

How Your United Way Works

Greater Mankato Area United Way's mission is to unite the community to secure and invest resources to improve people's lives.

Your Greater Mankato Area United Way

The Greater Mankato Area United Way brings people and resources together to meet the needs of our community. We identify the most critical needs in our community and then bring the people and resources together to develop the best solution. We unite the entire community's resources by conducting an annual fund drive, and then allocate those to best fulfill our local community needs. In a nutshell: people helping people.

Meeting the Needs of the greater Mankato area.

In 1931 when this organization was founded, its purpose was primarily to combine the annual fundraising appeals of several human services agencies into a single campaign. We still carry on this strong tradition of fundraising in the community. Of the dollars we raise, over 88% go into direct programming—another reason why people feel so good about donating to the Greater Mankato Area United Way.

In addition, over the years we have become a community solutions provider by identifying unmet needs in our community and allocating resources to meet those needs. Some examples of our recent initiatives are: **Connecting Kids**, a program that provides scholarships to youth to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in a meaningful activity that interests them; **Ready! for Kindergarten**, a program that provides parents and caregivers with classes and tools to help ensure that children enter kindergarten ready to learn and be successful; **People to Jobs**, a program that enables people to retain employment by providing needed transportation, and **Success by Six**, whose mission is to mobilize the community to support families, ensuring that all children are nurtured and ready to succeed when they enter school.

The Greater Mankato Area United Way Benefits Everyone.

Whether they realize it or not, almost everyone in the Greater Mankato Area benefits! By allocating funds to 57 programs and initiatives administered by 35 United Way partner agencies, we estimate that 1 in 3 individuals are helped each year in the greater Mankato area.

You, your family, your friends or your neighbors may not need these services today, but it is comforting to know that if you need help...it will be there!

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Our Daily Operations.

The Greater Mankato Area United Way is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors who set policy and direction for the organization. The organization's daily operations are managed by a staff of 4.5 FTE. The staff works with a volunteer workforce of over 450 local people. Over the course of a calendar year, staff and volunteers focus on the following:

- Researching, developing and piloting new initiatives & programs
- Reviewing agency and grant applications for funding
- Making funding recommendations
- Setting a campaign goal
- Developing a campaign strategy
- Creating a marketing message & materials
- Recruiting, training & supporting volunteers
- Assisting companies and volunteers with UW campaign rallies & events
- Communicating with donors and volunteers through mailings, newsletters, e-mails

How We Keep Overhead Cost Low.

Our aim is to give as much as possible to the agencies for whom we work so hard to support. We do this by utilizing volunteers (like you!), seeking donations for goods & services when possible, partnering with our business community, and maintaining efficient office operations. The Greater Mankato Area United Way's overhead is less than 10%. This means that more than 90% of every dollar you give goes to services helping people in the Greater Mankato Area; less than 10% goes to administrative and fund-raising costs. We are very proud of that.

How Your United Way Works

How We Achieve Accountability.

Donations made to our United Way are carefully administered and accounted for. Our Finance Committee provides oversight and support of our budgets and spending. Our Board of Directors is dedicated to monitoring our organization's accountability standards and provides numerous checks & balances. Our financial statements are audited annually by an independent accounting firm.

All agencies who receive funding from our United Way are also required to have a financial audit of their internal records conducted annually to ensure accountability. More than 60 community volunteers are trained to carefully review each member organization's finances and decide how much funding to distribute.

How We Monitor Local Needs.

Our staff and Board have relationships with all sectors of the local community, from leaders in government, to education, business, healthcare and non-profits who are concerned and knowledgeable about human service needs in our community. We also conduct local community needs research, utilize focus groups, surveys, studies done by local agencies and universities, and more to help determine gaps in services.

Where the Money Goes.

Your generosity makes it possible to support over 50 human service programs designed to improve lives across the Greater Mankato Area. We focus our efforts on three focus areas with seven impact teams so that we can concentrate our efforts where it matters most.

How We Help Improve the Quality of Life in the greater Mankato area.

Gifts made through the Greater Mankato Area United Way make a difference in the lives of people right here at home because money that is raised locally stays local. Gifts to us are used by 35 local agencies to combat many of the toughest problems facing thousands of people living and working in the greater Mankato area. By funding our member agencies & programs and developing community initiatives, the Greater Mankato Area United Way is providing the resources necessary to make sure that the services are there to support anyone in our community who needs a helping hand.

