

United Way Blackhawk Region

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United Way
Blackhawk Region

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United Way Blackhawk Region invests more than \$2.344 million in Community

BLACKHAWK REGION – United Way Blackhawk Region (UWBR) announces an investment of more than \$2.3 million to support local programs in Rock and northern Winnebago counties in 2018-19.

The annual Community Grant process is designed to award funds to programs demonstrating community need, articulating program efficacy and results. Through the highly competitive process, United Way Blackhawk Region's volunteer Board of Directors approved \$2,344,601 in grant funding for 62 local health and human services programs over an 18 month period.

The 18 month grant period serves as the first incremental step toward a new two-year funding cycle. Multi-year funding has become a standard across the United Way network, as it places an emphasis on longer-term programming to achieve greater impact. In small group discussions that took place earlier this year, both partner agency executives and United Way volunteers agreed that benefits of the new process include more time focused on achieving outcomes, less time spent on the application process, and the welcomed ability to plan farther ahead.

“Year after year, we’re amazed by the level of commitment and stewardship our skilled volunteers bring to the grant review process. Three tiers of robust review were conducted, a generous donation resulting in more than 700 hours of volunteer time,” said United Way Blackhawk Region President & CEO Mary Fanning-Penny. “We’re incredibly proud of the integrity of this in-depth process, and acknowledge that our big-hearted volunteers are tasked with a really tough job.”

Programs receiving grants in 2018-19, administered by 28 nonprofit organizations, are aligned with United Way's Community Impact areas of health, education and financial stability - the building blocks for a good quality of life.

Health: \$475,660 will be invested to:

- Improve community wellness by ensuring access to medical, dental and mental health care.
- Provide kids with opportunities to enhance their health, as well as empower youth about how to make healthy choices and avoid risky behaviors.
- Provide individuals and families with services to lead healthy and productive lifestyles.

Education: \$689,082 will be invested to:

- Help kids be ready to learn and succeed in school through access to quality early care and education, and parent/family awareness and engagement.
- Support youth to be successful inside and outside the classroom through mentoring and enrichment opportunities.
- Provide students with pathways to high school graduation and post-secondary success.

Financial Stability: \$1,093,859 will be invested to:

- Stabilize families in crisis by providing emergency food, shelter, transportation, rent assistance, and advocacy.
- Help adults become self-sufficient through access to quality child care, job training, and supports to overcome barriers to sustaining employment.
- Improve the education level of adults and create more financially secure situations for themselves and their families.

In addition, United Way is investing \$25,000 to provide 2-1-1, an information and referral service providing 7/24/365 access to a caring, compassionate person that can connect residents to local resources. The board of directors also approved up to \$20,000 in capacity building and venture grant funding, as well as up to \$40,000 in emergency funding. United Way will again spend \$1,000 to host Get Connected, a volunteer engagement website for the region.

In 2018 and beyond, United Way's Board of Directors will be exploring additional opportunities to strategically invest donor dollars in community-led initiatives working to develop innovative solutions to our most daunting problems.

"Community grants are made possible thanks to the generosity of more than 8,000 donors and the 200 plus community-minded organizations that host United Way workplace campaigns," said Jon Schlemmer, Board Chair for United Way Blackhawk Region. "We are working hard to identify every donor and dollar possible to move the needle on tough-to-solve issues. If our community joins us in these efforts and the campaign goal is attained, we'll be eager to allocate and announce additional investments or initiative funding in the months ahead."

United Way's 2018-19 Community Grants are dependent upon a successful fundraising campaign, which currently stands at \$732,585 or 29% of the \$2.5 million dollar goal. To find out how to facilitate a workplace campaign, make a donation or Live United in other ways, visit LiveUnitedBR.org or call (608) 757-3040.

About United Way Blackhawk Region

United Way fights for the health, education, and financial stability of every person in every community. We win by Living United, by forging unlikely partnerships and by finding new solutions to old problems; by mobilizing the best resources; and inspiring individuals to join the fight against a common foe, each community's most daunting social crises. United Way Blackhawk Region Lives United against poverty, family violence, hunger and homelessness to name a few, by providing community grants and resources to 62 human services programs at 28 nonprofit agencies in Rock County, Wis. and northern Winnebago County, Ill. More information is available at LiveUnitedBR.org.

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