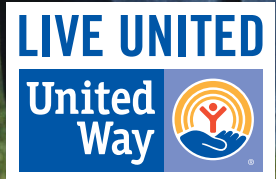


GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.



YEAR-ROUND
**ENGAGEMENT
TOOLKIT**



Metro United Way





LIVE UNITED AND GET INVOLVED!

Dear Community Partner,

Community involvement drives our mission forward. Together we are pursuing lasting change on some of the toughest challenges we face to ensure that everyone in our community achieves their fullest potential through education, financial stability, and healthy lives. Our community is made up of problem solvers, difference makers, and opportunity creators. We invite you to join us and use this guide as a conversation starter for how you or your organization can get involved with Metro United Way.

Great things happen when we Live United!



GIVE

Metro United Way could not do the work we do without our committed donors. We are so grateful for the tremendous generosity of individuals, families, corporations, small businesses and foundations that make our work possible. Visit metrounitedway.org/give for additional information and to make an investment in our community.

Make a Donation: Give a personal or corporate gift online, in person or through your workplace. Every dollar counts. When you join with many people from all walks of life to make a donation – even a small one – your contribution makes a big difference in our community.

Leave a Lasting Legacy: Make a planned gift and become part of Metro United Way's Red Feather Society. This will help ensure that Metro United Way's work continues for years to come.

Sponsor Our Work: Metro United Way provides a number of sponsorship opportunities including community wide initiatives, volunteer programs and donor cultivation events. Sponsors receive visibility and facilitate meaningful community impact for individuals in our community.



Grow Your Impact: Donation matching opportunities are available to grow your investment in the community through Metro United Way. Donations from young donors (40 or younger), women and individuals stepping up into major gift circles are matched by local foundations that ensure your gift to Metro United Way results in greater dollars going into the community.

Employee Giving: Give your employees the opportunity to learn more about our community's most pressing issues and how they can be part of the solution. Run a workplace campaign and join with hundreds of companies in our region that work with Metro United Way to create lasting change.

Make a Product or In-Kind Donation: Many companies offer a service or product that can have community benefit. Metro United Way works with our partners to ensure product donations are utilized in a way to achieve best results.





Through advocacy, Metro United Way raises awareness of community conditions and provides ways to take action and enact change. Your voice is powerful, and every voice counts! We will achieve our goals only by working together and raising our voices in support of education, family stability and health.

Stay Connected: Sign up for our email newsletter to receive more information about our work and learn about the positive impact we are having with your help. You can also text MUW to 51555 to receive messages about what we're doing in the community.

Take Action at Live United Day at the Capitol: Making a lasting change requires us to make sure decision makers understand challenges in their communities and act accordingly. Join MUW and United Way advocates from across the state during the legislative session for Live United Day. Meet with your representatives and help show our collective support for policy in the areas of education, financial stability and healthy lives.

Experience a Poverty Simulation: Deepen your understanding of the challenges faced by community members who live in poverty. Role-play a month in the life of a low-income family member, share your insights and learnings and brainstorm community change.

Lend Your Digital Voice: Find your voice and join the conversation on MUW's Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and blog pages to educate your networks on what you care about and how they can be a part of it. Become a digital advocate as a member of our social media "street team" and receive ready-to-share content.

Visit metrounitedway.org/advocate for additional information and to sign up to be an advocate with Metro United Way.



VOLUNTEER

Volunteering is one of the best ways to connect heads, hearts and hands around Metro United Way's work to create lasting change. By giving freely of their time and talents, volunteers advance education, family stability and health in our community.

EDUCATION

- **Host a Book Drive & Write Encouragement Notes to Young Readers:** Metro United Way's Little Libraries and Books & Barbershops initiatives help provide more children with free and easy access to books which is a leading indicator of a child's educational success. Volunteers can support both programs by collecting books, writing messages to young readers on labels inside the front covers and designing bookmarks.





KINDERGARTEN READINESS

The first five years of a child's life are a time of enormous social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth. For children to grow into successful adults, they need a supportive and healthy early foundation. We know that nearly 1/2 of the children in our community are not prepared to enter kindergarten ready to learn, and we know that children who start out behind, tend to stay behind. Together, we can change the odds for kids by ensuring they live in a community with rich learning opportunities that prepare them for kindergarten and set them on the path to lifelong success.

- **Build Invitation to Play Kits:** Promoting the love of learning and creativity in children helps them build lifelong critical thinking and problem solving skills. Early learning centers throughout our community—including Metro United Way's Excellence Academy centers—need Invitation to Play kits that allow young children to explore, investigate, question, examine and manipulate materials in ways that promote developmental progress and kindergarten readiness. The kits include items like tubes, ribbon rings, spoons, assorted stones, cups, etc.
- **Make Welcome Baby Bundles:** You can contribute to the health and safety of our community's newest neighbors by collecting and packaging essential infant-care items for expecting families. These boxes include thermometers, nasal aspirators, nail clippers and other essentials, as well as Metro United Way Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ) registration forms. The ASQ program allows parents to monitor their children's early development, identify potential challenges and connect to support services if needed.
- **Support Community Play & Learn Events:** The earlier in a child's educational process parent involvement begins, the more powerful the effect. MUW engages families in quarterly Play & Learn events to help parents become their child's first teacher and best advocate. You can support these gatherings by preparing supplies for learning activities in advance, writing notes of encouragement to parents, and attending the event as greeters and servers.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

High school graduation is a major indicator of a young person's success in life. In fact, high school dropouts are four times more likely to be unemployed as those who have completed four or more years of college. Since students only spend 20% of their lives in school, it's important that learning continue outside of the classroom. By establishing a system that helps steer local students toward high quality out-of-school time programs, MUW hopes to provide a stronger educational foundation to help decrease the high school drop-out rate and increase college degrees and career readiness, thus benefitting our entire community.

- **Read, Tutor or Mentor:** Research proves that caring volunteers working with students of all ages have the power to help kids boost academic achievement and bolster social and emotional development. MUW's Read, Tutor, Mentor program matches volunteers with opportunities to serve in those roles based on volunteer interest and availability. Visit metrounitedway.org/RTM to sign up.
- **Become a Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI) External Assessor:** Quality OST programs are universally recognized as an essential tool to help students increase their attendance, engagement in learning, test scores and grades. To help OST providers deliver quality programs to children in our community, MUW offers the Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI) system of evaluation and improvement. You can support not just one student but thousands by training to become a Volunteer YPQI External Assessor.
- **Assemble Healthy Snack Packs:** Help OST programs nourish student's bodies and minds by providing and packaging nutritional after-school snacks.





FAMILY STABILITY & BASIC NEEDS

The strongest communities ensure that all families have the resources needed to achieve financial independence with career opportunities that help them reach and maintain self-sufficiency. Children living in these communities have a better chance for a brighter future because healthy lives influence everything from how well a child learns in the classroom to how much an adult earns in the workplace.

- **Make Budget Basics Bundles:** MUW seeks to ensure individuals and families are equipped with the tools and knowledge they need to make smart financial decisions and manage their budgets effectively. You can directly support our family stability efforts by providing budgeting kits that include basic financial information, local resources, and essential budget development and tracking tools, such as calculators, calendars, registers, highlighters, and organizational materials.
- **Help Community Members Receive Earned Income Tax Credits:** With the help of our community, the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program has provided free tax preparation services to more than 97,000 individuals since 2001, resulting in \$142 million in refunds from available tax credits for earned income, children and education. You can help families achieve their financial goals by receiving training and serving as a tax preparer, site navigator, coordinator, reviewer, facilitator or greeter during tax season.
- **Serve at a Mobile Pantry:** MUW and Dare to Care Food Bank work in partnership on an expanded mobile pantry network that helps lessen food insecurity for low-income elderly, unemployed and in-need residents by bringing packaged meals to their neighborhoods. Mobile pantries rely on volunteers to unload and distribute food to attendees.

- **Assemble Personal Care Packages:** Personal care items not covered by assistance programs remain in high demand at basic needs programs throughout our community. Volunteers can provide and package soap, deodorant, mini shampoo, brushes/combs, tissue packs and other essentials to help all of our neighbors maintain health and dignity.
- **Off-Site Volunteer Projects:** If you would like to gather a group to volunteer at a Metro United Way partner agency, you can complete the Group Project Intake Form found at metrounitedway.org/volunteer. Possible projects include serving meals, painting, landscaping, cleaning and organizing.

Visit metrounitedway.org/volunteer to connect to volunteer opportunities.

Some volunteer projects have costs associated with required materials and management.

LINC

MUW invites young adults to join a thriving network of 22 to 30 year olds committed to improving our community while enjoying all it has to offer. LINC (Lead. Impact. Network. Change.) offers an annual calendar of events featuring unique social experiences with volunteer activities that allow participants to make a difference with other passionate, community-focused individuals. Young adults can also become LINC members by investing in change with a \$250 annual gift to MUW's Community Fund. Visit metrounitedway.org/LINC to learn more.



OUR MISSION

Improve lives and our community by engaging people to give, advocate and volunteer.

OUR VISION

A community whose people achieve their fullest potential through education, financial stability and healthy lives.

LIVE YOUR DAY UNITED



GET INVOLVED

Behind all our work, there are people like you who get involved in big and small - but significant - ways to ensure a better future for their family and their community. Your involvement is our most powerful resource. With you on our team, we can reach our goal of a vibrant, thriving community!