

ADVANCING EDUCATION
INCOME AND HEALTH

UNITED WAY NEWSLETTER

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Creating a Shared Vision

United Way of Story County is working to understand the scope and dimension of the challenges facing Story County. The best way to find something out is to ask! Therefore, Community Impact Director Shannon Bardole has hosted 11 community conversations with the help of Nancy Franz, professor emeritus in the School of Education at Iowa State University. Nancy provided facilitation expertise, which allowed for an unbiased leader of discussion. The ultimate goal for these conversations is to develop measurable goals in order to proceed with a shared vision in creating the biggest possible impact on the future of our county.

We talked to 11 groups (124 individuals) with a broad range of demographic characteristics in Story County: staff and clients of our partner agencies, young professionals, ISU students, seniors, members of the business community, members of the faith community, and educators. Geographically, the individuals represented the communities of Ames, Huxley, Maxwell, Nevada, Slater and Story City.

The groups were asked a set of open-ended questions and to share their aspirations for our community.

Questions included the following:

- What would make Story County a better place to live?
- What are the few most important concerns for the community?
- What prevents progress on these issues?
- What can be done to make a difference on these issues?

Now that the initial conversations have been held, United Way staff is analyzing all the public knowledge that has been gained. The next step is to determine countywide goals in the areas of education, income and health.

This community-organizing component is at the heart of community impact work. It calls the community to be engaged in creating a shared vision and committed to improving community conditions. Once there is a shared understanding and commitment to act, the work becomes focused on identifying objectives and strategies to meet the goals.

More information about the community conversations can be found online at www.uwstory.org. If you have questions, feel free to reach out to Shannon at sbardole@uwstory.org or (515) 268-5142.

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Education

- *Prevention strategies*
- *Outreach/advocacy services*
- *Access to building blocks for academic success*

Income

- *Basic/emergency needs met*
- *Movement toward self-sufficiency*

Health

- *Affordable/accessible essential services*

LIVE UNITED



United Way of Story County

315 Clark Avenue
Ames, IA 50010
(515) 268-5142
unitedway@uwstory.org

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.

United Way of Story County

uwstory.org



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Above and Beyond the Annual Campaign

Participation from companies and individuals in the annual campaign is vital for our communities. However, United Way of Story County (UWSC) has been fortunate in recent years to enter into some unconventional partnerships with various organizations to further support our work in education, income and health.

FINRA Foundation

UWSC has recently received a two-year grant totaling \$114,962 from the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) Investor Education Foundation and United Way Worldwide to expand the reach of our Women with Initiative program for at-risk women. The program includes money management training, one-on-one mentoring and access to educational scholarships. With the help of this grant, we plan to grow the program in Story County by making it easier for women outside Ames to participate.

Reducing transportation barriers and providing better access to our program for our target audience – women who are financially at-risk – is something that has been a goal of ours for several years. Initially in a part-time position, Women with Initiative Coordinator Jerri Baumeister is now working full-time, and Leslie Van Dyke has been hired as a part-time program assistant to help expand the program.

We are grateful to FINRA Investor Education Foundation and United Way Worldwide, who are awarding more than \$1.5 million in 12 grants to help low-wage families build financial stability under the *Financial Education in Your Community* initiative.

Hoiburger

The Hoiburger, a sandwich at Applebee's named after Iowa State University Men's Basketball Coach Fred Hoiberg, was offered in 11 area restaurants in June, July and August and was reintro-

duced statewide during basketball season. Carol and Fred Hoiberg were given the opportunity to select a charity to benefit from this promotion, and they chose UWSC. One dollar was donated to UWSC for every sandwich sold.

When Applebee's approached UWSC with the opportunity, sales were targeted to be about 6,000 sandwiches. However, the first run in the summer of 2014 saw almost 15,000 Hoiburgers sold. After the promotion expanded statewide at the start of basketball season, Applebee's sold more than 43,000 sandwiches! Therefore, this effort has resulted in a \$58,000+ donation to UWSC!

We can't thank Carol and Fred Hoiberg enough for choosing United Way of Story County as the recipient of this donation. We also appreciate the ongoing partnership of Iowa State University Athletics, and we're excited about our new partnership with Applebee's. Finally, we're grateful to each and every person who ate a Hoiburger!

Farm Progress Show

In 2010, the Farm Progress Show and Monsanto began a partnership to help feed Iowa's hungry, and they asked UWSC for our help to do so. As part of the initiative, Farm Progress Show visitors are encouraged to bring non-perishable food items to the show, which happens every other year in Boone, Iowa, and Decatur, Illinois. Each gate has a drop-off location, and for every pound of food donated, Monsanto donates \$1 in cash to United Way of Story County.

The food and monetary donations are then split between local food pantries. In the past three shows (2010, 2012, 2014), food donations have averaged more than 6,000 pounds and cash has averaged more than \$10,000 with the Monsanto match. Thanks to the Farm Progress Show and Monsanto, the impact on our local pantries is significant!



LIVE UNITED Annual Campaign: An Invitation to Influence

UWSC recruits people with passion, expertise and resources who want to make a difference. We focus on education, income and health because those are the building blocks for a good quality life and a strong community. A quality education is essential to getting a good job with health benefits. An income that can cover today's needs and save for tomorrow solidifies a family's foundation. Good health helps children succeed at school and adults succeed at work. Remove any one building block, and the other two topple. Build them all up, and we have a foundation for collective success.



Every dollar counts. When you join with others from all walks of life to make a donation, your contribution makes a big difference in Story County. Gifts within the leadership campaign go even further, and we invite you to consider the impact you could make by giving through

our leadership circles – Tocqueville Society (\$10,000+), Traditional Leadership (\$1,000+), Women with Initiative (\$1,000+ for financial education for at-risk women) and Young Leaders Society (\$250+ for those 40 and younger). Watch for more details this fall.

Women with Initiative (Wwi) Announces Luncheon Date

Wwi is pleased to announce its annual luncheon will be held on July 14, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., at Prairie Moon Winery. The event's program will cover an update of the impact Wwi has, including a special address from a program participant. In addition, keynote speaker Lily French will present the Iowa Policy Project's research on The Cost of Living in Iowa Report. This recently-released report details what a livable wage is for Story County and when an individual/family will experience "cliffs" that are prohibitive to self-sufficiency. Wwi's ability to educate at-risk women in budgeting and saving can help navigate these cliffs and continue on a path out of poverty. The luncheon is a paid event and will require an RSVP. Please email Kristin at kpates@uwstory.org for more information.

Young Leaders Society (YLS) Members Learn About New Partnership

YLS members recently saw UWSC's work in the area of income up close. United Way's funding within the portfolio of income helps meet basic and emergency needs through emergency food sources, rent or utility assistance or even homelessness prevention. BUT – the story of this work doesn't stop there. UWSC can also help increase self-sufficiency for those struggling to find employment. An example of this is seen with the new partnership of tuition assistance through a special program at DMACC, Workforce Training Academy. This new program will help meet the employment needs of our communities plus increase the earning potential of participants. Those who participate are connected to a career to help them secure in-demand employment.



JONATHAN WICKERT
Iowa State University

2015
Campaign Chair



YVONNE KINZLER
Kinzler Companies

2016
Campaign Chair



DAN CULHANE
Ames Chamber of Commerce and Ames Economic Development Commission

2017
Campaign Chair

Welcome aboard, Dan!

UWSC recently announced Dan has joined Jonathan and Yvonne in the LIVE UNITED campaign leadership succession. The campaign chair serves as the primary spokesperson and assists with campaign planning, goal setting and volunteer recruitment.



**CHANGE
WON'T HAPPEN
WITHOUT YOU
GET INVOLVED**

Endowment: Investments at Work

UWSC's mission is to partner with the community to identify needs and to develop, support and evaluate programs, especially in the areas of education, income and health to help address those needs. Securing resources, so that we are prepared to address the problems, is what the LIVE UNITED annual campaign is all about. But our effort to fulfill our vision to make life better for those in Story County doesn't end with the campaign or other sources of annual income. Rather, it's the beginning.

The Endowment fund is designed to ensure UWSC has the ongoing ability to meet the current and future needs of the community despite any fluctuations in the economy or in annual giving.

How? By investing in our future, much like a family does with their own savings account. Earnings from UWSC's Endowment fund have already been used to help meet new or emerging needs in our community that have not been addressed by funds from the annual campaign. Earnings from the Endowment have helped support the Backpack Program, transportation needs, the mental health wellness center and more.

In the past several years, UWSC staff has heard from many of our business partners that finding skilled employees is becoming more difficult. As the cost of living increases, United Way is also hearing from our partner agencies that individuals they serve are finding it difficult to find employment that earns them a livable wage because they lack the skills and don't have the resources to get needed training. Therefore, UWSC staff talked with representatives from Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) and the Ames Chamber of Commerce to discuss what needed to happen to get Workforce Training Academy (WTA) to DMACC's Hunziker Center.

We learned that they needed partners in the community. WTA is a short-term certificate program, and the two planned to be piloted this year include Construction Specialist with a 90 hour curriculum and Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) with a 150 hour curriculum. Through the partnership with UWSC and funding from other sources, both are provided at no-cost to the participant.

How do we know this need exists for both the employers as well as the individuals seeking employment? The GED (General Equivalency Diploma) program was restructured from a drop-in program to managed enrollment, meaning participants sign up for eight weeks of structured classes. DMACC saw increases in the number of individuals signing up. The enrolled program, now called HiSET, reported that there have been 120 individuals from Story County enrolled this past year. Seeing this increase in the program and understanding the importance of education to future earnings, UWSC partnered with DMACC to help support individuals struggling to afford a training program.

Eligible participants must meet the income guidelines – 250% of the federal poverty guideline and be un- or under-employed. To qualify for UWSC assistance, participants must also be a resident of Story County.

As the Endowment continues to grow, there will be more and more opportunities to accomplish the mission – and with your help we will continue to work toward our vision of improving the quality of life for individuals and families throughout Story County.

› *Golf Fore Kids* Golfers and sponsors are invited to participate in the 16th annual Golf Fore Kids event on August 7 at Ames Golf & Country Club to raise funds for local children and family programs. More info can be found at www.uwstory.org.

› *Volunteer to impact kids this summer!* We need volunteers to help this summer in Ames and Nevada. Number of hours worked can be flexible. We need help serving and cleaning up for breakfast, lunch and snack. We also need help implementing enrichment activities (science, technology, reading, engineering, arts and math). Please visit www.uwstory.org/summer-learning for more information and to get signed up.

› *Kickoff and Day of Caring* Save the date for Sept. 11 for the LIVE UNITED Campaign Kickoff and Day of Caring! We'll have breakfast that morning before heading out to volunteer. Sign up your business to volunteer at www.uwstory.org.