



# IMPACT REPORT

2022

UNITING TO THRIVE



United Way  
of Marathon County



Shanna Yonke, 2022 Board President  
Ruder Ware

Over the past year, United Way of Marathon County has transformed to ensure that we continue to support our community in a meaningful way for many years to come. We adopted a new mission – Uniting to Thrive – and we set our first bold goal in furtherance of our mission. With your continued support, we will **lift 10,000 community members to financial stability by 2033**. We are grateful for the dedication and contributions of our donors, volunteers, partners, and staff. Because of you, our community will thrive.

# UNITING TO THRIVE



Jeff Sargent, Executive Director/ CEO  
United Way of Marathon County

United Way of Marathon County completed a new strategic plan in 2022. COVID-19 emerged as a factor in the progress of our strategic planning, which caused a delay in moving forward.

The voices, ideas, and aspirations of our board, staff, donors, and community stakeholders contributed to the shaping of a new vision. Thank you to each one of you.

Our shared goal was to create a plan that can be implemented and have measured outcomes of success. We also needed a plan whose direction and priorities are exciting, attract support, provide a focused approach, and express the critical elements necessary to implement in the next three years.

We are confident that this strategic plan will make United Way of Marathon County a visibly stronger organization, more impactful for our community, and even more successful in our outcomes.

This strategic plan is ambitious and calls for numerous institutional initiatives. Among them includes a single-issue focus, to **grow** and **diversify** revenue to serve our community, to **engage** and to **motivate** our community through communications to emphasize the relevance and impact of our work, and to **deliver** outstanding service to ensure every community member can be stable, by Uniting to Thrive.

Without question, United Way of Marathon County is in a transformational period in a time of enormous change in our community, state, and country. Our 92-year history, our values, and our commitment to our community will guide our work as we move forward.

## CONTACT US



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#unitingtothrive



The **Marathon County Hunger Coalition** works with numerous pantries from around the county to provide nutritious food throughout the year. In 2022, over **24,606** food assistance requests were met.

## FARM TO FAMILY PRODUCE PROGRAM

The Marathon County Coalition collected over 7,000 lbs of fresh produce from the Farmers Market of Wausau and delivered it to 55+ Living Centers across Wausau through a program called Share the Harvest. Produce can be donated at the Farmers Market of Wausau from donors just like you.



*"Partners make this all possible."*



The **Turkey Trot** is the largest single-day event dedicated to food insecurity in Marathon County and all proceeds benefit the Marathon County Hunger Coalition. In 2022, there were 1,700 participants on Thanksgiving morning, which raised **\$52,000**.



The Marathon County Hunger Coalition distributed **1,320** Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) boxes bought from local farmers. Red Door Family Farms, and Cattail Organics bring nutritious food to tables in our area, connecting those in need to fresh & locally grown produce. Partnering with local farms and offering fresh, locally-grown produce allows 100% of donated funds to stay in the community.

## Providing Nutritious Food

Volunteers harvested and distributed over **1,000 lbs.** of locally grown carrots from Red Door Family Farm.

UW Marathon Extension FoodWise taught a monthly "Healthy Eating" class teaching participants to cook on a budget. The Coalition bought food for the classes and kitchen tools to assist participants with healthy food prep at home.



## WEEK OF ACTION

**70** volunteers worked for **119** hours to complete projects for families and community members.

**RETIRE UNITED** volunteers created kits for homebound seniors, to ensure they are able to stay as independent as possible in their homes. Seniors were gifted activity books, energy-efficient light bulbs, first aid kits, and new mittens.

**633** Summer Slide kits were created for four different school districts which encouraged reading, outdoor exploration, and journaling.

**200** Medicine Safety Kits were assembled for Social Services and Public Health Nurses to gift to individuals to ensure medications are safely stored and disposed of properly.

"Volunteering makes me feel like a part of the community and I love to give back."

**307** AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP volunteers dedicated **34,361** hours to volunteering at 42 different sites throughout Marathon County.



**AmeriCorps  
Seniors RSVP**  
United Way of Marathon County



*Joyce and Robert, in their 80s and live in their own home, are unable to do yard work because of limited mobility. They count on Make a Difference Day each year to clear their yard of leaves and debris. This small act of service allows the couple to remain independent in their own home without the worry of raking leaves. This year the couple thanked the volunteers with milk and cookies. They spoke with the volunteers and shared stories of when their children were young and enjoyed jumping in the leaf piles with the family dog.*

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY



2022

On this day, more than 500 volunteers raked **130** yards for 768 hours, for community members who are elderly or physically unable to do fall yard work themselves. This allows them to remain in their homes and provides a needed service free of any cost.



SAVE THE DATE FOR OCTOBER 28, 2023

# 2.1.1

Get Connected. Get Help.™

United Way's 211 is our community's information and referral service. In 2022, 211 answered **14,904** requests for help from residents in eight counties, including Marathon, providing 29,179 referrals to community resources.

211 is available 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, for anyone.



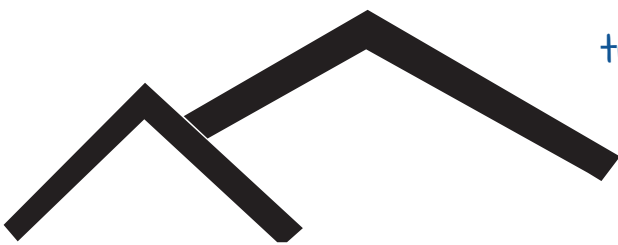
*Jake's wife had admitted to him she has a drinking problem and decided to stop drinking immediately. The next day when his wife was experiencing severe withdrawal symptoms, Jake called 211 for help. The 211 call specialist was able to connect Jake to an inpatient detox service that could take his wife in immediately. Upon follow-up, Jake shared that his wife was out of detox, still sober, and had a treatment plan in place. He was grateful to 211 for helping find immediate help for his wife.*

**24%** of referrals were for housing assistance.

**69 people** were in crisis.

**597** callers needed assistance from the WI Addiction & Recovery Helpline.

"I called 211 when I didn't know where else to turn. Thank you for being kind and helpful."



## HOUSING TASKFORCE

An initiative of United Way of Marathon County to partner with over 18 entities that focus on reducing the number of individuals experiencing homelessness, connecting those individuals to resources and permanent solutions, advocating for affordable housing solutions, and leveraging our partnerships to create sustainable change and solutions to the housing environment in Marathon County.

## BECAUSE OF THE WORK OF TASKFORCE MEMBERS...

**569** individuals accessed emergency shelters and transitional living programs.

**114** individuals were able to move into permanent housing.

**553** households received rent/mortgage assistance and were able to stay in their homes.

- 🏠 Implemented Outreach Case Management.
- 🏠 Advocated for 365 Day Shelter funding and Day Time Servicing. (First time in the Wausau Area.) An \$829,000 investment.





## IMPACTING FAMILIES

**YOUR** dollars made a difference in 2022. United Way funding provided **Childcare** assistance to **109** families, relieving the financial strain on their households.

*Mary is a single mother of a toddler. She was working just to put her child through daycare with barely anything left over. The Good Start Grant drastically changed their lives. They can now afford basic things like winter clothes and household necessities and in doing so build up her credit.*

» **LEARN MORE**



**UNITED WAY OF MARATHON COUNTY**  
**WOMEN UNITED** members are dedicated to creating a better place for women facing various hardships in their lives. They raise dollars and awareness to increase the self-sufficiency of women to improve their lives and the lives of their families. Members participate in a variety of engagement and volunteer opportunities throughout the year to increase awareness and impact.

## IMPROVING WOMEN'S LIVES

Power of the Purse raised \$40,000 to grant to organizations that improve women's lives such as Childcaring Inc. for daycare assistance, the H2N program for education to Hispanic women that speak limited English, scholarships at Northcentral Technical College and UWSP Wausau Campus Foundation for women going to school to increase their education and better their lives and Rebecca's Closet clothing needs and expansion.

## United Way Emerging Leaders

This group of young professionals granted **\$5,000** to 12 schools in Marathon County for programs such as:

### STUDENT LEADERSHIP GROUPS AT SCHOOLS



### MATH LEAGUES AFTERSCHOOL



### MUSIC EDUCATION



### ROBOTICS CLUB

### A DIVERSITY CLUB



One unique grant offered city bus passes to students, to remove the barrier of transportation, who are not eligible for school bussing. These young students were missing school because the walk was too far during the winter months. Parents were very appreciative and expressed relief that their young elementary students didn't have to walk over a mile when it was 20 below zero and parental transportation was not an option.



# COMMUNITY CLOSETS



In total these dedicated volunteers logged **1,083** hours to wash, sort and pack clothing orders.

The **Career Closet** served **193** individuals with clothing to help them start their new job.

**102** steel-toed boots were distributed to individuals through **Boots to Work**, for manufacturing employment. This is a great example of supporting community members who are working to support their families.



The Clothing Closets at United Way offer new and gently used clothing for families at no cost. These services allow families to gain some financial independence and maintain their dignity in challenging economic times. This year **Rebecca's Closet** served **20** different agencies in the Marathon County and more than **740** children.

*Mark went back to work, after a career change, and needed steel-toed boots to begin. He was hired at an open interview in the industrial park and could begin the following week. Through a referral to the Boots to Work program at United Way, he was able to pick up steel-toed boots and a few pairs of pants to begin his new career.*

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of Marathon County

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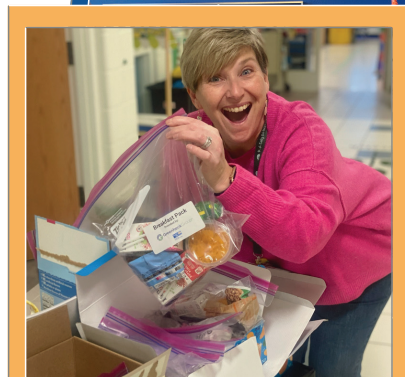
Wausau, WI

This year we challenged company leaders to create special holiday baking baskets filled with supplies that are often not on the shelves at food pantries. Flour, vanilla, cookie cutters, and family cookie recipes were included in these meaningful donations.

"I was able to bake with my grandchildren because of the wonderful basket I received. Thank you for allowing us to make memories."



Calm Kits for students



Snack Packs for kids



Literacy Kits for families



Hundreds of volunteers and companies created **Calm Kits** throughout the year that were distributed to schools and agencies for self-regulating and mental health mind breaks.

Kits are customized for Head Start and families, and specific school districts based on their requests.

1,000 **Snack Packs** were packed and given to schools and the Warming Center providing nutrition. 50 **Point In Time Kits** were made and given to Catholic Charities for unhoused individuals. 200 **Literacy Kits** were made including diversity books and activities for families.