campaigns) for more information.

## 2. GET APPROVAL

**Schedule CEO visit** to present plan draft, determine campaign goals, and secure approval.

**Set ambitious yet realistic goals** using the challenges and success of the previous campaign as a benchmark. For example:

- Increase last year's fundraising or participation by 10% or 15%.
- Increase leadership gifts (\$1000 or more) by five individuals.
- Increase employee participation through volunteer opportunities to magnify your workplace's social responsibility and impact.

## 3. ASSEMBLE A TEAM

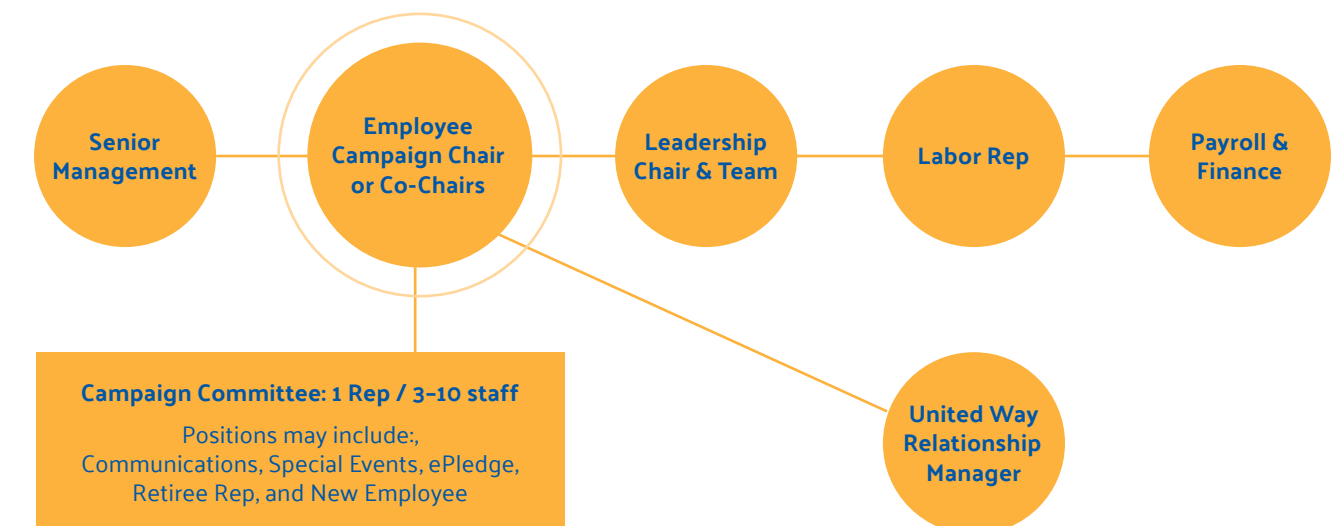
**Involve a cross-section of coworkers from different departments.**

**Campaign volunteers** are an integral part of your workplace campaign. These volunteers ask colleagues to donate and answer questions employees might have. They are usually the type of personality that's easy to identify—outgoing, friendly, and approachable.

**Union Members** – If your workplace is unionized, ask the union to appoint a campaign representative. Ideally, this person should be part of the union executive team and should be a co-chair of the campaign. Union Campaign Reps help secure joint union/management endorsements and assist in formulating strategies and campaign events that appeal to all.

- Include union logos on all marketing materials for your campaign, with a line noting endorsement from unions if applicable. When possible, use union banners/flags at departmental and cross-departmental events. Visibility helps!
- Ask the union to support United Way on their social media. Your Relationship Manager can help with this!
- At events, verbally credit the campaign's union and management support. If possible, make time for a union leader to speak about why they support United Way and ensure management credits union support of the campaign (and vice versa).

## SAMPLE TEAM STRUCTURE





#### 4. BRAINSTORM

Creating excitement around the campaign and bringing employees together is essential to a United Way campaign. Team engagement is critical, whether virtual or in person.

United Way holds several donor engagement activities and volunteer opportunities, both on-site and at United Way or our partner agencies. Would you or your employees be interested in these activities?

What components of the campaign do you see as in person? Virtual? Or both?

Are you already offering engagement activities, either in person or virtually, for your employees through other charities or internally? If so, what's working? What's not? What would you like to see?

What online platforms are you currently using to engage your employees? What has worked well, or do you have a preference?

Of all the engagement examples we have shared with you, which do you think your employees would respond more favorably to?

#### 5. PLAN AND ASSIGN ROLES

Roles may include announcing your campaign start and end dates, distributing pledge forms or links, planning staff events or meetings, and creating / sending email communications.

Have a kick-off to mark the start of the campaign. Considerations for a kickoff might include:

- Determine if you will hold an in-person, virtual, or hybrid event.
- Depending on the organization's size, the kick-off might be one large meeting or a series of smaller meetings (i.e., different departments log in at different times of the day).
- Determine who needs to lead the meeting (i.e., CEO, leadership team, ECC, union leadership, United Way Relationship Manager, etc.).
- Kickoff should be no longer than 30 minutes. (Or select an ideal time, but remember, it is more difficult to hold attention for long periods virtually.)

- If possible, make the part of the kickoff interactive. Ideas include running a poll, playing a Kahoot trivia game, having a speaker join you live, having a pre-recorded speaker, or using a virtual whiteboard – things to keep the audience engaged, whether in person or virtual.
- A call to action should be embedded in the meeting invitation or immediately after by providing a link to ePledge or your giving platform. If using paper pledge forms, be sure to distribute these immediately following the kick-off, if not before.
- Where attendance may be an issue, consider joining a preexisting meeting with a captured audience, like a town hall or weekly department meeting. You may need to cut down your time in these cases.

#### 6. MAKE THE “ASK”

Asking people for their support is one of the most critical but often overlooked aspects of fundraising. By committing to a face-to-face ask, either in person where possible or via a virtual meeting, you allow everyone the opportunity to support our community.

- Not being asked is one of the top reasons for not giving! Personal contact and a positive attitude are critical to your campaign team's success.
- Ask coworkers you know first.
- Start with people who already give – their participation will build momentum.
- Encourage payroll deduction. It's easier to give smaller amounts consistently.

# EXECUTING: METHODS AND IDEAS

## 7. PROVIDE STAFF WITH YOUR DONATION METHOD

Distribute paper pledge forms or an email link to give online. Start with your Leadership donors (\$1000+) who can lead by example!

Questions to think about:

- Do all employees have access to email and computers?
- Do employees prefer to use paper pledge forms? Is there somewhere these can be readily available in your workplace?

There are several options to collect donations depending on how your campaign will be run:

### Paper Campaign:

This type of campaign is best suited for workplaces where employees don't have access to email or a computer. Reach out to your Relationship Manager for paper pledge forms.

### Traditional ePledge Campaign:

An online pledging tool that fits seamlessly into your United Way campaign, allowing you to raise money while eliminating paper pledge forms efficiently and safely. Emails are sent directly to your employees using the secure tool. We create a branded landing page and customized emails for your organization, and you can automatically track pledges by running real-time reports.

This type of campaign is best suited for workplaces where:

- A large percentage of your employee base has access to email. If some employees do not, we will happily develop a hybrid campaign with paper pledge forms and ePledge.
- Representatives from the following departments MUST approve of the tool: HR, Payroll, Privacy Officer, Senior Management, Communications/Marketing
- You must provide a data file to United Way four weeks before your campaign to our Pledge Processing Manager.

### ePledge Employee Registration

In this campaign style, each employee is responsible for creating their own profile in our database. This type of campaign is best suited for workplaces where:

- Company does not release employee list
- Some employees have a work email address

- Company doesn't allow outside emails
- Existing donors that register with known email can see giving history and update contact information
- ECC wants real time results and reporting

### UWRRV Web Portal Campaign:

You will be provided with a link to send out to employees. This type of campaign is best suited for workplaces where:

- Company does not release employee list
- All employees don't have a work email address but may have a personal email
- Company doesn't allow outside emails
- ECC does not have access to real time result; UWRRV will provide reports

### The Hybrid Campaign

The hybrid campaign takes the best from in-person and virtual fundraising, using essential tools to support each. It encourages your supporters to engage with the campaign while providing the convenience and capabilities of virtual experiences.

Many new tools and online platforms allow for novel ways of connecting with others. An important first step when planning is verifying what technological platforms are available. Examples include MS Teams, Zoom, and Webex.

Can all employees access the same tools, or are there variations depending on how your business is set up? This will help you design the experience for all audiences.

- Confirm platforms are secure.
- Discuss how many people can join at once or the ideal amount you would want in a virtual meeting.

## 8. INFORM EMPLOYEES

Share about our communities' issues and the impact we can make together. Your United Way Relationship Manager can provide many resources for you to pass on. These resources may include video testimonials, informational brochures, digital assets, and more.

## 9. HAVE FUN!


Have fun! Whether in-person or virtual, encourage participation and enjoy some charitable team building. The more fun you can make your campaign, the better chance you'll have at capturing your colleagues' attention and inspiring them to unleash their local love.

### Workplace Special Events

With people working from home, in the office, and a combination of both, this is a time when you might need to be creative when engaging your coworkers. Some examples of events that can be either in person or virtual include:



**Games**  
BINGO, spelling bees, trivia (ex: Kahoot)



**Gift Card Survivor**  
Choose a grocery store or an online food delivery service as the prize for the last winner to remain on the "Island."



**Social Media or "Next Up" Challenges**  
Incentivize posting silly pictures to create awareness about the campaign or participate in a challenge (push ups, "do something good," etc.) and tag colleagues to be next up



**Walk/Runs**  
Could be virtual (distance tracked with Strata) or in person!



**Online Learning**  
Cook like a chef, learn flower decorating, make a cocktail or mocktail led by celebrity contacts, pro volunteers, or colleagues



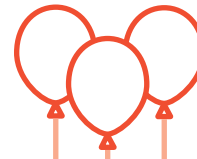
**Auctions & Raffles**  
(Don't forget to get a gaming license!)




**Cooking Challenge**  
What can your team cook with a mystery set of items?



**Scavenger Hunt**  
Encourage your workplace to get outside (or stay inside) with this game that can involve their families or roommates. A great way to get to know your coworkers!




**Balloon Pop**  
Employees donate prizes for this event. Before filling a balloon, place a note with the name of the prize inside. Employees make a payroll pledge or donate \$10 for each balloon and pop it to see what they have won!



**Acts of Service**  
Each employee may have a skill set and talent that coworkers don't know. Auction off these talents! Maybe someone can donate an hour of garden work, host a cocktail night, or offer two hours of helping someone move.



**Dress Up the Boss**  
Set specific goals and have senior management dress up in silly costumes (how about a cow costume?) once targets are met.



**Plane Toss**  
Give 10 minutes to assemble paper planes. The distance and accuracy of the plane toss determine the winner. Entry is by completing pledge forms.

# WRAPPING UP: CONGRATS!



Being able to share and connect employees with the great work United Way does in our community is exciting. Coordinating our internal campaign allows me to use fun incentives to inspire giving; reaching and surpassing our participation goals as a result is especially rewarding for me.

**TRISH MCCORMICK**  
Employee Campaign Coordinator,  
OrthoIllinois

## 10. ANNOUNCE THE IMPACT

Announce the impact of your colleagues' collective generosity! Thank donors, award any prizes, and remit funds to United Way of Rock River Valley – working with communities in Winnebago County, Illinois.

Congratulations! You've run your events. Your colleagues are excited about United Way. You have made the ask and followed up. Now it's time to collect pledges from those who gave because you have inspired them.

### Say Thank You!

- Two of the most important words in fundraising are “thank you.” Plan a celebration or wrap-up event to announce your campaign achievements and to thank every employee for their support and participation. It's also a great idea to give individual thank you notes to everyone who donated.
- Remember to thank everyone you have contacted, even those who did not contribute. Each person's time and gift are appreciated, and a heartfelt thank you is essential to your efforts.
- The impression you leave is the one people will remember when they think of the United Way.

### Collect pledge forms, special event funds, cash donations, and checks as needed.

- Have team members collect any paper pledge forms if you have them at your workplace. Send out an all-staff email update letting people know where, when, and to whom they can bring their forms, donations, and checks. If you do not have pledge forms but have had special events, collect those funds and your United Way Relationship Manager will pick up the campaign envelope.

### Submit the donations.

- For paper pledge forms, tally the donations and complete a paper or online version of your Campaign Envelope to review with your United Way Relationship Manager. IMPORTANT: The envelope MUST be sealed.
- Complete a Special Event Report for those using our online giving platform. Send all forms or information to your United Way Relationship Manager, or arrange for them to pick it up from you.





# VOLUNTEER & ENGAGE

## TAKE ACTION IN OUR COMMUNITIES

United Way mobilizes the collective power of neighbors, businesses, and community partners to strengthen our community. And strong communities are the basis of a thriving society. We need the heads, hands, and hearts of committed individuals and organizations to help us tackle our community's most challenging issues.

Your partnership with United Way engages you, your employees, and your organization with the community, creating lasting change across our region.

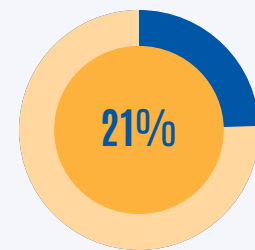
### Volunteer:

*verb* – To choose to act in recognition of a need, with an attitude of social responsibility and without concern for monetary profit, going beyond one's basic obligations.

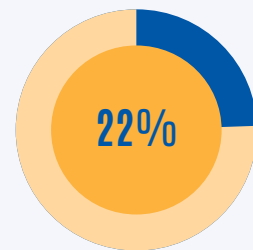
## BOOST EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT WITH VOLUNTEERISM

United Way will help connect your employees to meaningful volunteer experiences that impact lives in Winnebago County. Whether participating in our annual community-wide Day of Caring in the fall or engaging in ongoing volunteer experiences throughout the year, let us work with you to plan impactful volunteer opportunities either at your workplace or out in the community!

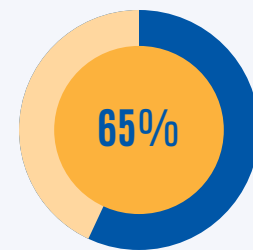
### Companies with high levels of engagement:



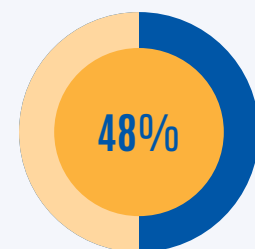
**MORE PRODUCTIVE**



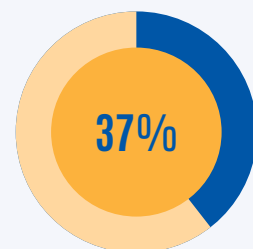
**MORE PROFITABLE**



**LESS TURNOVER**



**LESS ACCIDENTS**



**LOWER ABSENTEEISM**

Gallup defines engaged employees as **those who work with passion and feel a profound connection to their company.** They drive innovation and move the organization forward.



## ANNUAL DAY OF CARING

Each year, workplaces that are financial supporters of United Way come together in a BIG WAY to show up for our county by volunteering at a variety of local agencies. Volunteers paint houses or fences, assist with yard clean up, pack food, sort clothes, assemble after-school projects, and more! Day of Caring also is a great way for your employees to learn about United Way funded agencies, and build stronger relationships with coworkers. Day of Caring typically takes place on the third Friday in September.

## CURRENT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We're looking for volunteers to help with our United for Literacy efforts focused on preparing kids for kindergarten. Whether you're an individual or part of a group, there are opportunities to volunteer. You can volunteer at your workplace, our United Way office, or in the community!

- Be a classroom **I READ volunteer** once a week throughout the school year
- **Read to children** at a community story time
- **Host a collection/donation drive** at your workplace or online
- **Assemble story time kits**
- **Take pictures or videos** at United Way community events
- **Staff a United Way booth** at a community health fair or sporting event

**Distribute books** at community events

To learn more about volunteer opportunities, contact Community Engagement Manager **Cherice Ullrich** at [cherice@unitedwayrrv.org](mailto:cherice@unitedwayrrv.org).

When I walk into that classroom and all the kids yell, 'It's Ms. Deb!' and are so excited to see me... it just fills me up. I know that by talking to and reading with the students in Ms. Lisa's classroom I'm helping them develop important language and reading skills.

**DEB JOHNSON**  
I READ Volunteer



Jessica lasparro reads to a group of children



Wells Fargo employees hosting a book drive



Cherice Ullrich tabling at an Ice Hogs game to promote United for Literacy and Dolly Parton Imagination Library

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Who is United Way of Rock River Valley (UWRRV), and who do you serve?

We are a local, independent 501(c)3 non-profit organization part of the United Way Worldwide network, and we serve the needs of Winnebago County. Our programs and money stay local.

### Does UWRRV allow designations?

Yes, we do allow for designations to be made to a different United Way or another Winnebago County human services 501(c)3 organization. However, we hope you consider supporting us in our efforts to unite us all towards common goals.

### Where does my donation go?

Contributions to UWRRV directly support initiatives such as United for Literacy, the 211 Helpline, the Emergency Food and Shelter Program, and the Strong Neighborhoods program. **See pages 4 and 5 for more information about how UWRRV works!**

### How can I receive acknowledgement and a receipt of my contribution?

We always strive to show our generous donors how much we appreciate them. Please be sure to provide your full name and address upon making your donation. This allows us to follow up with a thank you that will also list your total contribution and can serve as a receipt.

### What is UWRRV's role with other nonprofits and agencies?

UWRRV supports local agencies through collaborative and financial efforts. UWRRV does research and creates an action plan to tackle local issues, then assembles a team of agencies that want to work with us on addressing them. We provide funding for those organizations to use towards our collective goals, and hold them accountable for doing their part by measuring and tracking our impact. By bringing diverse organizations and experts to the table we can solve many more problems than we could if all acted independently. **See pages 4 and 5 for more information about how UWRRV works!**

We respect your privacy, and your information will be utilized to provide you with an acknowledgement and receipt of your contributions, and keep you informed on how your investment continues to help our community thrive. Please note that several employers may be unable to release your contact information due to privacy laws, which will prevent us from sending acknowledgement, receipt, or additional correspondence to you.



**United Way of  
Rock River Valley**

612 N. Main Street,  
Suite 300  
Rockford, IL 61103

[unitedwayrrv.org](http://unitedwayrrv.org)