

**STRONGER  
TOGETHER.**



#UNITEDQUADCITIES

**United  
Way**



QUAD CITIES

## United Way FAQs

**Got questions? We have answers.**

Below are answers to commonly asked questions regarding United Way Quad Cities. If your question is not answered here, please contact us [via email](#).

### GENERAL QUESTIONS

#### **What does United Way do?**

We create, lead and invest in programs and partners that strengthen education, income and health outcomes in Rock Island and Scott counties. These fundamentals are the building blocks of opportunity and provide our community a firm foundation for success for both now and in the future.

#### **Why education, income and health?**

Imagine what education, income and health mean to you and your family. Could you do without any one of them? They're the building blocks of opportunity – all three are necessary for individuals, families and communities to thrive. Our children need an education so one day they can find employment that provides economic stability and mobility. And everyone needs good health to perform well at school or work.

Sometimes it's easier to use specific examples to demonstrate why these impact areas are so important:

- An individual who finishes high school will contribute \$750,000 more to the local economy in his or her lifetime than someone who drops out of school. That's why United Way is investing \$1.3 million to help ensure Quad Cities kids are successful in school and life.
- About one in five people experience a mental health issue each year. United Way works with community partners, practitioners and experts to shine a light on and address the behavior and mental health challenges in our community. That's why United Way is investing nearly \$1 million to help ensure Quad Citizens have the resources to lead happy, healthy and productive lives.

- One out of three families in the Quad Cities can barely cover basic daily living expenses. In today's economy, families need enough income to cover rising costs of food, housing, health care, child care and clothing – or face painful financial choices. That's why United Way is investing \$1.3 million toward helping to provide food, shelter, transportation, career training and financial education.

United Way works with 37 strategic investment partners, and dozens of other service providers, that focus on important pieces of the building blocks, but United Way brings together each of the resources to address all three building blocks of opportunity: education, income *and* health.

### **What's the ultimate goal?**

We're working toward a day when every child enters kindergarten ready to succeed: when every third-grader reads proficiently, every student has what's needed to reach graduation, and every graduate is fully prepared for success in college and/or their career. We envision a day when every adult can find and keep a job that leads to financial stability and when every individual has the resources to live a happy, healthy, productive life.

### **How do I know I'm making a difference when I give to United Way Quad Cities?**

We've been on a mission for nearly 50 years, and we're having a measurable impact. In the past year, we've put opportunity in the hands of nearly 50,000 people in the Quad Cities.

With help from the United Way:

- 11,411 students were provided opportunities to promote ongoing school success from pre-K through high school;
- 13,923 residents had the opportunity to secure a solid foundation to live, find and keep better jobs and to build savings to provide for their future;
- 24,060 Quad Citizens received the resources needed to live longer, happier lives with access to health and emotional wellness support.

Because of our local network and position in the Quad Cities, we have a 30,000-foot view of the resources and gaps in our community. We study and step into these gaps with investments, programs and coalitions to create opportunity where it didn't exist before.

## **How does United Way Quad Cities measure progress?**

Researchers and data analyst professionals from St. Ambrose University analyze Rock Island and Scott county school district student academic information to provide regional data on educational benchmarks. Other sources include U.S. Census Bureau, ALICE Project Research Center, Quad Cities Chamber, Bi-State Regional Commission, Iowa and Illinois workforce organizations, Quad Cities Health Initiative and Gallup. Our BOLD GOALS for 2030 – for successful kids, economic opportunities for all and a healthy and strong region – were established in alignment with the [Q2030 Regional Action Plan](#).

## **Who oversees the finances of United Way?**

All of our financial operations are audited by an independent accounting firm and carefully reviewed by volunteers who serve on the United Way Finance and Audit Committees and United Way Board of Directors. Our financial statements can be viewed [here](#).

## **DONATIONS**

### **Why should I give to United Way instead of to a specific nonprofit service provider?**

Our community's challenges are bigger and more complex than one organization can solve alone. That's why, when you invest your dollars with the United Way, you're investing in multiple organizations that are expected to deliver measurable results to improve the lives of children, families and individuals in our region.

When you give to United Way, the value of your dollar multiplies, and that's a smart investment. For every \$1 given to United Way, \$1.85 worth of resources are invested back into the Quad Cities. That often includes investment match opportunities, tax breaks and more. That's a positive return.

### **What are your total administrative costs?**

United Way Quad Cities is the largest funder of social services in our region. We raised \$7.1 million in donations last year. Administrative costs are 10.5% of revenues and fundraising costs are 8% of donations. For every dollar donated, about 81.5 cents go to the cause.

United Way Quad Cities (UWQC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating the conditions for every Quad Citizen to live their best possible life. In the nonprofit sector, it is less about making better widgets and more about improving systems and processes that help put opportunity in the hands of all residents.

Beyond the costs for office management, our administrative expenses include investments in training, developing and equipping our team with the most relevant expertise and technology to better advance our mission and operate our organization more efficiently. Like companies, investing here helps scale our work and ability to change Quad Citizens' lives.

### **Does my donation go to local service providers in the Quad Cities?**

Yes. United Way funded organizations are independently incorporated and led by local volunteers. So, your investment in United Way Quad Cities goes to help people in Scott and Rock Island counties. (The only exception to this is when a donor "designates" their gift to an organization beyond the Quad Cities.)

### **Do my dollars go to the national agency, United Way Worldwide?**

Our United Way is an entirely autonomous agency; however, we send 1% of the money raised to United Way Worldwide for annual association dues. In addition to naming rights, these dues provide access to a plethora of resources including public policies, communication materials, fundraising best practices and a large network of United Way employees from around the world.

### **Do you share specific information on how money is used within the organization?**

Yes, we share our annual 990 and audits [on our website](#). You can also view the list of [37 nonprofit organizations](#) that are funded through United Way.

### **What are the benefits of my company running a United Way fundraising campaign?**

It's really a win-win situation for everyone. Local businesses are the economic engine for our region. United Way Quad Cities helps them leverage their people and resources to connect them to causes most important to them.

We know companies are going above and beyond to attract and retain talent and customers. With a track record that includes impacting nearly 50,000 individuals in 2019 alone, United Way has the necessary expertise and reach to help your company execute a strong engagement program that provides opportunities for employees to make a positive impact.

And, through the support of your employee investments, together we make our whole region more vibrant and successful. United Way Quad Cities invests donor dollars in 37 local nonprofit agencies. Those investments help one in six people in our region live better lives. We're working hard to transform the quality of life for all in our region by ensuring kids succeed in school and

life, adults achieve gainful employment and are financially stable and people have the tools and resources to lead happy, healthy and productive lives.

## PROGRAMS

### **Does United Way Quad Cities provide direct service or have programs of its own?**

Yes. When there are gaps in our community, we may incubate a program solution to provide the services that might not otherwise be available to Quad Citizens. We currently have programs with local partners that fill gaps in our focus areas of education and income: Born Learning, Madison Community School Program, QC Tutor Connection, Read to Lead and the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (VITA).

### **Who does United Way partner with to drive impact and why?**

We partner with 501(c)(3) organizations, social entrepreneurs and grassroots groups that are best positioned to help meet our BOLD GOALS – ensuring kids succeed in school and life, adults achieve financial stability and residents have access to supports and services to live healthy lives. We use our expertise and resources to identify the greatest needs in the areas of education, income and health, and we vet potential partners to ensure our investments are driving us toward those goals.

### **Who decides which service providers receive funding?**

Skilled and trained committees made up of nearly 120 community volunteers review, evaluate and recommend grantees that address important needs in our community. The United Way Volunteer Board of Directors ultimately gives final approval. However, the application process is highly competitive and our funds are limited. Visit our website to view a comprehensive list of the organizations and programs we support and to see our [Strategic Investments Plan](#).

### **Why do you fund schools when tax dollars support that area?**

United Way funding fills a gap that is not supported by tax dollars. The educational components we're focusing on go above and beyond a normal school day. These include summer learning, after-school programs and support services for at-risk youth. Every child deserves the opportunity to succeed in school, so we're helping them do that with resources that fall outside the classroom.

## **How do I know funded partner service providers will use the funds responsibly?**

We make investment decisions based on an organization's fiscal responsibility, sound management and measurable results. Oversight of continued adherence to sound fiscal policies and of program outcomes is part of the Community Impact Grant Panel process.

## **Can a nonprofit not selected for funding receive other UWQC funding or reapply in the future?**

Absolutely. Our Strategic Investment Grant panels and staff provide feedback to all agencies based on the evaluation of their program(s), enabling them to be more competitive going forward. We encourage agencies to apply for United Way funding at any time.

## **How does United Way help those nonprofits that did not receive funding?**

United Way is a good partner, champion and advocate for the nonprofit sector. Our success is largely dependent on the performance of local nonprofit agencies delivering direct services that improve lives. We're committed to supporting and promoting their work beyond funding. For example, we leverage our United Way Volunteer Hub to match Quad Citizens with a variety of small and large nonprofit volunteer needs. We can help nonprofits with capacity building and professional development programs, as well.

## **What is the United Way's role in COVID-19 and other Disaster Response and Recovery efforts?**

We are a partner on the Quad Cities Disaster Relief Coalition that serves as the regional body to connect and communicate with area nonprofits, corporations and government organizations to coordinate disaster response.

In March 2020, we joined with the Quad Cities Community Foundation (QCCF) and Regional Development Authority (RDA) to activate the Quad Cities Disaster Relief Fund, hosted at the QCCF. The fund partners worked together to raise urgent resources to help local nonprofits working on the front lines of the coronavirus crisis. To date, more than \$1.4 million has been raised — including United Way Quad Cities' contribution of \$125,000 to the fund. As our region moves into the recovery and rebuilding phase and after requests from corporate partners, we established the [United Way COVID-19 Rebuilding Fund](#) to provide quarterly grants to local nonprofits experiencing evolving challenges from COVID-19. Monies can be used to:

- Provide essential needs like, food, shelter, hygiene items for our most vulnerable populations;
- Get kids back on track for learning and succeeding in school and life;

- Address the immediate economic impact for many workers, particularly in the service and retail industries with tangible solutions and resources – getting people back to work and financially stable;
- Ensure the health and emotional wellness of our children and adults.