

## UNITED WAY FAST FACTS

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### General Information

- United Way fights for the education, health and financial stability of everyone in our community. We all benefit when kids start school ready to learn, stay in school through graduation and are able to support their families and save for the future.
- When you give to United Way, your gift is invested in local programs that are building a stronger community for all of us.
- United Way is an efficient way to invest in our community, leveraging more than \$3 million grants, in-kind donations and volunteer hours, in addition to our campaign.
- In 2019, United Way funded almost \$2 million in community programs that focus on education, health and financial stability at 21 local organizations.
- United Way knows what the current needs are because we conduct a community needs assessment. The 2017-2019 LIFE Report contains information about the quality of life in our community and the areas we need to improve.
- United Way of Marathon County was established in 1930 and is locally governed by a volunteer board of directors.

### United Way's 211, Volunteer Connection and RSVP

- United Way's 211 is a free, confidential information and referral service that helps people access information on health and human service resources 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- United Way's 211 publishes the Give and Get Help Guide—a free resource that connects people to services and volunteer opportunities. You can [download a copy here](#).
- Over 100 local nonprofits are seeking volunteers. Select your perfect fit from hundreds of available opportunities at <http://unitedwaymc.galaxydigital.com/>
- Volunteer Connection piloted a reading/tutoring program at Mosinee Elementary in 2014 and expanded it to Marathon Elementary and Edgar Elementary. Volunteers work with kindergarten and first grade students to improve their reading skills. Almost 95% of students who participate see an increase in their reading abilities.
- Make A Difference Day (the fourth Saturday in October) is the nation's largest single day of service. Locally, United Way coordinates a Rake-A-Thon. Last year 100+ yards were raked and many receiving help have NO other way to get their yard raked. Plan to volunteer.
- United Way Volunteer Connection trains disaster volunteers to help manage the crowds of volunteers that will materialize after a local, large-scale disaster. Consider joining this Ready to Respond team.
- If you would like to donate goods to an area non-profit, [use this link](#) to access the on-line database of needs.
- United Way RSVP volunteers perform many different volunteer jobs—from stuffing envelopes, to tutoring, to driving people to doctor's appointments.

### Focus on Education

- United Way of Marathon County invests in early childhood programs that help children be school ready because kids who are lagging in kindergarten often fail to catch up to their peers.
- For every \$1 invested in early childhood programs, there is a \$7 return on investment or savings in future program and social service costs.
- United Way's Ready to Read Program began in 2004 and has distributed over 180,000 books to date.
- Ready to Read books are provided free to agency partners that serve families with young children, with an emphasis on agencies that serve low income families with children under 5.
- RaiseGreatKids.org is a website that provides caregivers of young children a place to connect with local expertise and opportunities for support.

- United Way provided \$240,000.00 in Good Start Grants to local child care providers in 2019 to help eligible families in Marathon County afford quality child care.
  - The average dropout can expect to earn \$10,386 less per year than a high school graduate—that's why United Way focuses on programs that help keep kids in school.
- **Focus on Income**
  - The Marathon County Hunger Coalition met over 150,000 requests for food assistance last year.
  - Volunteers have given over 6000 hours to staff the Wausau Community Warming Center, a project of the Marathon County Housing and Homelessness Coalition.
  - During a United Way Housing and Homelessness Coalition sponsored bus tour of local basic need agencies, volunteers learned about needs in our community. Learn more at: <https://www.unitedwaymc.org/improve-lives/income/housing-homelessness-coalition/>
  - United Way partners with FamilyWize to provide a prescription drug discount card to individuals without prescription insurance, saving Marathon County residents thousands of dollars every year.
- **Focus on Health**
  - United Way is helping people gain access to mental health counseling.
  - Services for victims of abuse are one of the priority need areas identified by United Way.
  - Prevention and treatment programs focused on the abuse of alcohol and drugs are part of United Way's strategies to improve the health of our community.
  - United Way invested \$55,000 in 2019 to help keep seniors living independently.
- **Focus on Leadership Groups**
  - United Way of Marathon County has four Leadership Groups – Summit League, Emerging Leaders, Women United and new in 2018—Retire United.
  - Summit League is a leadership giving group of about 900 individuals or couples. Collectively they contribute more than 40% of all campaign revenue.
  - United Way Women United's signature fundraiser, Power of the Purse, is held each May and raised over \$28,000 in 2019 to help low-income women with children become financially stable.
  - United Way Women United's signature project is Rebecca's Closet. This program provides infant and children's clothing to families in need.
  - The Emerging Leader's Career Closet helps people prepare for a job interview with appropriate clothing and accessories. Last year they provided more than 200 people with steel toed footwear to start a new job.
  - United Way Emerging Leaders have constructed 4 Born Learning Trails in area parks. Check them out and turn a walk in the park into a fun learning activity with your child.