

By the Way, a newsletter for long-time friends of United Way

Fall 2016

COMMUNITY RAISES \$3.1 MILLION THROUGH UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN

The generosity of the community was evident once again, as the United Way Centennial Campaign announced on Nov. 3 that pledges in excess of \$3.1 million had been received.

Campaign Chair Dennis Rosonke said, as in recent years, the results of this year's United Way Campaign clearly show the importance of every gift. "Whether your decision to give this year is a usual decision or whether you are a new donor, the gifts are equally important and appreciated," said Rosonke.

Dennis is the third employee from Meierhoffer Funeral Home and Crematory to serve as the United Way Campaign Chair.

At the concluding campaign celebration, the generosity of individuals and companies was recognized. Special recognition was given to organizations that pledged more than \$100,000. Those organizations include: Altec Industries; American Family Mutual Insurance Company; Johnson Controls,



Dennis Rosonke, United Way Centennial Campaign Chair, reminded the community that caring never grows old during the concluding celebration for the campaign.

Inc.; Mosaic Life Care; Nestle Purina PetCare; and employees and students of the St. Joseph School District.

In the 100th year of serving the community, United Way of Greater St. Joseph celebrated that donors continue to improve lives today and into the future.

"Thanks to each and every donor, dollars will be invested in important services that will improve thousands of area lives," said Kylee Strough, United Way President. ♦

UNITED WAY LEADERSHIP ST. JOSEPH MEMBERS PROPOSE COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS

The completion of the 2016 class of United Way Leadership St. Joseph was celebrated on Dec. 8 at Green Acres. Graduates from the previous 33 classes reconnected with each other and welcomed 27 new program graduates.

As in the past, creating project proposals for the community throughout the year's training was an important focus for class members. Projects and team members are listed below:

Events and Recruitment: Facilitating Partnerships with Big Brothers Big Sisters

—One project group focused on creating events for Bigs and Littles through Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater St. Joseph. The proposed increase in scheduled events aimed to help Bigs provide quality time with their Littles. The proposed schedule of increased events was also designed as a tool to help recruit more Bigs.

Group members: *Susanne Eichenmueller, Dana Massin, Korbyn Paden, Jordan Shadwick, Michael Thornton, J.C. Watts, Korinda Wierzba*

Project advisor: *Josh Emberton*

Little Free Library—Another group focused on improving community literacy. They created a visible and accessible model Little Free Library at the North Belt US Bank near the drive-thru. The group partnered with the St. Joseph Public Library to ensure that the Little Free Library will continue to be stocked with great books. The group

... continued on page 2

The United Way staff wishes each of you a HAPPY NEW YEAR!



*Kim Kylee
Tammy Renita
Linda Karen
Ann Jodi
Jay
Bobbie Glenda
Barb*



VOLUNTEERS READ WITH CHILDREN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR



Before the development of United Way Reading Adventure, St. Joseph elementary school principals identified the loss of reading skills during summer vacation as an issue for many children. The program is modeled after Hope Outreach Ministries which has been connecting children in low-income apartment complexes in St. Joseph with volunteer readers during the summers since 1994.

Volunteers have read with children throughout this year and continue doing so in various settings across St. Joseph through United Way Reading Adventure.

The program partners with summer childcare programs for elementary age students and local businesses to connect volunteer readers and students on a weekly basis. Over the course of the summer, the program served six sites. A school-based version of United Way Reading Adventure is also held with the second grade classes at Title I elementary schools. During the 2016/17 school year, United Way is working with second graders at Lake Contrary, Humboldt, Coleman, Edison, and Mark Twain elementary schools.

United Way Reading Adventure is a reading program designed to help children maintain and improve reading skills. Through the program, volunteers read individually with a child or in small groups for 30 minutes once a week.

Thanks to a grant from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, United Way Reading Adventure is able to give a new book to every second grader in the school-based program and to provide reading resources for the classrooms.

Those interested in volunteering can contact Jodi Bloemker at United Way at 364-2381 or jodi.bloemker@stjosephunitedway.org. ♦

... (cont'd) UNITED WAY LEADERSHIP ST. JOSEPH

also proposed a sustainable plan for other local businesses to use as a guide to help plan their own Little Free Libraries with safe and easy access.

Group members: *Tom Alden, Taira Garvey, Carrie Koelzer, Shannon Moore, Stacey Reinert, Seth Slayden, Jennifer Sanders-Tutt*

Project advisor: *Linda Burns*

Safe Ride—A third group outlined a pilot program aimed to provide a safe mode of transportation for Missouri Western State University students during late night and weekend hours. The proposal is designed to prevent DWI offenses, alcohol-related accidents, and domestic abuse incidents. As currently envisioned, Safe Ride services could be provided by the university with funding from various sources and contained within the boundaries of the City of St. Joseph for students who live on or off campus. The group plans to hand their proposed program outline to the Student Government Association for potential continued development and implementation.

Group members: *Teresa Cobb, Joel Hane, Jenna Keyes, Rodney Potter, Dee Vestal, Kristin Wyckoff*

Project advisor: *Beth Keaveny*

We Care—A fourth group worked to promote community collaboration related to teen suicide prevention and to improve awareness of the topic. The group connected with and linked multiple community groups working independently on the topic, some unaware of others' efforts. The project group hopes their work leads to more cohesive community teen suicide awareness work.

Group members: *Jonathan Alden, Carrie Armstead, Jana Campbell, Drew Hill, Hannah Howard, Andrew Mertz, Tanja Schumacher*

Project advisor: *Michael Venenga*

Sponsoring businesses and organizations that supported individual class members for the year were: Altec Industries; American Family Mutual Insurance Company; American Red Cross of Northwest Missouri; Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica; CliftonLarsonAllen LLP; Commerce Bank; First American Title Insurance Company; Hillcrest Transitional Housing; Hillyard Companies; Johnson Controls, Inc.; Junior League of St. Joseph; KCP&L; Mosaic Life Care; Murphy, Taylor, Siemens & Elliott P.C.; Nestle Purina PetCare; Progressive Community Services; City of St. Joseph; St. Joseph Public Library; Tieman, Spencer, Hicks, LLC; United Cerebral Palsy of Northwest Missouri; US Bank. ♦



Group projects allow United Way Leadership St. Joseph participants to learn about and help the community. Some of this year's 27 class members can be seen here during one learning activity that prepared them for projects. Four community projects were proposed by this year's graduating class.

GRANT ALLOWS UNITED WAY AND PARTNERS TO GUIDE CAREGIVERS WITH THE SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG CHILDREN

United Way recently received a grant from Mosaic Life Care to implement the United Way Success By 6® Resiliency Project.

This project will help parents, childcare providers and other caregivers foster the social-emotional and behavioral development of young children so the children can remain in a high quality childcare or preschool setting and be prepared to begin kindergarten. Project elements include Conscious Discipline® training for parents and childcare providers, social-emotional assessments, and a partnership with Family Guidance Center to provide mental health consultation.

Barb Martin, PhD, has been hired to implement the new project. ♦



Barb Martin (pictured here) and staff with Family Guidance Center are implementing the United Way Success By 6 Resiliency Project.



PARENTS LEARN TO PREPARE YOUNG CHILDREN FOR SCHOOL

United Way Success By 6® continues to work toward the goal of preparing all children to be successful learners when they begin kindergarten.

As a step toward that goal, the initiative aims to ensure that parents and other caregivers have knowledge and resources to facilitate their child's early development.

United Way Family Fun Time is a monthly series of enjoyable events designed to help families with children under the age of six play together and to learn about early development. This year's themes have been: trains, noodles, music, fitness, gratitude, and blocks. An average of 48 families have attended each event.

Play Paths engage families in early learning activities while they enjoy a park.

This year, a new United Way Success By 6 Play Path was added to the sidewalk north of the Jumpin' Jungle Playground, located north of the Campus Family YMCA, 3601 North Village Drive. A total of three local Play Paths now provide different ways for children and adults to play together through sidewalk art, suggestions given through signage, and other fun learning features. United Way Success By 6 Play Paths are also located at Bartlett and Hyde parks.

A third way parents and caregivers can learn to prepare their children for kindergarten success is through United Way Success By 6 KinderClub. This year, the program helped parents prepare 247 students for kindergarten. Every KinderClub meeting begins with a read-aloud story followed by easy learning activities for parents to re-create at home. Children are given the school supplies needed for each lesson and their own copy of the book shared at the beginning of each meeting. Teachers explain the rationale for each activity with parents and share simple ways parents can continue their child's learning at home.

To learn more about how United Way Success By 6 helps parents prepare children or about how the initiative raises the level of quality in childcare centers and informs community leaders about the importance of the early years, contact Bobbie Cronk or Jay Martin at the United Way office. ♦



MANY GET A TASTE OF UNITED WAY

More people than ever before, 215, have participated in Taste of United Way this year.



Many have attended each month, and, on average, 34 people a month have accepted the invitation to learn about a featured United Way Partner Agency or Initiative.

At the free monthly luncheon series, participants hear first-hand from directors, staff, and clients of various organizations funded by United Way of Greater St. Joseph about local work. Generous sponsors provide a light lunch each month.

You are invited to attend the next Taste of United Way focusing on Inter-Serv on Wed., Dec. 14.

To RSVP and for more information, contact Glenda Hamilton at 364-2381 or glenda.hamilton@stjosephunitedway.org.

Future sessions will be shared at stjosephunitedway.org as they are planned. ♦

... (cont'd) ALLOCATIONS PROCESS

impact in the areas of education, health and financial stability and that United Way of Greater St. Joseph is accountable to donors.

Volunteers are placed on one of six subcommittees, and each subcommittee reviews three United Way Partner Agencies. Volunteers dedicate 10-15 hours over a two-month period from mid-March to mid-May. Each subcommittee meets approximately five times.

Those interested in volunteering in 2017 may contact Jodi Bloemker at the United Way office, 364-2381, or jodi.bloemker@stjosephunitedway.org. ♦

CAN YOU HELP GUIDE UNITED WAY ALLOCATION DECISIONS?

United Way of Greater St. Joseph is calling for community volunteers for the annual allocations process.

Through the United Way Allocations Process, volunteers examine United Way Partner Agency programs, their community impact, operations, and finances before recommending how much money should be allocated to each agency the following year.

Recommendations are presented to the United Way Board of Directors for review and final approval.

The volunteers help ensure that donor dollars are used to achieve the greatest

... continued on page 3



This spring, 140 volunteers participated in the United Way Allocations Process. Contact the United Way office if you'd like to volunteer in the coming year.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Feb. 2-United Way Annual Meeting. Receive the 2016 Annual Report and usher in 2017 United Way Board leadership at Missouri Western Fulkerson Center, 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m. Cost is \$15 per person. RSVP to 364-2381 during office hours.

*Watch for more events at stjosephunitedway.org

Thank you to all who GIVE to United Way. You help improve thousands of lives.

TRIBUTE GIFTS

REMEMBER THE PAST. HONOR THE PRESENT.
TOUCH THE FUTURE.

The following Tribute Gift has been gratefully received by United Way of Greater St. Joseph:

*In Memory of Diane Acuff-
Dr. Roger and Sue Lang*

Tribute gifts are a unique way of supporting United Way while recognizing the special people in your life. Tribute gifts may be given any time of year in memory of a loved one or in honor of a friend, colleague, or family member.

During this season of giving, many people consider year-end gifts to recognize those who mean much to them. To make a tribute gift to United Way of Greater St. Joseph, please complete the adjacent form and return it to the United Way office.



YES, I'D LIKE TO GIVE A TRIBUTE GIFT

If you would like to celebrate the life of a family member or special friend through a memorial gift/honorarium to the United Way Endowment Fund, please complete this form and send it to Glenda Hamilton at United Way of Greater St. Joseph, P.O. Box 188, St. Joseph, MO 64502. Your gift will improve lives in our community.

Enclosed is my tribute gift of \$ _____

Given by _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

Commemorating _____
(please indicate the birthday, anniversary, or other special occasion)

Please send acknowledgement to _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

The person you are honoring, or the family of the person you are remembering, will be promptly notified of your gift without mentioning the amount. Your gift may also be listed in a United Way publication unless you indicate here that you wish to remain anonymous.

Please do not list my name.

Please make your check payable to United Way of Greater St. Joseph.
Contributions are tax-deductible. Thank you!