

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE EARLIEST YEARS, 1916 through the 1920s

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

In 1887, a Denver woman, a priest, two ministers and a rabbi got together. It sounds like the beginning of a bad joke, but they didn't walk into a bar; what they did was recognize the need to work together in new ways to make their city a better place. They created the nation's first united campaign in Denver, raising funds for 10 health and welfare agencies and beginning a movement that would later become United Way.

When what is now United Way began in St. Joseph back in 1916, we were called the St. Joseph Federation for Charity and Philanthropy, following in the footsteps of the Denver group. The agency began here as a way for our community to come together to improve lives in a united way, a more overarching way than individual churches, synagogues, civic groups and agencies could do on their own. A big part of the St. Joseph Federation for Charity and Philanthropy's work was to raise money to share with social service agencies already making a difference in lives that could use some extra financial support from the community.

The first campaign in June 1916 raised \$17,404.03 in pledges and contributions. Eight local charities received shares of the funding; all but one of the initial agencies provided either health or children's services. By 1923, the Federation responded to pressure for a more inclusive campaign, a trend known nationally as the Community Chest movement. Six new partner agencies entered the Federation, adding recreation, character building and emergency assistance to a growing range of services.

Fundraising goals in the early years fluctuated up and down, apparently depending on the economic conditions in the community and the needs for providing social services.

In 1924, N. S. Hillyard accepted the monumental position as the first volunteer to head the campaign, aiming to raise \$140,000 and actually bringing in \$135,468.

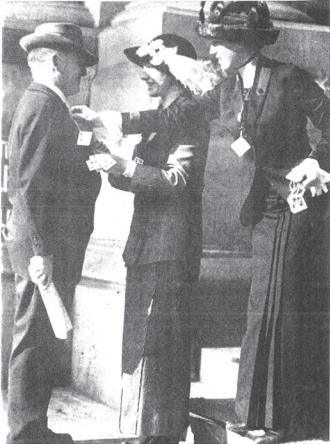
Which current United Way of Greater St. Joseph Partner Agencies were funded by United Way in the earliest years?

- 1916 FAMILY GUIDANCE CENTER
- 1916 Faithfully Serving People InterServ
- 1923 American Red Cross of Northwest Missouri
- 1923 BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA PONY EXPRESS COUNCIL
- 1923 THE SALVATION ARMY
- 1923 eliminating racism empowering women ywca
- 1923 the ywca

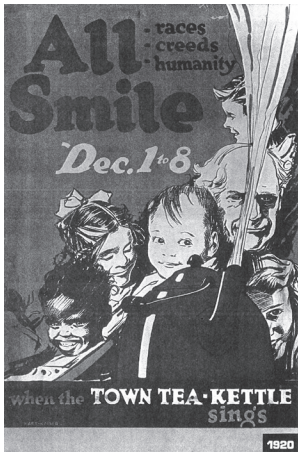
Photos from United Way archives ...



A portrait of life in the Midwest from 1918.



We understand that, in the earliest years, women often campaigned door-to-door for what is now United Way.



A campaign poster from 1920. \*Note: we're not sure if this is from St. Joseph or another community with a similar campaign.

TRIVIA QUESTION:  
Can you guess any of the original eight local charities funded by the St. Joseph Federation for Charity and Philanthropy? See back for answer.

# MORE DETAILS FROM 1916 through the 1920s . . .

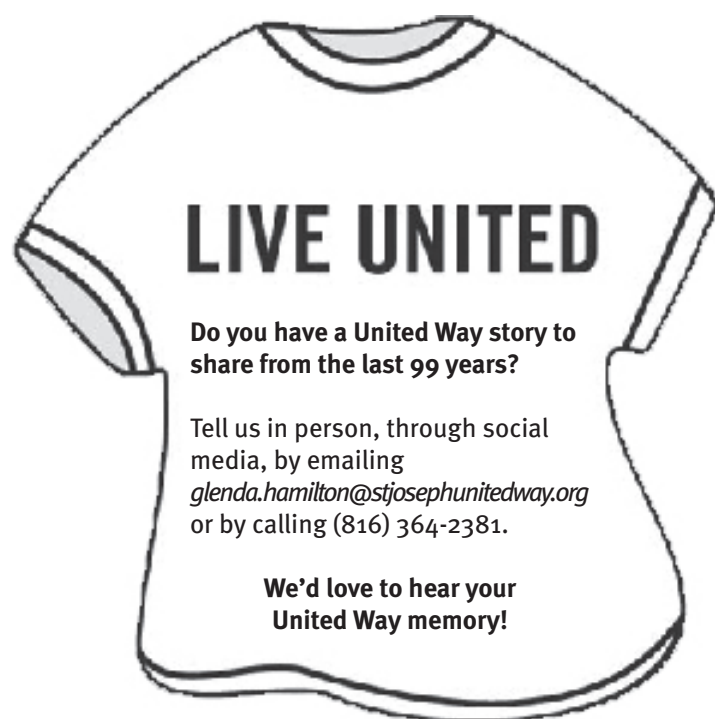
## Local Volunteer Leadership Is a Long Tradition

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. Records of leadership details begin in 1924. Do you recognize any names from the 1920s?

Date	Campaign Chair	Goal	Raised
1924	N. S. Hillyard	\$140,000	\$135,468
1925	N. S. Hillyard	\$130,000	\$125,690
1926	Charles Waddles	\$141,125	\$123,762
1927	N. S. Hillyard	\$135,000	\$127,284
1928	W. J. Adams	?	\$121,351
1929	C. A. Semrad	\$135,000	\$123,537

James E. Cox is the first recorded volunteer Board President of St. Joseph Federation for Charities and Philanthropy (the agency that became United Way of Greater St. Joseph). He served as president from 1924 through 1929.

*\*Note: Records are scarce from 1916 to 1923.*



### TRIVIA ANSWER from question on front:

The original eight local charities funded by the St. Joseph Federation for Charity and Philanthropy (now United Way of Greater St. Joseph) were:

- 1) Associated Charities Work Room
- 2) Baby Welfare Association
- 3) Humane Society
- 4) Riverside Home
- 5) Sheltering Arms (*now Family Guidance Center*)
- 6) Tuberculosis Society
- 7) Visiting Nurses Association
- 8) Wesley House (*now InterServ*)

## An excerpt from United Way's 1991 Annual Report regarding the agency's earliest years . . .

From the very beginning, the Federation expected results. Budget records from 1918 contained detailed service breakdowns. The Baby Welfare Association had furnished nursing and medical care for 1,124 babies and dispensed 15,684 quarts of milk. The Humane Society, which at that time handled cases of "children such as are neglected in various ways by sending them out to beg and to go to all sorts of places at nighttime," investigated 974 complaints of abuse and neglect. The Society had, moreover, checked out dance and pool halls "62 times." The Visiting Nurses Association not only cited client load, but even listed patients' outcomes, including 69 who died.

The Federation set a high standard of accountability for itself as well. As the first auditor noted in his report, "I find that records are kept in a remarkably neat and intelligent manner."





## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 1930s

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

### St. Joseph Maintained Charitable Giving Efforts During Great Depression

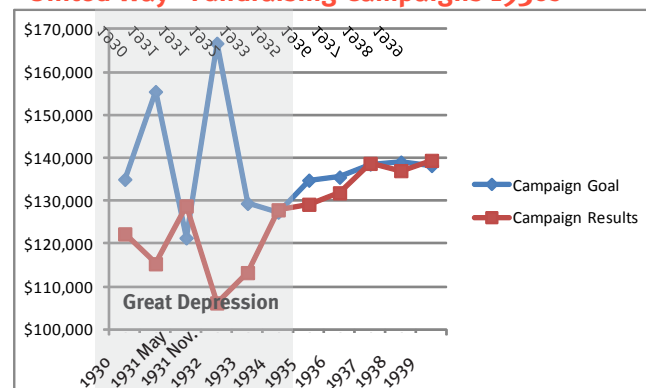
In St. Joseph, despite of being in the third year of the Great Depression and experiencing decreased campaign amounts, the first executive director was hired in 1931 for the agency now known as United Way. The executive director promoted the campaign as a social work program and encouraged coordination of local social services. Two campaigns were held to meet increasing human needs here that year, which boosted total overall contributions.

In the early 1930s, a St. Joseph citizens' committee, brought together by what is now United Way, helped establish an employment bureau and successfully persuaded the City Council to raise their funding of the Social Welfare Board.

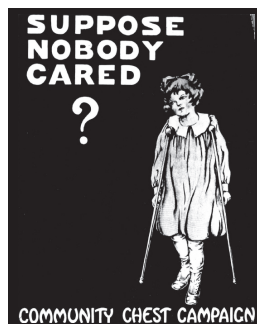
When President Franklin D. Roosevelt took office in 1933, government programs were created to meet human needs across the nation, shifting the balance from local support for local needs to more of a partnership of public and private services during the remaining years of the Depression.

In 1933, volunteer giving nationwide dropped by 76%; our community did not see such a drastic drop.

#### "United Way" Fundraising Campaigns 1930s



*In response to increased human needs during the Great Depression in St. Joseph, the agency that is now United Way increased efforts, campaign goals, and even conducted two campaigns rather than the usual one in 1931. Compared to the country at large, charitable giving in St. Joseph through the agency remained fairly stable.*



*Over the last century, our local United Way has been known by other names. The agency that began in 1916 as the St. Joseph Federation for Charity and Philanthropy and that is now United Way of Greater St. Joseph, officially became Community Chest in 1933. The agency had unofficially been using the name for the fundraising campaign for a decade.*

### "Community Chest" Name Adopted in 1933

The name "Community Chest" was a recognizable name across the country in the early 1930s, and the agency that is now United Way of Greater St. Joseph adopted the name in 1933.

During World War I (1914-1918), "War Chest" fundraising campaigns were held nationwide to help provide relief for the armed forces, their families, and European refugees. Perhaps intentionally using a similar name, a group in Rochester, New York first used the name "Community Chest" in 1919 for their own community's fundraising campaign that allocated money to local agencies that provided important social work. The name caught on, and 353 large cities had their own Community Chests by 1929.

The Community Chest movement consisted of individual communities conducting a single community campaign to support a broad range of local social services to address area needs. The movement invited people of all income levels to accept a common responsibility for building life in their community. The movement was known for collecting money from local workers and the businesses that employed them.

Nationwide, from 1929 to 1935, the years of the Great Depression, the Community Chest movement mobilized to fight hunger and want in response to President Hoover's request for Community Chest organizations to play a major role in relief work. Across the country and locally, people fell into serious financial difficulty, and charitable funds became harder to raise as "Let Uncle Sam Do It" became a common attitude.

#### TRIVIA QUESTION:

Can you guess which current United Way of Greater St. Joseph Partner Agencies were funded during the 1930s?

*See back for answer.*



# MORE DETAILS FROM the 1930s...

## 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 1930s?

Date	Campaign Chair	Goal	Raised
1930	J. Doyle Barrow	\$135,000	\$122,264
1931 (May)	R.L. Douglas	\$155,439	\$115,306
1931 (Nov.)	Wm. M. Wyeth	\$121,352	\$128,774
1932	R.A. Brown, Jr.	\$166,691	\$106,187
1933	Floyd M. Sprague	\$129,386	\$113,244
1934	T.W.Dodd	\$127,344	\$127,880
1935	T.W.Dodd	\$134,789	\$129,176
1936	L.H. Steckling	\$135,500	\$131,828
1937	L.H. Steckling	\$138,564	\$138,705
1938	S. R. Douglas	\$139,000	\$137,007
1939	W.F. Enright	\$138,210	\$139,397

Thirteen years after women gained the right to vote in the U.S., Mrs. A.B. McGlothlan became the first female volunteer Board President of our local Community Chest (the agency that became United Way of Greater St. Joseph) in 1933. She remained in the role through the remainder of the 30s.

Prior to her in the 1930s, the following volunteer presidents led the St. Joseph Federation for Charities and Philanthropy (the agency's name before it became Community Chest): Charles Semrad, 1930; William Wyeth, May 1931; Fred Karr, Nov. 1931; Lester Binswanger, 1932.

Photos from  
United Way  
archives...



The writing on this photo reads, "1930? President Hoover contributes to United Way. (unreadable) Street, Fleming, Delano and Poole." During his presidential term (1929-1933) that coincided with the onset of the Great Depression, President Hoover encouraged communities to hold Community Chest (now United Way) campaigns to support local social services to help relieve increasing needs.



In the heart of the Great Depression (1931), the agency that is now United Way of Greater St. Joseph held an extra campaign to support local social work. During the Great Depression, 1929-1935, human needs increased as capacity to give decreased. 1932 is notable as the year with the lowest campaign contributions in St. Joseph from 1924 through present day.



United Way  
of Greater St. Joseph  
[stjosephunitedway.org](http://stjosephunitedway.org)

### TRIVIA ANSWER from question on front:

Current United Way of Greater St. Joseph Partner Agencies that were funded throughout the 1930s are:

- 1) American Red Cross of Northwest Missouri
- 2) Family Guidance Center
- 3) InterServ
- 4) Pony Express Council, Boy Scouts of America
- 5) Salvation Army
- 6) YMCA
- 7) YWCA

\*Note: other agencies were funded in the 1930s as well.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 1940s

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

### St. Joseph Community Chest Adjusted to Needs During and After War Years

St. Joseph's Community Chest (now United Way) emerged from the Great Depression challenges of the 1930s with what the 1940 annual report termed "a more thoughtful approach to community problems."

A thoughtful approach was certainly called for as our community found itself part of a country at war when the U.S. officially entered the fighting of World War II at the end of 1941.

World War II brought a change from the exclusively local focus of St. Joseph's Community Chest. From 1943 through 1947, dollars from the local annual fundraising campaign were allocated to war-related relief in addition to ever-present local social service needs.

The war spurred a great surge in our Community Chest's fundraising. Twenty-seven out of every hundred local residents made a financial donation in 1944. According to records of the time, St. Joseph ranked "above average of all Chest cities in the number of subscribers per hundred population." Records also indicate that the number of pledges unable to be collected grew, too, since large numbers of payroll contributors were drafted before their pledges could be paid.

At the 1944 Community Chest Annual Meeting, with the end of the war in sight, Catholic Bishop LeBlond stressed two themes as guest speaker: 1) the need for cooperation among social agencies in our community; and 2) the necessity of post-war planning. While the text of his remarks has not been preserved, existing records provide ample evidence of both planning and cooperation in St. Joseph. The Community Chest helped coordinate the creation of a local Council of Social Agencies in which 47 agencies and civic organizations participated. In addition to its regular activities, the Council set up a special bureau to help returning veterans.

In 1945, the Community Chest began maintaining a Central Index of families and individuals seeking assistance to help coordinate local social services and to avoid duplication of services.

To direct attention back to local needs, the Community Chest embarked on a massive educational effort. Volunteers from the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and YMCA (three Partner Agencies at that time) delivered information to every household in the city.

The process for distributing Community Chest funds became more inclusive in 1949, as a broad-based citizens' review replaced the select committee approach in helping decide how dollars donated to the agency would be invested. Fifty community volunteers helped guide what United Way now calls the Allocations Process that first year.

**A few 1940s posters . . .**



#### Dollars were Divided in More Directions than Ever During the Decade

*During the 1940s, contributions to St. Joseph's Community Chest (now United Way), were allocated in the following ways:*

**1940-19** local agencies

**1941-18** local agencies

**1942-17** local agencies

**1943-16** local agencies; 16 War Chest agencies

**1944-16** local agencies; Missouri State War Chest; War Appeals Review Board

**1945-16** local agencies; Missouri State

War Chest; War Appeals Review Board

**1946-15** local agencies; Missouri State War Chest; War Appeals Review Board

**1947-14** local agencies; USO (United Service Organization); United Seaman's Service

**1948-15** local agencies

**1949-15** local agencies

#### TRIVIA QUESTION:

**Can you guess what marketing tool was used for the first time in 1946 by St. Joseph's Community Chest?**

*See back for answer.*

# MORE DETAILS FROM the 1940s . . .

## 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?

### TRIVIA ANSWER from question on front:

Records indicate that a *COLOR MOVIE* was first created in 1946 to show the work of St. Joseph's Community Chest agencies.

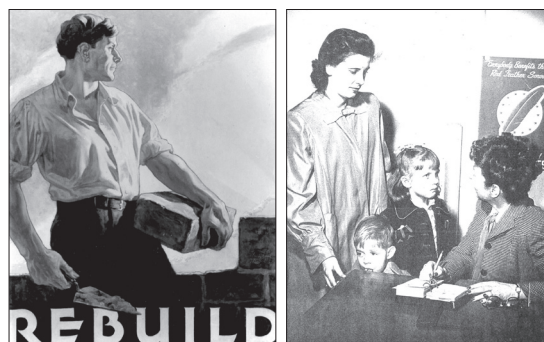
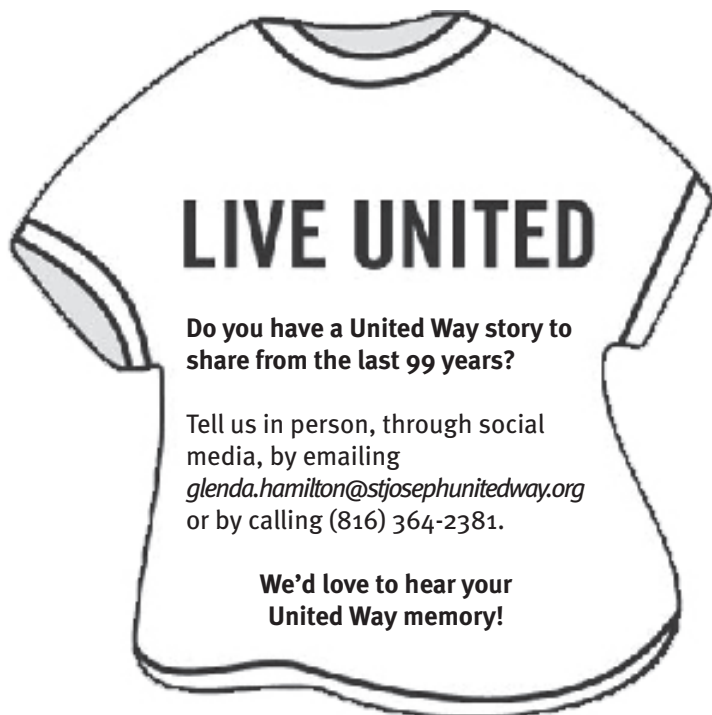
### About the dollars . . .

*\*NOTE: The annual campaign met goal just twice during the 1940s. It appears the campaign met goal for the first time in 1931 with a total of four fundraising goals met in the 1930s.*

*\*NOTE: The annual campaign surpassed the \$200,000 mark for the first time in 1942, increasing by more than 52% from the previous year, which was good since St. Joseph's Community Chest doubled the number of agencies receiving dollars from that campaign from 16 the previous year to 32. In addition to directing dollars to local agencies, St. Joseph's Community Chest dollars reached Great Britain, Greece, Poland, Russia, and China during World War II.*

Date	Campaign Chair	Goal	Raised
1940	E.H. Steffens	\$141,921	\$142,448
1941	Harold N. Stevenson	\$143,325	\$136,685
1942	Harold N. Stevenson	\$199,986	\$208,809
1943	Harold N. Stevenson	\$235,000	\$215,744
1944	Frank S. Hanna	\$227,785	\$210,569
1945	Lorren W. Garlichs	\$226,278	\$190,940
1946	Michael McKenney	\$188,015	\$180,664
1947	N.I. Ayers, Jr.	\$187,965	\$182,860
1948	W. Conger Beasley	\$204,143	\$192,132
1949	John D. McCaskey	\$219,981	\$193,724

Volunteer Board Presidents for St. Joseph's Community Chest (the agency that became United Way of Greater St. Joseph) in the 1940s were: Mrs. A.B. McGlothlan (1940-41); R.L. Douglas (1942-44); Harry Tilden (1945); Harry Mohler (1946); and H.N. Stevenson (1947-49).



Two more posters from the 1940s

**LIVE UNITED**



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of Greater St. Joseph  
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## 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.

