

CARING CONNECTIONS

News from Your United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year! This is a special year for United Way and the history of community philanthropy across RVA. It was 1924, 100 years ago, that United Way launched the first collective fundraising and grant making effort in greater Richmond - the original crowdfunding called the Community Chest. Community leaders created United Way as a way for various sectors and diverse leaders to come together to address pressing needs and create positive change in the lives of people - a noble purpose.

The power of purpose for a “united way” has stood the test of time. Today, your United Way is more focused than ever on being that call to action, the vehicle by which we help those in need and create opportunities for all by working together, sharing resources and accountability, and Live United.

As we mark our centennial, I want to thank you for your steadfast support and invite you to join us on this next part of the journey toward a community where all residents can thrive. Let’s start this month with learning and honoring America’s Black History and all the incredible contributions to making America what it is today.



Barbara Couto Sipe
President & CEO



1957



2024

Black History Month

We are celebrating leaders past and present who champion justice and compassion during Black History Month. Notable Richmond leader **Richard Foster** led a 1957 Community Chest campaign and played a key role in United Way's history. Today's United Way history maker is **Angela F. Williams**, the President & CEO of United Way Worldwide, who works passionately to create equitable opportunities across the globe.

GIVE



Ignite Change: Join a United Way Giving Community!

In December, members of Women United gathered at Buskey Cider to better understand regional maternal health issues and assemble Born Healthy Kits for newborn caregivers. Women United is one of the United Way giving communities which unite donors dedicated to investing in the future of our region. These groups are a wonderful way to give back and meet like-minded people. If you or someone you know is interested in joining a giving community, we encourage you to attend an upcoming event. To learn more, visit www.YourUnitedWay.org/giving-communities/



Donated Dental Services (DDS)

Higher Achievement | Closing the Middle School Opportunity Gap
Jewish Family Services | Coordinated Senior Services
Virginia Dental Association | Donated Dental Services

ADVOCATE

Advocacy in Action: United Way Champions Youth Mental Health at the Virginia General Assembly

EveryDay Strong, a United Way initiative, advocates for youth mental health through collaboration with Voices for Virginia’s Children and ChildSavers. We recently visited the Virginia General Assembly to discuss with **Delegate Carrie Coyner** the need for universal preventive mental health support in schools. With 36% of Virginia high-school students lacking a caring adult, we aim to equip the next generation for success. Support youth mental health at www.EveryDayStrongVA.org

Empowering Progress:
Local Nonprofit Programs You Might Not Know About

United Way selects effective local nonprofits to fund each year through a process of careful evaluation. The 72 programs we are funding this year are among the best in the region. Our partner agencies deliver services to the most critical areas of need, uplifting our community and giving everyone the opportunity to thrive. Explore our website to learn more about our funded partners making a positive impact in our community and discover ones you may not already know about: www.YourUnitedWay.org/partners



Financial Wellness: United Way Advocates for Tax Prep Assistance

United Way staff met with **Senator Ghazala Hashmi**, **Delegate Carrie Coyner**, and **Delegate Betsy Carr’s** Chief of Staff to educate about Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA). Through United Way’s 2023 Tax Assistance Program, the team of IRS-certified volunteers helped nearly 3,000 community members recover \$2.6 million in tax returns and save over \$670,000 in tax preparation fees. To learn more about United Way’s Tax Assistance Program, visit www.YourUnitedWay.org/program/VITA

Childcare Advocacy: Early Child Development is Economic Development

Heather Farber, Director of Major Gifts, joined a roundtable led by **Congresswoman Jennifer McClellan** on childcare and maternal health challenges in our region. With childcare costs exceeding \$1,000 per month per child, working families face significant financial hurdles. Initiatives like United Way’s WomenRise, as well as United Way partners such as FRIENDS Association for Children’s Preschool and YWCA’s Sprout School, offer crucial support. However, to effectively address the pervasive issue affecting numerous lives in our community, it is imperative to implement systemic changes. For ways to help, go to www.YourUnitedWay.org/womenrise





**Community Care:
Spread the Word! FREE Tax Prep Assistance**

Jessica Noll, through her Virginia This Morning show on CBS-6, spread the word about United Way's FREE tax preparation assistance program. Join her in letting individuals and families with income under \$64,000 know that there are various tax assistance sites in the region, as well as virtual options available. Learn more at www.YourUnitedWay.org/program/VITA.



EveryDay Strong Tip: Building Safety, Connection & Confidence with Youth

Supporting a child is simple – no degree needed. Try this tip: **Connect by Playing**

What to do: Make time to play, even when you would usually say no. If the child does not ask, invite them to enjoy an activity they like. Spend time together at the park, playing video games, or watching funny videos.

Why: Play and laughter are powerful tools for connecting with youth. Playing with friends or entertaining themselves cannot replace relationships with important adults. To learn more about EveryDay Strong, go to: www.EveryDayStrongVA.org

VOLUNTEER

Unite for Impact: Join Volunteers United to Shape Our Region's Future!

Join Volunteers United to amplify our collective strength for meaningful change. We seek enthusiastic individuals to contribute their time and expertise to tailored service initiatives. Discover the power of unity, make an impact, and start your journey at www.YourUnitedWay.org/volunteer



Corporate Compassion: Local Corporations Unite to Invest in the Next Generation

Many businesses want to make a meaningful impact in their community but may be unsure how to do so. United Way can help! We plan and execute volunteer projects that address local issues. Literacy Kit Leaders exemplify corporate volunteerism by investing \$1,500 in school supplies for elementary students, easing financial burdens on parents and teachers. Thanks to this year's leaders for shaping the future through strategic investments in the next generation! Learn how to get involved at www.YourUnitedWay.org/literacy-kits

THANK YOU TO OUR 2023 - 2024 LITERACY KIT LEADERS!



OTHER CONNECTIONS

New Leadership, New Horizons: Family Lifeline Welcomes New CEO Jennifer Case



Congratulations to our partner agency, Family Lifeline, which welcomes their new President & CEO, Jennifer Case! Having previously worked at Family Lifeline for a decade, this role is a homecoming for Case. We are thrilled for the Family Lifeline team and look forward to this exciting new chapter under Case's leadership!



Celeste Anderson

Leadership in Action: United Way Staff Selected to Serve on GRCoC Board

Celeste Anderson, Director of Community Impact, joins the Greater Richmond Continuum of Care (GRCoC) Board of Directors. GRCoC is the decision-making body for coordinated homeless services in Greater Richmond and is responsible for developing policies and procedures to coordinate homeless assistance.

SAVE THE DATE

February 29, 2024: United Way Happy Hour

Is there a friend or colleague in your life who wants to give back to the community but is uncertain where to begin? Our upcoming Happy Hour is a fantastic opportunity to mingle with fellow civic-minded community members and learn more about how you can change lives with United Way. We invite you to join us on February 29 at Väsen Brewing Company. For more information about the event, please visit www.YourUnitedWay.org/giving-communities



March & April 2024: Leadership Metro Richmond Workshops

March 13, 20, 27 | Leading Conversations: Best Practices in Facilitation

March 26 | Nonprofit Board Governance Workshop - CEO Roundtable

April 9 | FREE Leadership Quest Information Session & Reception

Registration Required: www.LMRonline.org/upcoming-events

All workshops will take place at United Way's office: 7814 Carousel Lane, #400, Richmond, VA 23294

April 24, 2024: Annual WomenRise High Tea Luncheon

Our WomenRise program provides childcare scholarships to local single moms pursuing higher education, easing their financial stress, and enabling them to concentrate on work, school, and family. Each year, we gather to celebrate these remarkable women and empower the next generation. Join us for this uplifting event on April 24 at the Tuckahoe Woman's Club, featuring **Kelli Lemon** as MC and **Joye B. Moore** as our keynote speaker. To learn more, visit www.YourUnitedWay.org/WomenRise



Kelli Lemon



Joye Moore

Be a Changemaker: Interested in Supporting United Way?

If you have any questions about United Way or questions about donating, please contact **Heather Farber**, Director of Major Gifts.

(804) 771-5883 | farberh@yourunitedway.org



United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg, a nonprofit dedicated to improving lives and mobilizing the caring power of communities, has been at the forefront of positive, lasting change since 1924. Collaborating with nonprofit partners, donors, and volunteers, we continue to unite community resources to deliver effective programs and initiatives.