

For Immediate Release: August 4, 2022

Volunteers to Assemble 5,000 “Shine Bright” Boxes for Metro-Area Students

Hundreds of community members will come together next Thursday, August 11, to brighten local students’ days by assembling 5,000 “Shine Bright” boxes at the Mid-America Center in Council Bluffs.

Right now, thousands of students across the metro are lacking essential hygiene items like soap, shampoo, conditioner, clean clothes and dental products – impacting their health, academics and confidence. Each “Shine Bright” box contains the full-sized hygiene items these students need to feel good and succeed in the classroom and in life.

“Shine Bright” is a partnership between United Way of the Midlands (UWM), the Omaha and Council Bluffs Public Schools, JAG Nebraska and others. With the community’s support, “Shine Bright” partners will distribute 5,000 “Shine Bright” boxes to kindergarten, sixth- and ninth-grade students in need throughout the community.

“In large part due to the highest inflation we’ve experienced in decades, one in three families in the metro area is struggling to make ends meet,” said Matt Wallen, SVP of Community Impact and Analytics at UWM. “That means many families are having to make tough choices with their finances, leaving them without hygiene products like soap or dental products. We are proud that through our partnerships, we can make sure students have the items they need to regain their confidence and shine bright in school.”

“Shine Bright” is proudly supported by community sponsors American Enterprise Group, Turner Construction, Weiners LTD and Werner Enterprises.

Members of the media are invited to the “Shine Bright” event at the Mid-America Center anytime between 9 a.m. and Noon on Thursday, August 11. Dr. Cheryl Logan, Superintendent of Omaha Public Schools, and Shawna Forsberg, President and CEO of United Way of the Midlands, will also be available for interviews that day between 10 – 11 a.m.

About United Way of the Midlands

For nearly 100 years, United Way of the Midlands (UWM) has served the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro by bridging the business and not-for-profit sectors to create a Circle of Support that helps our neighbors overcome difficult challenges and start building a better future. UWM’s funded programs and direct services address social and economic disparities and meet families’ essential needs such as healthy food, safe and stable housing, physical and mental health services, career preparation and job training. For more information, visit www.unitedwaymidlands.org.

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