

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 1950s

MISSION: To improve lives through the caring power of community.

Important Dates of the 1950s

- 1950 — Community Chest (now United Way) actively ensures that speakers from local social service agencies present fields of social work to the community as a year-round program.
- The comic strip Peanuts is first published
- 1951 — Community Chest sets three-year consecutive board member terms with a schedule to elect one-third of the board each year (note: United Way of Greater St. Joseph uses the same procedure today.)
- “I Love Lucy” premieres on CBS
- 1952 — Due to strong collections, Partner Agencies receive more dollars than originally planned
- The Today show debuts on NBC, hosted by Dave Garroway
- 1953 — Children’s Mercy Hospital becomes a Community Chest Partner Agency (note: Children’s Mercy is still a United Way of Greater St. Joseph Partner Agency.)
- Dwight D. Eisenhower begins presidency
- 1954 — Flannel board presentations are believed to be one of the outstanding developments of the annual fundraising campaign.
- 1955 — Disneyland opens at Anaheim, California
- 1956 — Community Chest celebrates 40 years of service, and Dr. C. M. Chilton, the only living member of the first board residing in town, speaks at the celebration dinner.
- Elvis Presley appears on The Ed Sullivan Show for the first time.
- 1957 — Community Chest adopts the name United Fund, and the Safety Council becomes a Partner Agency (note: St. Joseph Safety and Health Council is still a United Way of Greater St. Joseph Partner Agency.)
- Soviets launch Sputnik (flew over St. Joseph on Oct. 15, 1957 at 5:45a.m.)
- 1958 — United Fund board decides to not include national agencies without active, local boards
- NASA formed and U.S. increases space exploration
- 1959 — \$436,112 is raised during the annual campaign
- Alaska and Hawaii became the 49th and 50th U.S. States

“United Fund” Name Adopted in 1957

In 1957, the Community Chest of St. Joseph (now United Way) became the United Fund.

The name change marked an expanded number of partner agencies. The United Fund continued partnering with existing Community Chest agencies but also welcomed in other local and national health, welfare, and character-building organizations with active, local boards that had been conducting their own local fundraising campaigns. Through one United Fund campaign, social agencies aimed to eliminate waste, reduce costs, conserve time and energy of volunteers, and provided contributors with the fairest method of making gifts to charity.

During its first year, the United Fund was led by volunteer board president Clovis McWilliams. With a goal based on submitted agency needs of \$433,204 for the year, the campaign was able to raise \$415,554 through the efforts of Campaign Chairman, Cleo Crouch, and 2,150 United Fund volunteers. The organization continued to raise funds throughout the remainder of the 1950s, reaching as high as \$436,00.



Health has been a focus area of United Way since the early days. In this photo, the Red Feather, a public relations image used by the Community Chest beginning in the 1940s is visible in the background.

Photos from the United Way Archives...



Candidates for the United Fund queen posed together when Donna McFadden was named United Fund queen in 1957.

TRIVIA QUESTION:

What agencies were funded in 1958 by the first United Fund campaign?
See back for answer.

MORE DETAILS FROM the 1950s . . .

Local Volunteer Leadership Is a Long Tradition

From early in United Way of Greater St. Joseph's history, the agency was overseen by a volunteer Board of Directors, and the fundraising campaign was steered by a volunteer who led the charge for helping the community raise dollars to invest in social services to improve local lives. Do you recognize any names from the 1940s?

Date	Campaign Chair	Goal	Raised
1950	John O. Netwon	\$231,741	\$202,364
1951	Clovis McWilliams	\$261,117	\$223,630
1952	Henry Baker	\$269,450	\$246,274
1953	Billy V. Ayers	\$269,020	\$254,133
1954	B. Springsted, Jr.	\$309,590	\$258,984
1955	Robert G. Coy	\$304,570	\$256,940
1956	Cleo Crouch	\$312,500	\$275,992
1957	Cleo Crouch	\$433,204	\$415,554
1958	Stanley W. Cox	\$457,990	\$388,165
1959	Dwight L. Dannen	\$426,981	\$436,112

Clovis McWilliams was the first Board President to reside after the agency took on the United Fund name in 1957. He had served as Campaign Chair six years earlier and was succeeded as Board President by John Landis III who served in 1958 and 1959.

Prior to the formation of the United Fund, the Community Chest (the agency's name before becoming United Fund) was led by volunteer presidents W.C. Beasley, Orin Anderson, H.N. Stevenson, Billy V. Ayers, and Ed Feltenstein.



TRIVIA ANSWER from question on front:

The 21 agencies first with the United Fund were:

- Blind Products Broom Factory
- Boy Scouts
- Catholic Welfare Bureau
- Cerebral Palsy
- Children's Mercy Hospital
- Community Welfare Council
- Family and Children's Service
- Girl Scouts
- Mental health
- Milk Fund
- Missouri Association for Social Welfare
- Red Cross
- St. Joseph Nutrition Service
- St. Joseph Organization for Public Health Nursing
- Safety Council (*known as St. Joseph Safety and Health Council today*)
- Salvation Army
- Sheltering Arms Child Guidance Center (*known as Family Guidance Center for Behavioral Healthcare today*)
- Wesley House (*known as InterServ today*)
- USO
- YMCA
- YWCA

Photos from the United Way Archives...



Goetz Brewing Company brought "Miss Snow Cap," Miss Jane Crockett, to town in 1956. She visited local firms before speaking at a Community Chest rally.



A poster from a 1950s.



United Way
of Greater St. Joseph
stjosephunitedway.org