

Cabinet Talking Points 2024

Impact

- For over a century, United Way of Racine County has been a cornerstone in our community, leaving a lasting impact through its own initiatives, special projects and partnerships with other organizations.
- United Way of Racine County funds more than 35 high-performing partner programs run by local nonprofits. Funding is distributed by multiple committees of volunteers that review proposals and provide recommendations to United Way of Racine County's board.
- United Way of Racine County has a long tradition of adhering to very high standards of accountability and transparency to create real, impactful change in Racine County. Programs approved for funding go through a rigorous application process, involving evaluation of programming, impact, goals and financials as well as monthly and end-of-year reporting to ensure programs are on track to meet goals.
- United Way of Racine County strategically collaborates with community stakeholders, businesses and other partners to maximize resources and amplify impact to help the Racine County community thrive.
- United Way's LIFT (Link and Inspire for Tomorrow) strategy, in collaboration with Racine Unified School District, creates partnerships between neighborhoods, businesses and nonprofits that help deliver on-site resources and support at our three community schools – Knapp, Julian Thomas and the Academies of Racine at Mitchell.
 - Community schools offer a wide array of resources, including support for academics, family connections, healthcare, social services and more.
 - In spring 2024, Julian Thomas Community School hosted its Fresh Air Science Fair, engaging 90 fifth graders in projects related to clean air and pollution effects. This event, a collaboration among United Way of Racine County, Racine Unified School District, Modine Manufacturing and the Milwaukee Bucks, offered more than just academic opportunities. Winners received tickets to a Bucks game, transportation and concession vouchers. This impactful event, held at a community school, not only nurtured scientific curiosity but also fostered community partnerships and rewarded student efforts with memorable experiences.
- United Way's VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program provides free tax preparation and electronic filing of tax returns for moderate- to low-income Racine County residents.
 - Over \$1,500,000 in state and federal tax refunds was returned to the Racine County community through VITA in 2024.
 - IRS-certified volunteers are trained to prepare and file tax returns at various VITA sites. The VITA site at Case High School allows students to become IRS-certified tax preparers. This partnership provides free tax assistance to the community and supports the academic and social growth of the student volunteers.

- United Way of Racine County is dedicated to equity, working actively to address disparities in the Racine County community.
 - Through the Equity Innovation Fund, United Way has backed innovative projects aiming to reduce disparities, improve outcomes and empower marginalized populations. Since January 2022, the fund has granted over \$1,545,000 to 32 programs, thanks to MacKenzie Scott's and Racine County's generosity. The fund also provides equity in the grant application process. Many first-time applicants receive support from the fund, with United Way providing staff or volunteers to guide them from proposal to project completion.
 - Since its launch in December 2023, United Way's Equity Through Technology Fund has been making a difference in Racine County. Thanks to the generous support from the Microsoft Corporation, the fund has provided over \$57,000 in grants to five projects. These initiatives aim to increase equitable outcomes and reduce disparities for historically marginalized populations through the innovative use of technology. Currently, the funded projects are in progress, working toward a brighter, more inclusive future for our community.

Benefits to the company

- Businesses that commit to investing in their communities foster more meaningful relationships with their customers, employees, stockholders, suppliers and communities.
- United Way offers opportunities for businesses to engage their employees, which helps to strengthen employee loyalty, enhance leadership development and increase recruitment. Research shows that increasing employee engagement reduces absenteeism and increases profitability.
- Companies can share their employees' talents by engaging in meaningful, hands-on, one-time and on-going group and individual volunteer experiences that match both their employees' personal passions and their company's values.
- Corporate sponsorship is an effective promotion tool and allows businesses to share their message of social responsibility with the community. United Way's corporate sponsors benefit from year-round local visibility and see a definite return on their investment, since tangible impressions and measured media value far exceed the cost of sponsorship.
- Companies who partner with United Way elevate their corporate identity in the community by linking their brand to one of the most recognized and respected nonprofit brands in the world. This reinforces their company's reputation as a good corporate citizen and helps them to foster a positive image within their community.