

Questions and Answers About United Way

What does the United Way do?

Our mission is:

The United Way of Monongalia and Preston Counties enhances the quality of life in our community by helping those in need.

Another way to say it: the United Way's role in the community is to increase the organized capacity of people to care for one another. This is accomplished through the annual fund-raising campaign to support local health and human service agencies, operation of the Volunteer Connection, planning the annual "Day of Caring," participation in community problem-solving strategies, and providing a variety of support activities to local charitable services.

How much of my contribution is spent on administration?

A vast network of volunteers, the simplicity of payroll deduction and in-kind contributions keep administrative expenses low. Our local United Way's administrative cost is 9.7%. This figure compares favorably with the suggested Better Business Bureau guidelines of up to 35 %. Our efficiency also measures up very well against other national charities, whose overhead costs run normally between 20 – 40%. In addition, donors giving through the United Way have a unique assurance that their contribution provides funding to agencies with local programs reviewed for cost effectiveness and community need.

Is money spent on meals, special events and advertising?

The annual dinners and events to honor volunteer workers are sponsored by local businesses, or paid for by those attending. Newspapers, radio and TV have generously provided publicity without cost to the United Way as a part of the Media Embracing the Community campaign.

Will I be pressured to give when I don't want to?

United Way volunteers are not encouraged to pressure anyone to participate. The role of an employee campaign coordinator is to inform co-workers of the activities of the local United Way agencies and to enable concerned people to give their support where it will be used effectively to meet urgent social challenges.

When I give to United Way, who decides what agencies will receive my contribution?

Annually in the spring and as necessary during the year, the Citizen's Review Committee of the United Way meets to consider the funding requests of member agencies and new agencies. A diverse group of over 50 volunteers spends weeks reviewing each agency's programs and

budgetary information.

The Citizens' Review volunteers work very hard to try and balance the needs of our community with the resources available to meet those needs. This committee makes their allocation recommendations to our local volunteer board of directors for final approval.

How does United Way handle donor designations?

Several options are available:

Community Care - contribution is distributed by a local panel of diverse volunteers (the Citizens' Review Committee) after carefully considering the needs and requests of every agency and balancing the distribution of funds to best serve the community's total needs.

Preston Co. Community Care - contribution is earmarked for the Citizens' Review process to distribute to Preston Co. agencies and programs.

Guaranteed Gift - contribution is earmarked for a specific agency. An agency is assured that its minimum share of all funds raised in the United Way Campaign will not be less than the total of guaranteed gifts.

Another United Way - contribution is forwarded to the United Way working in the specified area.

Other - contribution will be accepted and forwarded only to other health and human service organizations holding IRS 501(C)(3) status. (Note: Campaigns for federal and state employees operate under different rules.)

Why should I give to United Way? Doesn't it make more sense to give directly to a particular agency?

A broad spectrum of health and human service agencies depend on United Way for important funding. None of these agencies can address all the needs in our community. You might have a special interest in the service a particular agency provides. However, there are many needs in our community, and that agency's effectiveness is enhanced by the complementary role of sister agencies. With your gift to United Way, you can be assured that all of these agencies will benefit. In addition, United Way can provide a convenient way to contribute through a workplace payroll deduction program.

Why do some United Way brochures list many non-member agencies?

Our local United Way conducts three fundraising campaigns. The first is the familiar general campaign, through which most contributions are made. The other two are the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) for federal employees, and the WV State Employees Combined Campaign (WVSECC).

The local United Way sets only those rules and regulations that apply to the general campaign. Federal and state law dictates guidelines and admissions to the CFC and WVSECC. We organize and conduct these campaigns, following the government regulations.

Who are the Leadership Givers?

The Leadership Giving Association recognizes contributors supporting the local United Way campaign with an annual personal gift of \$750 or greater. Any pledge to our United Way, “Guaranteed Gift” to a local member agency, or another United Way in the region may be counted as a Leadership contribution. With permission from the donor, the names of our Leadership Givers are published in *The Dominion Post* and other publications. Detailed information is available on the internet, at www.teamunitedway.org or call Erin Snedegar Newmeyer, 296-7525.

Where can I go for information on giving through charitable trusts and estate planning?

When you make your annual pledge through the local campaign you provide immediate help for those who need it. To insure that your annual investment continues to make a significant impact well into the future, our local United Way has created the Future Fund. The Future Fund, established with the Greater Morgantown Community Trust, is a vehicle for the donor to support health and human services through a variety of options: Will Bequest, IRA Charitable Bequest, Charitable Gift Annuity, Charitable Remainder Trust.

All inquiries to our office will remain confidential. For more information or to request a brochure please contact the United Way office at 296-7525 or the Greater Morgantown Community Trust at 296-3433.

Does our local United Way send money to United Way of America?

The United Way of Monongalia and Preston Counties operates as an independent charity, controlled and governed by a local volunteer board of directors. All decisions are made by people who live and work locally. Funds raised remain here to support this United Way and its agencies.

United Way of America serves as a national trade association for more than two thousand independent, autonomous United Ways across the country. The fee we pay for United Way of America services (1% of our campaign) is paid from rental revenue, rather than donor pledges. In exchange, we receive a variety of services that benefit Monongalia and Preston counties, including corporate monetary support, training, materials, and national advertising.

How can I get involved as a volunteer for United Way or other service agency?

The United Way could not exist without the talents and assistance of the hundreds of volunteers that participate in our campaign, the Citizens’ Review process, and the activities of our Board and committees. We always welcome community-minded volunteers and will work with you to find a service that fits your interests and the hours you can contribute. If you want to be an

integral part of the behind-the-scenes activities that make United Way a success, contact our Director, Brandi Potock Helms, at 296-7525.

Many local human non-profit agencies are looking for volunteers for a great variety of programs. The Volunteer Connection is operated by the United Way to assist individuals and companies interested in service projects and community building. To explore the opportunities available, contact the Volunteer Connection Manager, Kim Mitchell, in our office.

How can I find out information on upcoming United Way events or information on where I can volunteer my time to meet a community need?

United Way works hard to offer fun and exciting events throughout the year to meet specific community needs or to increase awareness of the organization and its member agencies. Events range from the campaign kick-off event, the Annual Day of Caring, to the B.E. Taylor concert in December. We sponsor food drives, Corporate Cup athletic competitions and even offer extensive opportunities for youth to volunteer. Visit www.teamunitedway.org for the most current calendar of events. You can also call the United Way office at 296-7525 to be put on our listserv to receive up to the minute emails on events.

It is important to us that donors are provided with timely, accurate and up to date information.

Please contact us if you, or someone you know, has a question about the United Way of Monongalia and Preston Counties.

Thank you!

Still have questions? Call our office, at 296-7525, or visit our website: www.teamunitedway.org.