

THE POWER OF YOU

UNITED WAY OF
THE MIDLANDS

YEAR IN REVIEW

20
20

A COMMUNITY UNITED!

United Way
of the Midlands

United
Way



FROM OUR CEO

Dear United Way friends and supporters,

Each and every one of you is truly a community hero.

This past year has been an extremely challenging one for the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro and our country. The COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted the physical, mental and financial health of thousands of people—our family members, our friends and our neighbors. Nonprofits all across the metro have been working overtime to meet the community's increased needs.

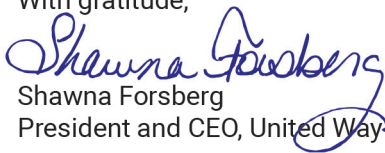
But there's one thing the pandemic hasn't changed—and that's this community's generous and can-do spirit. You've been there for United Way and our neighbors every step of the way. And as you'll see within this recap, your support has empowered us to accomplish some truly remarkable things. Together, we've adapted to meet community needs, raised millions of dollars for nonprofits on the front lines and answered thousands of our neighbors' calls for help and support.

There is still a very long road ahead, but with the heart, determination and generosity of the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro, I am confident that we can continue to do the work necessary to get people back on their feet! If nonprofits, government agencies, organizations and people like you continue to work together, we will come out on the other side of this difficult time stronger than ever before.

So, from the bottom of my heart, thank you. Thank you for caring so deeply about this community. Thank you for your heroic commitment to living united even in a time characterized by isolation. Thank you for giving so generously when hardships abound and resources are limited.

United truly starts with YOU!

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Shawna Forsberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'S' at the beginning.

Shawna Forsberg
President and CEO, United Way of the Midlands

BOARD

2020 - 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We thank these community heroes for lending their passion, expertise and leadership to United Way of the Midlands.



Gail DeBoer
Board Chair
President and CEO
Cobalt Credit Union



Mickey Anderson
President and CEO
Baxter Auto Group



Avi Atholi
Vice President
Enterprise Data Management
FNBO



Tim Burke
President and CEO
Omaha Public Power District



Susan Courtney
Executive Vice President
Operations & Clinical Effectiveness
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska



Jerry Crouse
Vice-Chairman and CEO
Tenaska, Inc.



Nate Dodge
President
NP Dodge Company



Joel Falk
Board Treasurer
Regional President
UMB Bank



Shawna Forsberg
President and CEO
United Way of the Midlands



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Public Affairs Group
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CEO and Owner
Midwest Maintenance
Companies, Inc.



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Women United Board Liaison
Financial Advisor
Wells Fargo



Alison Ingunza
Emerging Leaders Board Liaison
Landscape Architect
HDR, Inc.



Steve Kaniewski
President and CEO
Valmont Industries



Dr. Pam Kayl
Vice President, Nursing
CHI Health



Dr. Cheryl Logan
Superintendent
Omaha Public Schools



Clark Ponthier
Senior Vice President
Supply Chain &
Continuous Improvement
Union Pacific Railroad



Jim Richardson
Partner and Nebraska
Audit Leader
RSM US LLP



Cory Shaw
Executive Vice President
Chief Operating Officer
Nebraska Medicine



Dan Waters
Board Secretary
Partner
Lamson, Dugan & Murray LLP



Brian Woolfolk
Head of Institutional Division
Pacific Life

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

2019 - 2020 TOP 100 CAMPAIGNS

It is truly humbling to see the many ways in which our 600 corporate partners champion the work of United Way of the Midlands. We'd like to extend a special thanks to the companies who went above and beyond this past fiscal year.



FRONTLINE HEROES

2020 - 2021 Funded Agency Partners

We are so honored to partner with these amazing organizations who have been on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic. We thank them for their heroic commitment to this community and our neighbors.



2020 WAS OFF TO A GREAT START...



GOOD ON THE GO STEM KITS

HDR, Inc. employees participated in a *Good on the Go* project, putting together 100 STEM kits for children at Boys & Girls Clubs of the Midlands.

FREE TAX PREPARATION

The Omaha Earned Income Tax Credit Coalition—a program funded by UWM—oversaw five free tax preparation sites in the metro area. Thanks to the program, community members received more than **\$9.5 million** in federal and state tax refunds.

CAREEROCKIT

During Careerockit Week, which is hosted by the Greater Omaha Chamber, we welcomed a group of Omaha North High School seniors to the United Way office to learn about nonprofit careers.



THEN THE PANDEMIC STRUCK...



COMMUNITY HEROES LIKE YOU HELPED US ADAPT...

DEVELOPED COVID-19 RESPONSE

To determine what the community's needs were and how UWM could evolve to meet those needs, United Way's senior team and our Community Impact team were involved in conversations with local United Ways, United Way Worldwide, local nonprofit agencies, the **Omaha Community Foundation** and other local philanthropists and community taskforces, including the **Omaha Mayor's** taskforce and the **Greater Omaha Chamber's** taskforce. In response, we created a COVID-19 relief fund to raise money for programs immediately responding to the pandemic. We partnered with local corporations to create donation pages so their employees could make donations to help those who were struggling. In total, individuals and corporations donated more than **\$11 million** additional dollars to help those impacted. To keep our community informed, our team also put together a COVID-19 resources page containing guidance from **Nebraska Medicine** and the **Nebraska and Iowa Health Departments**, as well as community assistance information.

PROVIDED EDUCATION RESOURCES

Because students began learning at home due to the widespread closing of schools and before-and-after school programs, we compiled local and national educational resources in one, easily accessible webpage to foster at-home learning.



CREATED THE HOUSING STABILITY PROGRAM

With the addition of **\$1.7 million** in CARES Act funding, our housing stability program has provided support to **430** households needing rental, mortgage or utility assistance and referred more than **460** additional individuals to other area programs.



RECEIVED PPP FUNDING

Our Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan totaled **\$796,000**, which ensured we could keep staff employed and continue to serve our communities during the pandemic.

SHARED COMMUNITY NEEDS DURING KETV'S NONPROFIT ROUNDTABLE

Thanks to the **Greater Omaha Chamber's** President and CEO **David Brown, Shawna Forsberg**, President and CEO of UWM, was featured on KETV's roundtable segment alongside **Albert Varas** from the **Latino Center of the Midlands** and **Tom Warren** of **Urban League of Nebraska**. Together, they discussed our community's needs and how nonprofit partners stepped up to help.

MODIFIED OUR INVESTMENT PROCESS

To ensure we could remain flexible and address quickly evolving community needs, we shortened our community investments from a two-year to a one-year timeframe and created two rounds of funding.

- During the first funding disbursement, we invested donor dollars into programs immediately responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a significant portion of the total investment allotted to programs meeting people's basic needs.
- During the second round, we invested donor dollars into financial stability and education programs addressing the long-term challenges caused by COVID-19.



PROVIDED SUPPORT THROUGH THE 211 HELPLINE

This spring when the pandemic hit, the number of people reaching out to 211 was **170%** higher than it was during the 2019 spring floods. To date, more than **162,000** Nebraskans and Iowans have reached out to the Helpline, which is nearly double last year's totals. Thanks to funding from the state of Nebraska, the Helpline was able to accommodate the increase in demand by hiring staff to provide service overnight and weekends and investing in upgrades to the phone system and website. Throughout the year, 211 also provided rides to doctor appointments, job interviews and foodbanks for those in need, thanks to its partnership with Lyft.

2.1.1

Serving Nebraska and Iowa

AND ANSWERED THE COMMUNITY'S CALL FOR SUPPORT!



PROVIDED SOCKS TO PEOPLE IN NEED

The Young Professionals for Credit Unions collected more than **2,200** pairs of socks during their annual sock drive—500 of which were donated by **Family Focus Federal Credit Union** to Siena Francis House.



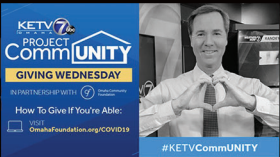
CREATED SNACK KITS FOR LOCAL CHILDREN

Toast, Inc. employees put together **300** snack pack kits for children at **Boys & Girls Clubs of the Midlands** during their *Good on the Go* project.



DISTRIBUTED HAND SANITIZER

Using material donations from ethanol partners, the **University of Nebraska-Lincoln** created and donated **2,300** gallons of hand sanitizer to **12** local nonprofits serving our community during the pandemic. **UWM, Greater Omaha Chamber, the NorthStar Foundation** and **Werner Enterprises** helped organize the delivery and distribution of the hand sanitizer.

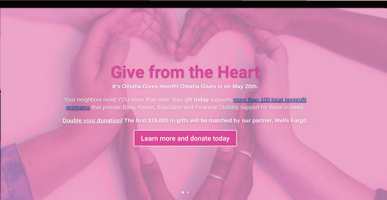


GIVING WEDNESDAY

During KETV's Giving Wednesday fundraiser for United Way, the community raised **\$36,000** for people who had been impacted by COVID-19 with the support of corporate giving partners **Fiserv** and **Valmont**.

ADDRESSING COMMUNITY DISPARITIES

As part of our commitment to address disparities in our community, we are honored to be a part of the **Commitment to Opportunity, Diversity and Equity (CODE)** coalition and to be partnering with the **Greater Omaha Chamber, Latino Center of the Midlands, and Urban League of Nebraska** on the next phase of the **Strategic4Sight** project.



Give from the Heart

Give from the Heart is a national campaign that encourages people to give from their hearts to support the needs of their communities. It is a simple, powerful way to make a difference.

[Learn more and donate today](#)

OMAHA GIVES

We asked our community to **#GiveFromTheHeart** on Omaha Gives!, and thanks to you, we raised nearly **\$45,000** for families in need. A special thanks to our generous corporate partner, **Wells Fargo**, who provided a **\$15,000** match!

UNITED WAY CAMPAIGNS DURING COVID-19

We are so grateful to all the organizations who adapted their United Way campaigns in this unique time. To help campaign leaders ensure their United Way campaigns would be safe and effective during the pandemic, we held three different informational webinars. We walked attendees through our new, robust Campaign Headquarters website, which features videos, materials and virtual fundraising ideas and tools; shared how to involve employees who are working remotely and discussed how to create safe in-person fundraisers.

OUR 2020 CAMPAIGN CHAIRS

We are honored to have **Clark and Emily Lauritzen** serve as the 2020 United Way Campaign Chairs. Clark is the Chairman and President of **FNBO**. We are so thankful for their passionate leadership and the support provided by the **FNBO** team.



OUR CAMPAIGN KICK OFF

During our virtual Campaign Kickoff, which was supported by **FNBO**, local community members shared how they overcame challenges with the help of United Way funded nonprofits. We were also honored to be joined by **Greg McDermott**, head coach of the **Creighton University Men's Basketball** team, who spoke to the power of working together as a team. More than **1,000 people** were in attendance.



FNBO FILM FRIDAYS

In advance of our event featuring critically-acclaimed author **Chris Gardner**, we partnered with **FNBO** to host a free showing of the movie *The Pursuit of Happyness*, which is based on Gardner's book by the same name. The screening was part of FNBO's Film Friday series.



TEE UP TO READ

Our Emerging Leaders raised more than **\$14,000** for the Raise Me to Read literacy initiative at Tee Up to Read, their annual charity golf tournament! The tournament was generously sponsored by **Fidelity National Title Group, The Harry A. Koch Company, Gavilon, OPPD, MUD, Adams & Sullivan, Cobalt Credit Union, Heartland Pest Control, HDR, Inc., University of Nebraska-Omaha, Metropolitan Omaha Educational Consortium** and **US Bank**.



BE A HERO. SAVE LIVES. MASK UP.

TAKE A SELFIE IN YOUR MASK AND POST IT ON SOCIAL WITH **#MASKUPMETRO**

#MASKUPMETRO

We partnered with **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska, FNBO, Mutual of Omaha** and the **Greater Omaha Chamber** on our **#MaskUpMetro** awareness campaign, which encouraged community members to wear masks to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. **Ideal Images, Mangelsen's, the City of Omaha Fire Department, the Omaha Storm Chasers** and **Union Omaha** donated more than **18,000** masks to nonprofit agencies as part of the campaign.



AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

We joined forces with our partners to launch a "Raise Me to Read" awareness campaign, which is part of the overall "Raise Me to Read" community-wide initiative to help local students achieve important reading milestones. We are pleased to be working with our **Emerging Leaders** group, **FAMILY, Inc.**, the **Iowa West Foundation**, **Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties** and **Metropolitan Omaha Educational Consortium** on this initiative.

UNLOCK THE POWER WITHIN YOU

FEATURING CHRIS GARDNER

Sponsored by:
FACEBOOK



With the support of our sponsors **FNBO** and **Facebook**, we were thrilled to bring *The Pursuit of Happyness* author, Chris Gardner, to our community for "Unlock the Power Within You." During the virtual event, Chris shared how we can achieve our dreams and build a better future for ourselves and our neighbors. We were also honored to have **Albert Varas**, Executive Director of the **Latino Center of the Midlands**, and **Tom Warren**, President and CEO of **Urban League of Nebraska**, discuss the steps we can take to ensure more people receive equal opportunities to thrive. More than **2,000** people were in attendance.

SCOUTING FOR FOOD

We partnered with the **Mid-America Council, Boy Scouts of America** to host "Scouting for Food," a food drive benefiting the **Food Bank for the Heartland**. With the support of our sponsors, **Werner Enterprises** and **Target**, the Scouts were able to collect **64,000** non-perishable food items from local homes and at three **Target** locations across the metro.



THE POWER OF PETS

Our first-ever **Pets United** cutest pet contest fundraiser raised nearly **\$5,000** for local community programs. Congratulations to the winner and our **UWM** animal mascot, **Mika**, for raising nearly **\$640** for local families in need!



CELEBRATED HEROES LIKE YOU AT OUR ANNUAL MEETING

Thanks to our community sponsors, we were able to celebrate the successes of this past year at our virtual Annual Meeting with more than **850** community members in attendance. With the support of Campaign Chairs **James** and **Paula Blackledge**, **UWM** raised **\$19.4 million** for local nonprofit programs and helped provide **5.1 million** basic needs, education and financial stability services to people in need in the '19-20 fiscal year. To learn more, visit: www.unitedwaymidlands.org/2020-annual-report.



CITIZENS OF THE YEAR

Mary and Rodrigo Lopez received the "Citizens of the Year" Award for their commitment to United Way of the Midlands and the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro. **Barbara and Wally Weitz**, the 2019 "Citizens of the Year," presented the award to the Lopez's.



CAMPAIGN RECOGNITION AWARDS

We were honored to present the third annual Campaign Recognition Awards to seven organizations that went above and beyond to support the 2019 United Way Campaign: **OPPD**, **OrthoNebraska**, **Union Bank and Trust**, **Koley Jessen**, **Tenaska**, **Kellogg Company** and **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska**.

UNITED WAY OF THE MIDLANDS
EMERGING LEADERS

University of the Midlands

United Way



READERS TO LEADERS



A Happy Hour Discussion

VIRTUAL HAPPY HOUR

The Emerging Leaders hosted an educational happy hour for young professionals interested in learning more about the Raise Me to Read initiative, which the Emerging Leaders support through fundraising and volunteerism.

The event featured special guest

Dr. Martha Bruckner, Executive Director of the Metropolitan Omaha Educational Consortium, and Samantha Emerine, Director of Literacy Initiatives for FAMILY, Inc. and Raise Me to Read.



THE PATH FORWARD: HELPING YOUTH SUCCEED DURING THE PANDEMIC

Women United hosted a virtual lunch and learn event where local experts shared how COVID-19 has impacted Opportunity Youth (OY) in our community and how we can help them succeed during this difficult time.

The event featured a panel moderated by **Matt Wallen**, Senior Vice President of Community Impact and Analytics at United Way. Panelists included **Joni Griffin, Director of Parenting Assessments and Supervisor of Aftercare Services at Therapy Place**; **Ronda Newman, Associate Vice President, Project Everlast**; **Aaron Weaver, Central Access Navigator, Project Everlast** and an Opportunity Youth client from **Therapy Place**.

PARTNERED WITH OMAHA WORLD-HERALD TO ADMINISTER THE GOODFELLOWS PROGRAM

We were honored to be selected by the Omaha World-Herald to help administer their Goodfellows program, which was established in the 1890s to help those in our community who have fallen on hard times.

Omaha World-Herald

Goodfellows

In Partnership with United Way of the Midlands



\$250 helps 6 families stay in their homes and avoid eviction this winter.

YEAR END GIVING

We kicked off our year-end giving campaign on Giving Tuesday on Dec. 1! Throughout the month of December, we invited community members to gift hope to our neighbors by donating to United Way. To learn why people supported those in need during the holiday season, please visit www.unitedwaymidlands.org/whygive.

TOGETHER, WE ARE BUILDING A BRIGHTER FUTURE.



JAG | NE

JOBS for AMERICA'S GRADUATES NEBRASKA

In Association with United Way of the Midlands

LAUNCHED JAG NEBRASKA

We were thrilled to launch a partnership with Jobs for America's Graduates, a program that aims to deliver student-centered programming in schools so youth are prepared to enter the workforce or post-secondary education. This program is generously supported by **Governor Ricketts, Commissioner John Albin** and the **Nebraska Department of Labor**.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Together with a task force of community leaders and collaborative partners, we will spend the next year updating and revising our strategic plan to ensure we remain responsive to community and donor interests and to elevate our priorities and processes so we can make a greater impact in the metro as we look toward 2025 and beyond.



EXPANDING THE 211 HELPLINE'S PARTNERSHIPS

Moving forward, 211 is continuing to broaden its capabilities and services to help the great states of Nebraska and Iowa. The Helpline is creating a mobile app to provide our neighbors with another way to access assistance and adding new partnerships with **Unite Nebraska** and **Help Me Grow Nebraska**. **Unite Nebraska** is a coordinated care network of health and social care providers sponsored by the **Nebraska Health Information Initiative (NEHII)**, and **Help Me Grow Nebraska** is an initiative focused on vulnerable children 0-5 years of age and their families, led and funded by **Children's Hospital**, and in partnership with **Munroe-Meyer Institute** and **UNL's Center for Children, Families, and the Law**.