

UNITED WAY OF KANKAKEE & IROQUOIS COUNTIES

2024 ANNUAL REPORT + STRATEGIC PLAN

United
Way



United Way of Kankakee
& Iroquois Counties



UNITED WAY BOARD OF DIRECTORS | 2023-2024

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THIS IS WHO WE ARE

OUR VISION

United Way envisions a world where all individuals and families achieve their full potential through education, income stability and healthy lives.

OUR MISSION

To improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of our community to advance the common good.

We live out this vision by serving as a...

- **FUNDER** - Channeling investments to life-impacting programs across Kankakee & Iroquois Counties
- **THOUGHT LEADERSHIP** - Using our “big picture superpower” to providing support and education for service providers, businesses, and local residents in order to better address major regional issues
- **CONVENER** - Facilitating conversations and uniting stakeholders around common goals
- **ADVOCATE** - Raising awareness of needs and standing in the gap for these programs

OUR VALUES

***Excellence | Community-First Commitment | Collaboration
 Visionary Thinking | Transparency | Empathy | Equity & Inclusion***

OUR TEAM



Mariah Vail
Executive Director



Melina Pizano
Development Manager



Tammy Marcotte
Community Navigator

STRATEGIC PLAN - DIRECTOR'S REFLECTION

This Strategic Plan represents a year's worth of honest, hard conversations and dream casting.

It all started with our board retreat in February of 2023 and was continued throughout the year via focus groups and one-on-one conversations with key leaders in our community. By focusing our efforts on these measurable strategies, we aim to better live out our mission of improving lives by mobilizing the caring power of our community to advance the common good.

If you are a donor, a United Way champion, *your support* will enable the implementation of the strategies listed below. We will need a dedicated tribe of volunteers to live this out, so please consider getting involved at a deeper level. We'd love to hear from you. Once again, we sincerely thank you for making this work possible.



Mariah Vail

Executive Director
United Way of Kankakee
& Iroquois Counties

UNITED WAY'S 2024-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

*The plan represents a high-level snapshot - a **roadmap to success**. Each objective includes its target year for achievement. Beyond this we have developed detailed action steps corresponding with each objective. Each step is assigned to a United Way staff member and Committee responsible for regularly updating the United Way Board of Directors on progress. By setting these benchmarks we can now confidently gauge our progress at end of 2026.*



GOAL 1: IMPROVE BRAND STRENGTH, AWARENESS, & RELEVANCE

Our Vision: United Way is recognized as the partner of choice for understanding and addressing community issues.

- **Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy.**
 - Create a marketing strategy with clear goals and objectives.
 - Review marketing strategy annually and build upon it as needed.
- **Build on strategic partnerships that enhance our local reach and reputation.**
 - Bolster operations for our non-profit partners by providing quarterly training options.
 - Strengthen local non-profit leadership teams via bi-annual Board Bootcamp cohorts.



GOAL 2: DIVERSIFY & GROW REVENUE

Our Vision: United Way builds new revenue streams, strengthens its pipeline of donors, and focuses on future sustainability.

- **Implement fundraising best practices to drive year-round engagement for individuals and corporate donors.**
 - Complete an analysis of donors.
 - Streamline & strengthen donor communications.
- **Activate diverse and sustainable revenue streams and minimize overhead.**
 - Increase individual giving outside workplace giving.
 - Grow our relationships with corporate partners.
 - Maximize major gift/legacy planning efforts with the help of specialized consulting services or an experienced major gift officer.



GOAL 3: DEVELOP A STRONG ORGANIZATIONAL FOUNDATION

Our Vision: United Way's governance, core operational capacities, culture and values create enduring success, enabling it to be efficient, agile, sustainable and relevant.

- **Grow our financial excellence.**
 - Complete a financial trend analysis, to more accurately anticipate and allocate resources.
 - Make cuts and grow revenue to bring overhead.
 - Create financial sustainability plans for Women United, Leadership Giving Society, and Success By 6.
- **Foster a forward-thinking culture.**
 - Survey donors, volunteers, and neighbors to capture feedback and inform future priorities.
 - Host internal United Way employee trainings quarterly.



GOAL 4: ENHANCE OUR EQUITABLE COMMUNITY IMPACT

Our Vision: United Way advances equitable and sustainable solutions that address gaps and disparities to ensure that every person has access to the resources needed to thrive.

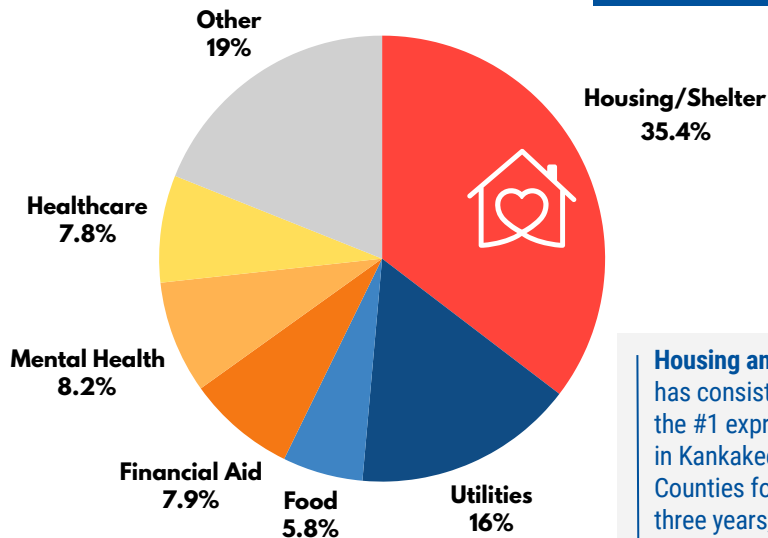
- **Develop a Community Impact plan that reflects real-time local needs.**
 - Update our Community Impact plan.
 - Review and update our Community Impact plan annually to ensure continued alignment with evolving community needs.
 - Complete an exploration of cause/research-based priority funding models.
- **Promote inclusion at every level of our organization.**
 - Grow our volunteer pool so that the racial/ethnic diversity of our community is represented across every level of our organization.
 - Host an annual grant training before opening our grants application, with an opportunity for further coaching if help is needed.
 - Share racial equity training options annually with board members and staff.

IMPACT SNAPSHOT



Get Connected. Get Help.™

211 is one of our most effective strategies to reach people in need. No matter the situation, the specialists at 211 listen, identify underlying problems, and connect people in need with resources and services in their community that improve lives. This service is made possible locally by Ascension Saint Mary in partnership with United Way.



Housing and Shelter has consistently been the #1 expressed need in Kankakee & Iroquois Counties for the last three years, as shown by local 211 data.

Dial 2-1-1 on your phone to find information and be connected to resources available in our community.

211 connects you to services including:

- Food pantries and home-delivered meals
- Financial assistance, literacy, and coaching
- Healthcare and insurance assistance
- Stable housing and utility payment assistance



1,919 Local calls made to 211 in FY 2023-24



United Way partners with SingleCare to assist residents of Kankakee and Iroquois counties in accessing affordable prescription medications. This is one way United Way seeks to secure greater health and financial stability for our neighbors. Download and print a card on **SingleCare.com** or text "family" to 700700 to receive a card on your phone. Message and data rates may apply.

myunitedway.org/singlecare

SINGLECARE'S LOCAL IMPACT
JULY 2023-JUNE 2024

\$32,550

Medication savings last year by Kankakee & Iroquois County Residents



On June 21st, we celebrated Day of Action with seven service projects in partnership with the City of Kankakee's seven wards and 14 aldermen. **Nearly 100 volunteers** showed up, ready to take action despite the blazing heat! Projects were hosted in all seven wards of the City of Kankakee, thanks to an exciting partnership with the Kankakee Economic and Community Development Agency and Kankakee Forgives. **United Way's Day of Action will return June of 2025!**

IMPACT SNAPSHOT



Since 2008, United Way and the Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley have partnered in leading **Success By 6**, an early childhood community collaborative for service providers, caregivers, and local stakeholders interested in bettering the odds for our youngest neighbors. This Coalition is led by a volunteer Steering Committee and a Strategic Plan, and is lived out beyond our bi-monthly meetings by three Action Teams - **Healthy Beginnings**, **Supported Families**, and **Early Childhood Workforce Development** - who meet year-round.

Expanding Our Early Childhood Outreach

In the summer of 2023, United Way received an ARPA grant from Kankakee County to begin development for a plan presented by our Success By 6 Steering Committee. **Our hope?** To bring connections and services for families with children under the age of 6 directly to them, serving as a voice for the whole of our early childhood network. This project made a giant leap in the winter 2024 when United Way received an additional grant from Birth to Five Illinois.

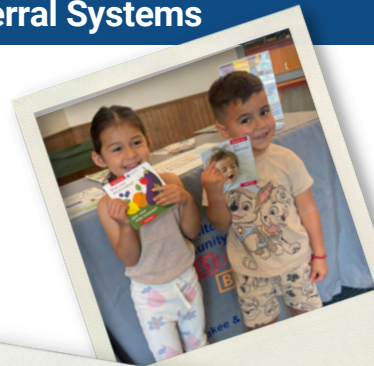
This kickstarted our **Success By 6 Community Navigation program**. In the first five months our Community Navigator, Tammy Marcotte, made **886 introductions** and **235 referrals** to needed services for families. Tammy's main workspace is in the Kankakee County Health Department, who has been a valued partner in this project. We have also grown connections in Iroquois County, supporting many families often unable to access the same early childhood resources as Kankakee residents. Our Coalition is working on multiple initiatives with Iroquois area partners which will be launched in 2025!

Another objective achieved thanks to these grants was a system-wide update for our 211 and Kan-I Help Information Network resource directories. We also relaunched the **Kankakee-Iroquois Information Network Policy Council**, in partnership with the Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley, who now approves new content and oversees the direction for both services. In the first half of 2024 we updated **700+ Kan-I Help resource profiles** and added **47 new listings**, including services like preschools, ABA therapists, food pantries, and recreational activities.

Upgrading Local Referral Systems

Supporting Parent Education

A third objective made possible by Birth to Five funding was fulfilled by a partnership with the Kankakee Area YMCA's parent education program and Rise & Thrive Wellness. A Positive Discipline course was hosted, training 24 parents and 38 YMCA staff members. These collaborations help us build a stronger support network for families and caregivers throughout Kankakee and Iroquois Counties.



2024 Early Childhood Fair

In June of 2024, Success By 6's fourth annual Early Childhood Fair took place at the Kankakee Farmers Market. **Over 150 children attended**, participating in fun, free activities from 19 of our local early childhood partners. Special thanks to **Ascension Saint Mary** and **Iroquois Federal** for their Success By 6 support that made this event possible!



Family Support Bus Partnership

In 2023, Success By 6 celebrated the launch of a partnership program to bring early intervention services to families in our community. This effort was made possible in collaboration with the Bourbonnais Elementary School District as well as local parent education programs: Jump Start (EasterSeals), Healthy Families (Aunt Martha's) and First Taste (KSD#111), and dozens more volunteers who we helped train to administer the ASQ screening.

In one year, our **Success By 6 Family Support Bus Partnership** made **9 outings** and provided free ASQ developmental screenings for **over 100 children**, in addition to distributing 200+ free children's books along with other early childhood resources.

May 2024: Healthy Beginnings - Trauma & Resilience Summit

To address concerns voiced by Coalition members on the prevalence and misunderstanding of ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences), Success By 6 hosted a free full-day conference for early childhood providers and social service partners in May 2024. This event included 14 breakout groups on trauma-related interventions, hosted by local leaders in their fields. **Over 150 people attended** and we were able to train **79** people on an intro to Parent Education & Positive Discipline, **53** people in Mental Health First Aid, **46** people on how to lead a Parent Cafe, **28** people on Infant Massage, and many more topics.



If you want to be involved with our Success By 6 efforts this year, please sign up for our email alerts! Visit myunitedway.org/signup and check the "Success By 6" box to receive monthly communications!

NonProfit Board Bootcamp

In the fall of 2023, a new partnership initiative was born. United Way director, Mariah Vail and the Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley director, Nicole Smolkovich, had a vision of supporting our board development for the whole of our local nonprofit network. Thus, Board Bootcamp was born!

Since then we've hosted two cohorts of Board Bootcamp and celebrated nearly 50 graduates! These emerging leaders have been trained on everything from nonprofit governance standards, fundraising practices, equipped on how to read financials, and much more. We look forward to an Iroquois County based cohort coming soon!



Special thanks to our fantastic hosts, Riverside Healthcare and Olivet Nazarene University, as well as our guest speakers: Mike Stanfa, Matt McBurnie, Mike O'Brien, Joe Giacchino, and Jimmy & Mileen Joines.



YOUR IMPACT

Your donations empower a diverse network of community organizations who tackle complex health, education, and financial stability issues facing our neighbors.

The work of these accredited 501(c)3 nonprofits is verified through our annual Community Investment process to ensure that they are: mission-oriented, addressing key community needs, collaborative, data-driven, and effective in creating life-impacting change.

Education Impact Programs

- **A More Excellent Way**
 - Family Matters Program
- **Clove Alliance**
 - Community Engagement & Prevention Services
- **KCC ALIVE**
 - ALIVE Literacy
 - Baby Talk Program

Financial Stability Impact Programs

- **Agape Community Outreach Mission**
 - Moving Forward Program
- **Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet**
 - Horizons Transitional & Rapid Rehousing Program
 - Homeless Prevention Program
- **Farmworker & Landscaper Advocacy Project**
 - Improving the Social & Economic Quality of Life for Low-Wage Immigrants Program
- **Fortitude Community Outreach**
 - Emergency Overnight Shelter

Scan to watch a [story of impact](#) from a United Way funded program!

United Way of Kankakee and Iroquois County relies entirely on private donations, provided by generous individuals and companies in our community. Our funding is sourced locally and that support stays local. ***Your support makes stories like this one possible!***



Health Impact Programs

- **Agape Community Outreach Mission**
 - Merchant Street Food Pantry
- **Blessings in a Backpack**
 - Weekend Nutrition Program
- **Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet**
 - Senior Nutrition Program
- **Center of Hope**
 - Food Pantry Services
- **Child Network**
 - Child's Advocacy Center
 - Court Appointed Special Advocates
- **Clove Alliance**
 - Trauma Counseling Services
 - Medical & Legal Advocacy
- **Helen Wheeler Center for Community Mental Health**
 - Child & Family Services
 - Outpatient & Case Management Services
- **Iroquois Mental Health Center**
 - Psychiatric Services
- **Options Center for Independent Living**
 - Emergency Services & Assistive Technology Program
- **UCP Center for Disability Services**
 - Home-Based Services Program



Our 2024 Community Impact grant evaluation process was made possible thanks to **52** local volunteers who contributed a total of **180** hours. United Way's grants process is community-guided, so our volunteers traveled to 13 agency locations across both counties, providing the evaluation and financial reviews which ultimately selected these grant recipients.

CORPORATE LEADERS

Each year, United Way works with local companies, who we refer to as our Corporate Leaders, to improve lives and strengthen communities. Leaders qualify by giving, or working with their team to raise, \$100+ per year.

The 65 companies listed here are members of our Corporate Leadership program in fiscal year 2023-2024. Combined, these companies and their employees contributed over \$332,000 in workplace giving, sponsorships, and locally designated grants. We thank them for their faithful generosity and commitment to our shared purpose.



AHF PRODUCTS
AMEREN
AQUA OF ILLINOIS
ASCENSION SAINT MARY
AT&T GLOBAL CORPORATION
KENSING SOLUTIONS LLC
BMO FINANCIAL
BRADLEY BOURBONNAIS COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL
BRADLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT #61
CARLE FOUNDATION HOSPITAL
CATERPILLAR FOUNDATION
CIGNA
CITY OF KANKAKEE
CLOVE ALLIANCE
COMED/EXELON
CONSTELLATION
COUNTY OF KANKAKEE
CSL BEHRING
DOW CHEMICAL
EASTERSEALS
EDWARD JONES
ENTERPRISE/TAYLOR
FIFTH THIRD BANK
FIRST FINANCIAL BANK
FIRST MID BANK & TRUST
FIRST TRUST BANK OF ILLINOIS
GARDANT MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS
GOOD SHEPHERD MANOR
HARBOR HOUSE
HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT & CONSTRUCTION
HUBERGROUP
HYDRITE CHEMICAL
IROQUOIS FEDERAL
IROQUOIS MENTAL HEALTH CENTER
ITW
JCPENNEY
KANKAKEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
KANKAKEE SCHOOL DISTRICT #111
MANPOWER
MEIJER
MIDLAND STATES BANK
NELNET
NICOR GAS
OLD NATIONAL BANK
OLIVET NAZARENE UNIVERSITY
ONEOK
OPTIONS CIL
PEDDINGHAUS CORPORATION
PEOPLES BANK OF KANKAKEE COUNTY
PROJECT SUN
RIVERSIDE HEALTHCARE
SECURITY LUMBER & SUPPLY CO.
SKDO
SOUTHERN COMPANY
STATE BANK OF HERSCHER
SUPERVALUE (JEWEL OSCO)
TARGET
THRIVENT FINANCIAL
UNITED WAY OF KANKAKEE & IROQUOIS
MARSHALLS
UPLIFTED CARE
PNC BANK
VAN DRUNEN FARMS
VILLAGE OF MANTENO
ZACHRY INDUSTRIAL

Additional companies with one or more employees who contributed at a smaller level included:
AbbVie, FedEx, Eli Lilly, Kellanova (Formerly Kellogg), Kroger, O'Reilly Auto Parts, UPS

Thank you!

UNITED WAY WOMEN UNITED®

Women United is a dynamic force that leverages the strength and commitment of female leaders to bring about positive change within our local communities. Since 2016, the United Way of Kankakee and Iroquois Counties has proudly honored and celebrated the remarkable achievements of local women leaders through the annual Women United breakfast.

Over time, Women United transformed into a membership-based affinity group, steadfastly advancing the mission of the United Way. Our primary focus remains on championing health, education, and financial stability, with a dedicated emphasis on empowering local women and girls. As of January 2021, Women United has blossomed into a vibrant and diverse community, comprising over 60 dedicated members. Our unity is forged by a profound sense of connection – to one another, to our shared mission, and to the communities we proudly call home.

In 2023-2024 Women United efforts raised over \$48,000 towards United Way's community impact investments in programs serving women and girls.

Women United efforts have empowered support for these United Way Impact partners with a program serving 70%, or more, women & girls.

A More Excellent Way Ministries



COLLABERATION IS OUR STRENGTH

Women United collaborated with the talented local graphic designer, Jami Mcelroy, to add some flair to our wardrobe! Together, we designed and printed some of the most eye-catching Women United t-shirts around. We've already sold over 100, so you may have seen one proudly worn by amazing women in our community, showcasing the slogan: **Empowered Women Empower Women**. All proceeds help us support local programs that uplift and empower women and girls in our community. Now that's fashion with a purpose!



WOMEN UNITED'S 2023-2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

Special Thanks To Our Partner, Connector, & Builder Members!

Debra Baron, Janice Krizik Schmidt, Jessica Davis, Margaret Frogge, Mary O'Brien, Rhonda Pence, Robin Savage, Sarah Powers, Monica Pizano, Tami Galbreath, Barbi Brewer-Watson, Janet Glazar, Maureen Powell, Jill Rieken, Melissa Tanner, Kelly Konemann, Sarah Memenga, Brandi Kaner, Autumn Johnson, Bailey Gentile, Jacqueline Alford, Mileen Joines, Ariel Denault, Laurie Burkhalter, Cristin Kersten, Stacey Van Kley, Lou Ann Napolitano



NETWORK | EMPOWHER HOUR EVENTS

EmpowHER Hour is a quarterly networking event that gives women the opportunity to network, meet other local women and learn more about being a Women United member. Thank you to the following businesses who opened their doors to us: The Well-Manteno, Manteno's Ladies' Night, The Mill, and Mattea's Joy.



VOLUNTEER | KINDNESS PROJECTS

Women United supports community and volunteer events hosted by and available to members.

- **July - Mattea's Joy Snack Boxes** - Women United members volunteered together at Mattea's Joy, packaging snack boxes for families with hospitalized children. We had a wonderful time and deeply appreciate Mattea's Joy for all they do for our community.
- **August & September - Clothing Drive for Women** - Women United collected clothing items for clients of Agape Community Outreach Mission (ACOM) who are entering the workforce. ACOM provides food and resources for those in need in Kankakee County, serving over 210 families weekly. Special thanks to our friends at CSL Behring for hosting a donation bin for their employees and the Kankakee Public Library for hosting a bin for our neighbors.
- **December - Storytime with Success by Six & Women United-** Women United volunteers hosted a Storytime hour at the Kankakee Public Library, reading "The Year We Learned to Fly," an uplifting story inspiring kids to dream and use their imagination. Thank you to our friends at the Kankakee Public Library for having us!
- **March - Letters to Her** - During the 2024 Women United Breakfast, attendees wrote over 100 encouraging letters to women receiving services from our United Way Impact partners.



WOMEN UNITED ANNUAL BREAKFAST

The 8th Annual Women United Breakfast took place on March 20, 2024, at Olivet Nazarene University. Over 200 women and men attended the Women United Annual Breakfast. The Women United Annual Breakfast featured an exciting lineup of local female speakers on topics including productivity, intentionality, and workplace dynamics, along with a panel discussion where accomplished local women shared their career journeys and the role models who influenced them.



This year, we presented the first Women United Award to honor a member who has demonstrated extraordinary leadership. The inaugural recipient was outgoing Women United chair: Sarah Marion. **Thank you to our 2024 Breakfast speakers: Kate Reed, Dr. Cynthia Taylor, Barbi Brewer-Watson, Alicia Kleinert, Brooke Barnes, Fabiola Lule, Lacie Harsey, and Lindy Casey.**

POWER OF THE PURSE

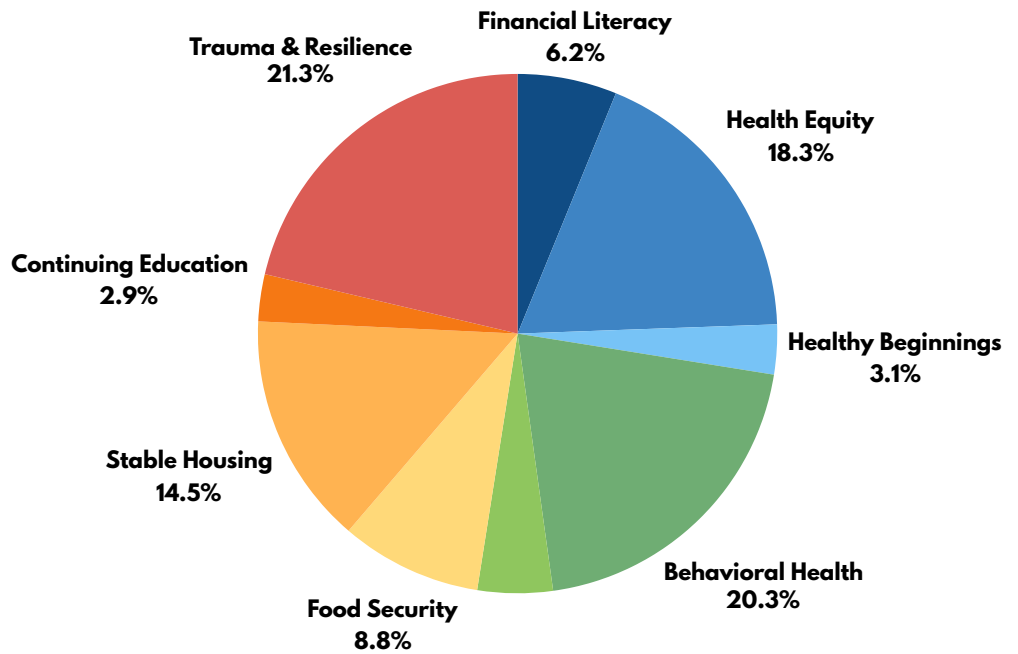
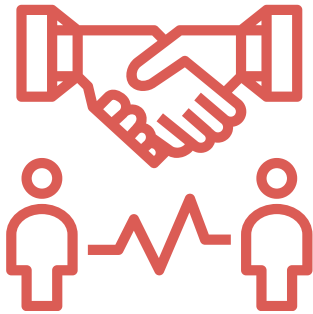
The second Women United Power of the Purse fundraiser was held on May 9, 2024, at the Majestic in Kankakee, with over 100 women in attendance. The evening featured a panel of local nonprofit leaders, a special presentation by Jeannie Martin, and over 30 silent auction items. Special thanks to our 2024 speakers: Jeannie Martin, Brenda Stewart, Kim Abrassart, Shannan Carrell, and Kimberly Crothers.



2023-2024 FINANCES

Displayed below is the breakdown of current year, 2024-2025, community impact and local program investment categories.

Total 2024 investment in local programs: \$292,543.77



In fiscal year 2024 we were thrilled to receive three major grants that we had not anticipated in our 2023-2024 budget originally. The first two grants allowed us to add a third member to our team, our Success By 6 Community Navigator (see P5), whose work has been entirely supported by grant funding. The third grant assisted us in supporting and marketing our 211 phone-based assistance line across Kankakee and Iroquois Counties.

ENDOWMENTS

**Endowment Account Balances as of June 30, 2024*

United Way holds two endowment funds stewarded by our friends at the Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley. In FY 2024 we were able to utilize a \$25,000 distribution from our Iroquois County fund to support our grant investments for that community. If you are estate planning, please consider channeling your support through these endowments!

United Way General Fund: \$75,231*
Established in 2010 by anonymous donors with a lead gift of \$20,000.

United Way of Iroquois Fund: \$679,188*
Established in 2014 through an estate gift for the benefit of Iroquois County.



DONOR BILL OF RIGHTS

We want to do everything we can to maintain the trust of our donors and neighbors. View our Donor Bill of Rights by scanning the QR code below.



WE VALUE YOUR TRUST

We take our finances very seriously, and we pride ourselves on adhering to a stringent set of membership standards that focus on governance, ethics, financial management, and general operations. We strive to be transparent with our donors, as demonstrated by our **2024 Gold Seal of Transparency** status with Candid.



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