



**REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY 2017**  
**THE DIFFERENCE YOU MAKE**

**LIVE UNITED**

## MEANINGFUL CHANGE HAPPENS WHEN EVERYDAY PEOPLE GET INVOLVED

When you care about your community and the people who live in it, it's easy to commit to doing everything possible to make it better. For United Way, this year continued to be a year of discovery and transition.

Through our community conversations you told us that we are in a unique position to be a catalyst for change. You helped us determine our priorities in the areas of Education, Health and Financial Stability and said we should focus our attention and resources on these specific topics:

### Early learning, Birth to 10

Ensuring that all children are ready to learn when they start school and have the foundation/fundamentals to be successful.

### Mental health

Improving access to treatment with a spotlight on trauma informed care and adverse childhood experiences.

### Access to jobs that pay a family sustaining wage

Supporting programs that prepare people with the skills to obtain better paying jobs.

But we cannot do this alone. We will need to bring together the necessary partners and stakeholders to achieve these priorities, because together we can do it.

**TOGETHER** we will address the hunger needs for families struggling in our community through the WinnebagoLand Hunger Network.

**TOGETHER** we will empower women by providing coaching to help them set goals toward economic stability and financial assistance to address the barriers they face in getting and keeping a job that pays well.

**TOGETHER** we will confront mental illness, and alcohol and drug addiction by providing access to treatment.

**TOGETHER** we will help our students thrive and achieve academic success through reading, math and mentoring programs.

**TOGETHER** we will support survivors of violence with treatment, advocacy and safe haven.

In order to make this happen, we have committed to increasing our efforts to generate additional financial resources, focusing on re-structuring our board, and improving our marketing efforts to communicate our impact and purpose. We are counting on you to help us make this happen because

**UNITED WE FIGHT. UNITED WE WIN.**

Thank you!



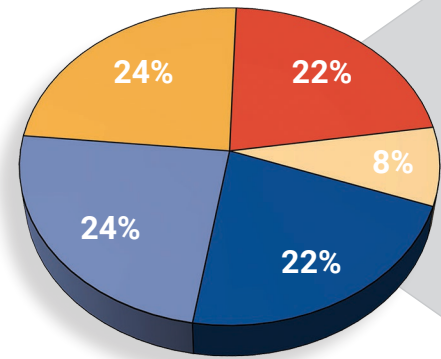
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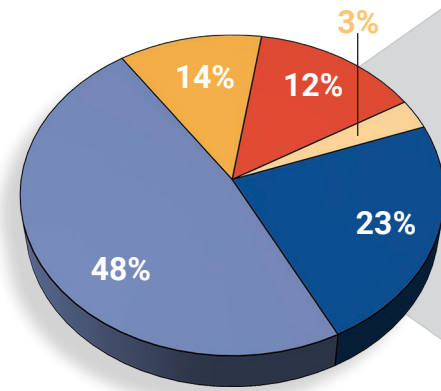




## HOW WE INVESTED IN OUR COMMUNITY \$1,306,753

|                       |     |           |
|-----------------------|-----|-----------|
| Reserves              | 8%  | \$156,731 |
| Community Initiatives | 22% | \$289,763 |
| Education             | 24% | \$312,000 |
| Financial Stability   | 24% | \$314,260 |
| Health                | 22% | \$234,000 |

## FY 2017



## FUNDING SOURCES

\$1,274,782

|                                  |     |           |
|----------------------------------|-----|-----------|
| Special Events & Sponsorships    | 3%  | \$ 36,431 |
| Foundations                      | 12% | \$155,000 |
| Individual Contributions         | 14% | \$193,669 |
| Employee Workplace Contributions | 48% | \$590,285 |
| Corporate Contributions          | 23% | \$299,397 |





## WHY I GIVE: JENNIFER SKOLASKI

Jennifer moved to the area in 2012 and soon connected with the team at the Oshkosh Area United Way. She claims she wasn't always a giver of dollars, adding "When I was younger, my donation was my time. My professional background is in social work and I hoped to be a school social worker. However, observing the burnout in this profession, I turned to the nonprofit path as a career.

I have been involved in nonprofits since I was five, as my dad runs a private family foundation in Madison. My parents instilled in me, the concept of giving and philanthropy.

As a result, I became involved with nonprofits in college. As a career, I turned my attention to these nonprofit agencies, determined to give back to the community in my work."

Jennifer goes on to explain, "The reason I give to United Way now is that 1) I feel the need to put action behind the preaching, and 2) I give because I see so many agencies with challenges. I believe United Way is the resource for helping them become more efficient and effective in the work they do, to help these agencies fulfill their mission, and to become stronger."

She believes if organizations are stronger all of them can work better together. "I believe giving our financial gifts to United Way, collectively, will have a greater impact than is possible for any one organization."

The public might be surprised to learn how many organizations, programs and resources are utilized by a single person. The United Way minimizes duplicate services and helps agencies work together to better serve those in need, often serving as an unbiased intermediary among agencies, with the ability to encourage collaboration. Jennifer knows firsthand, that donors want to see efficiency in delivering services and agencies working well together.

During the annual United Way Campaign, Jennifer was often asked, "What is the benefit of donating to United Way?" She is ready with quick and well thought out responses:

- The United Way offers good stewardship: accountability by funded programs and agencies
- The United Way promotes collaboration and helps focus efforts
- The United Way also spearheads many community initiatives
- The United Way keeps its fingers on the pulse of emerging and pressing needs. It is not myopic and looks at issues with a different lens.

It is clear that Jennifer gives in many ways, using both her head and her heart, and is making a difference in our community.

Visit the Oshkosh Area United Way website at [oshkoshunitedway.org](http://oshkoshunitedway.org) to see the difference all of our donors are making every day in our community and learn how you too, can make a difference by donating to the United Way.







## EDUCATION: PARENT CONNECTION

He is our future. Your donation to United Way helps ensure it is bright.

Rachel spent a lot of time babysitting and being a nanny to four children when she was a teenager. However, caring for her own son as a single mom at age 21 is a lot different than taking care of someone else's child, she acknowledges. She was referred to Parent Connection about a month after her son Jacob was born, when she was readmitted to the hospital with postpartum issues. Today Jacob is a bright independent 19-month-old, who is quickly developing a large vocabulary and likes to have his mother within earshot.

With the help of Parent Connection's Family Support Specialist, Brenda, Rachel is gaining confidence not only in her ability to care for her young child, but also in knowing Jacob

is doing well, hitting or surpassing many of the expected developmental benchmarks.

In addition to the home visits, Rachel participates in group sessions with other parents. The groups, which also include other Support Specialists, center around a shared meal and an activity that parent and child can do together. In these settings, Rachel is often a leader among her peers, modeling the desired interactions with her son, which are so important in a child's development. She is quick to get on the floor with Jacob, and stack blocks, read to him, or ask him about colors.

She finds the group meetings helpful especially when it quickly becomes clear to her that she isn't the only one who sometimes feels uncertain about caring for her son. She admits that it, "is a lot harder than I thought it would be, and it feels good to know I'm not the only one who sometimes has a hard time with it, like the worrying and decision making. I'm responsible for everything for him."

With the help of Parent Connection, Rachel is finding joy in the hard work of parenting. When asked by Brenda what she enjoys most about her child, Rachel's response is, "I love how Jacob enjoys interacting with me, and how he will bring a book to me and sit and read with me." During this exchange, she is reminded by Brenda, that this is a direct result of her actions shaping his interactions with her. By showing interest in what he is doing, Rachel gives him the confidence to interact more with her, to which Rachel also responded, "I never thought of it that way."

With the help of United Way dollars, Parent Connection provided 2,153 home visits to new parents last year. During the visits, the Support Specialist works with Mom or Dad and guides them in caring for their children from birth to age three. These early experiences are critical to early brain development and well-being for the child, setting the stage for health and success for the rest of their life.

In addition to the home visits, Parent Connection provides parenting workshops throughout the year to new parents, or those looking to improve their parenting skills. All Parent Connection staff are college degreed professionals in the fields of Education, Human Services, Social Work as well as other fields related to childhood development. In addition, all are trained in "Parents as Teachers" a nationally recognized early brain development curriculum.

The reporting and data regarding the importance of early brain development in children birth to five is mounting every day. Giving parents the tools to ensure their child receives the stimulation and interaction for this development is fundamental to the services Parent Connection provides.

It is the Difference YOU make as a donor to United Way.





## FINANCIAL STABILITY: Breaking the Cycle: ADVOCAP and Day by Day Warming Shelter

Allen, 39, never knew what a stable life looked like. As a child, he was abandoned, abused, in and out of foster care, and could not adjust to adoption. As a young adult he was in and out of jail and prison. He is from nowhere, and everywhere. Born in Germany, he grew up in the south, and before landing in Oshkosh, lived in Duluth. He never planned for a future, because he never knew one was possible.

During his last incarceration in Oshkosh, sober for the first time in a long time, with his eyes wide opened, he knew he needed to turn things around and change his life, essentially starting over. One skill his turbulent life gave him is the ability to

disconnect, to put the past behind him and move on. It is this skill that allows Allen to keep focused on what he does want; a better life.

Once out of jail, he was resourceful. Having been homeless before, he knew if he showed up in the right place there would be help available. The difference this time, is Allen tapped the help he needed to make permanent changes. He credits The Day by Day Warming Shelter and ADVOCAP for giving him the help he needed to make those changes.

The one gift he believes he does have is intelligence, plus one skill. He is an accomplished chef. He states there are many places he feels uncomfortable in his life. But the one place he feels comfortable is in a kitchen. He loves the atmosphere, the environment, and the pace.

Today Allen is working full time at The Ground Round as a food shift supervisor, as well as The Ruby Owl. He is confident. He knows he's good at what he does. Although working two jobs, he's still utilizing the shelter. He is working to clean up financial situations, personal situations, and his physical health. He is on track to get his driver's license for the first time in his life. One of his goals after paying off his debts was to open a bank account with \$1,000. He just accomplished this goal recently.

Allen felt he needed an incubation period to get his life in order and the services at The Shelter and ADVOCAP have

given him this. The Shelter is his calm in the storm. He knows he needs a plan by April 15 when the shelter will close for the season.

He wishes people knew how tough being homeless is—the mental drain. “You don’t have a home. You have no security. You live out of blue bins. It’s fatiguing and draining. It is a negative psychological thing.”

The key to making a change for him has been the support and understanding he gets from the case manager funded by the United Way. This has given him time to reflect on what are the next steps for him. He’s three months in to his new life. From his perspective, what the program staff REALLY do, besides putting a roof over his head and giving him food, is relate to him as a person. He reflects, “They want to see you do better and move forward. They offer support without pressure.”

The Day by Day Warming Shelter and ADVOCAP are supported by Oshkosh Area United Way. Helping Allen achieve self-sufficiency and break his cycle of homelessness is the difference YOU are making with your donation to United Way.







## HEALTH: BONUS 10

How do you teach children to eat their fresh vegetables, if they aren't served vegetables?

That is the question and the underlying purpose behind the Bonus 10 Food Bucks Program. Since the summer of 2015, United Way, along with other community partners, has been supporting this program to get fresh food to those living below the poverty line, who may not otherwise be able to afford fresh produce. But there's more to the program—hope that shoppers of locally grown produce will also learn about the food they are purchasing and how to prepare it.

Numerous community outreach initiatives have been introduced in collaboration with the Oshkosh Farmers Market to achieve this goal, including Meet Me at the Market grocery bags, Discover the Market Certificates, Double Bonus Program and a Market Food Survey.

Since its launch in 2015, the Bonus 10 Food Bucks program allows Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP) recipients to spend \$10 or more in market tokens and get an additional 10 free tokens. The tokens can be used to purchase fruits, vegetables, meat, and seafood. In 2016 in collaboration with the Oshkosh Food Pantry, the program was expanded for children age four to eighteen. The Discover the Market program gives each child using the Kid's Corner at the food

pantry a certificate good for 10 market tokens which can be used at the pantry or the Farmers Market. The child must redeem the tokens in person and then can share with their family. The Discover the Market certificates were distributed through the Oshkosh Food Pantry and The Boys & Girls Club of Oshkosh.

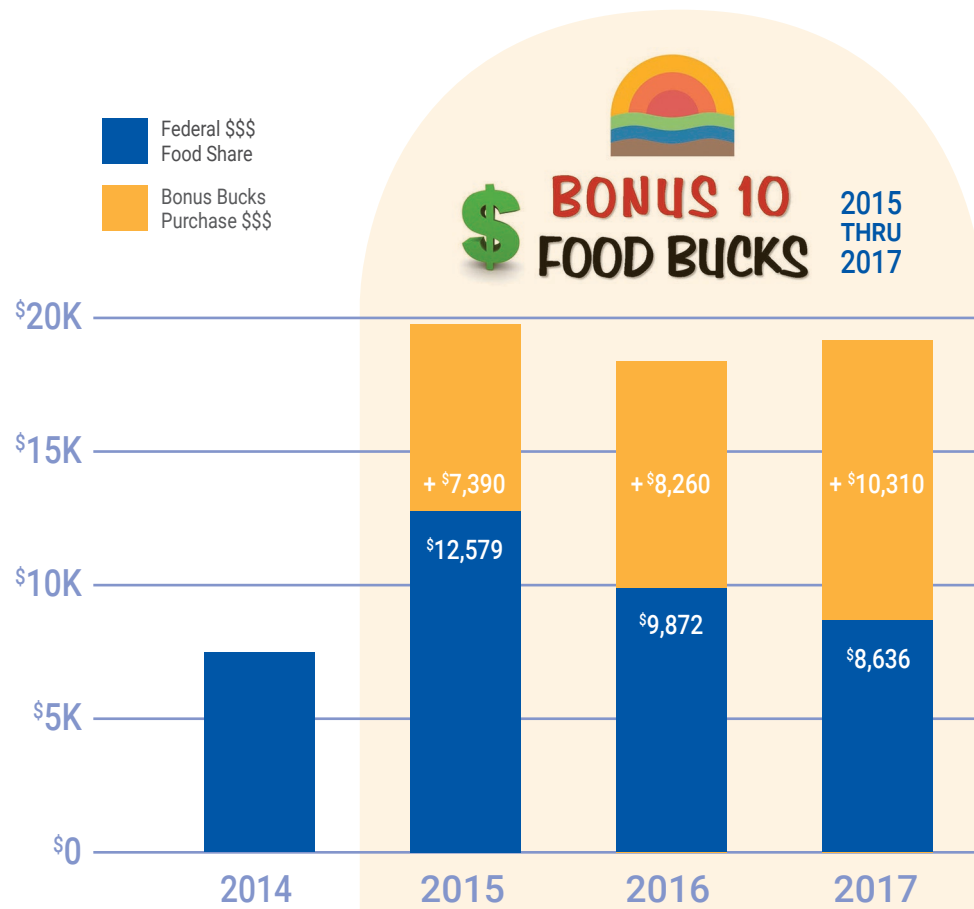
Dennis and Karlene Leatherman, recently retired Farmers Market managers, have enjoyed seeing the kids using the Discover the Market program. "They are so excited to be able to spend their tokens and do so with great care. One young boy used his 10 tokens to first buy (unpopped) popcorn for the family, blueberries for his mother and then with his remaining tokens bought his favorite food, mushrooms," stated Karlene. The Leathermans also note that the Discover program has resulted in entire families coming to the market and parents commenting on how happy they are that their children really want to come.

Program Manager, Michael Cooney, notes that SNAP spending at the market has more than doubled since its inception. "It's a great program and everybody wins. The farmers get more customers, there is better nutrition for everybody, and we help participants stretch their SNAP dollars."

The Difference YOU Make with your donation to United Way is felt in the everyday food choices and options of families in our community.







## BONUS 10

The Bonus 10 Food Bucks program allows Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP) recipients to spend \$10 or more in market tokens and get an additional 10 free tokens. The tokens stretch their buying power to purchase more fresh produce for their families.

The **BLUE** bars on this chart indicate SNAP dollars from the Federal Food Share program. The **GOLD** bars indicate the additional dollars worth of fresh food purchased using Bonus 10 Food Bucks plus other outreach initiatives.

2014 was before the Food Bucks program started. Comparing 2014 to 2015 thru 2017 shows the tremendous increase in purchases of healthy fresh produce by SNAP participants. This includes children who get to make their own decisions on which healthy foods their tokens will buy.



## Oshkosh Area United Way Board of Directors 2017

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## AGENCY

## PROGRAMS FUNDED

|   |   |
|---|---|
| ADVOCAP .....   | Bridges<br>Home Delivered Meals                                       |
| American Red Cross .....                              | Disaster Services   |
| Big Brothers Big Sisters .....                        | Community Based Mentoring<br>Site Based Mentoring                     |
| Boys & Girls Club .....                               | Basic Needs<br>Radford Kids<br>Teens on Track                         |
| Catalpa .....   | HOST-Rise Up  |
| Covey .....   | Life Enrichment<br>Out of Home Respite                                |
| Christine Ann Domestic Abuse Services .....           | Client Advocacy<br>Emergency Shelter<br>Youth Services and Prevention |
| Day by Day Warming Shelter .....                      | Resource Coordination   |
| Evergreen, Miravida .....                             |   |
| Park View Health Center .....                         | Senior Services   |
| Family Services of Northeast WI .....                 | Home Visits<br>Parenting Workshops<br>Supervised Visitation           |
| Financial Information and Service Center (FISC) ..... | Financial Counseling/Education  |
| Girl Scouts of the Northwestern WI .....              | Membership<br>Reaching Out  |
| hub .....   | Self-sufficiency Coaching   |
| Hunger Task Force .....                               | Empty Bowls   |

## AGENCY

## PROGRAMS FUNDED

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Legal Action of WI .....                     | SE Asian Advocate Project   |
| Living Healthy Community Clinic .....        | Medical Services  |
| Lutheran Social Services .....               | Making the Ride Happen<br>Older Adult Counseling  |
| Oshkosh Area Community Pantry .....          | Food For Kidz   |
| Oshkosh Area Community Foundation/OAUW ..... | Results Based Accountability  |
| Oshkosh Area United Way .....                | Agency Relations/Capacity Building<br>Day of Caring<br>Dolly Parton's Imagination Library<br>United Way 211<br>Volunteer Income Tax Assistance<br>Weight of the Fox Valley<br>EMPOWER |
| Oshkosh Community YMCA .....                 | Member Scholarships   |
| Oshkosh Farmers Market .....                 | Bonus 10  |
| Reach Counseling .....                       | Advocacy<br>Counseling<br>Education<br>Sexual Abuse Treatment   |
| Samaritan Counseling Center .....            | AODA Counseling   |
| Tri-County Dental Clinic .....               | Children's Dental Services  |
| UW Oshkosh .....                             | Resettlement Study  |
| Winnebago Literacy Council .....             | Family Literacy<br>Road to Work   |



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# OUR MISSION

The Oshkosh Area United Way improves lives by leveraging people and resources to create innovative solutions to community needs.

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