

# UNITED WAY IN 2024

2024 Annual Report: The Power of Partnerships



**UNITED WAY**  
Northeast Arkansas

1955-2025

**70** YEARS OF  
IMPACT



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IMPACT**



**1950s**

1961: Ronald Reagan is brought to Jonesboro with the GE Theater as the guest speaker for the annual campaign kickoff.



**1970s**

1983: The Loaned Executive Program begins, encouraging corporations to "loan" employees to the United Way. Loaned Executives report to the United Way office one day each week for 10 weeks.

1983: United Way agrees to underwrite the Jonesboro Food Bank for any month it is unable to pay its lease during its first year of service. One year later, the Food Bank is given \$2,000 to purchase a freezer and later admitted as a member agency of United Way.

1984: The Pillars Club is organized with 25 charter members at a donation of \$500 or more.

1984: United Way receives the first FEMA funds in the amount of \$23,000 to be used in the area of emergency food and energy assistance.

1955: The United Fund is organized, with a goal of \$37,000, to establish a primary fundraising source in the community to collect and disburse gifts to partner nonprofit agencies. The original member agencies are the Salvation Army, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, YMCA, Red Cross, and Junior Auxiliary. Its first campaign goal was exceeded, raising \$38,276.

**1960s**



1973: Name is changed to United Way of Greater Jonesboro to assist a larger range of nonprofit agencies.

1973: After multiple tornadoes across Jonesboro, United Way pays for the uninsured damages of its member agencies and distributes \$10,000 to the Red Cross and Salvation Army for tornado victims.

1976: Junior Auxiliary receives its final year of funding after achieving sustainability as a member agency for more than 20 years.

**1980s**



**UNITED IS THE WAY TO COMMUNITY**



## 1990s



2003: Pillars prints created as a "thank you" for leadership donors.

2003: Gary Schuchardt Memorial 5K Run begins.

2005: United Way celebrates 50 years!

2005: Stuff the Bus hosts its first school supply drive in Corning and Newport.

2005: Imagination Library program begins.

2006: Name changes to United Way of Northeast Arkansas to extend coverage to multiple counties.

2009: Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) begins, completing tax returns for free.

## 2010s



2020: Jonesboro Tornado Recovery fund is established and distributes more than \$100,000 to impacted community members.

2020: COVID-19 Response fund raises \$64,000 for response efforts.

2021: Inaugural NEA Sings event raises \$51,590 to boost funds during COVID-19.

2023: Books & Badges program begins, hosting reading days with more than 350 students in the Nettleton and Jonesboro School Districts.

2024: Community Connect is implemented to provide an avenue to connect immediate needs in our community with solutions through United Way partnerships.

2024: Volunteer United is established to provide a connection point for United Way's volunteer network.

## 2000s



1991: The newly established Jonesboro Church Health Center receives \$10,000 from United Way as start up funds before officially opening in 1992.

1992: Habitat for Humanity receives startup funds from United Way.

1992: Mission Outreach receives \$2,183 to upgrade kitchen to meet Health Department standards.

1994: Day of Caring begins as a community-wide "hands-on" day of service.

1999: United Way moves to city owned building at 407 Union Street.

2013: The first Batting for a Better Tomorrow softball tournament is held to support fundraising efforts.

2014: The first Live United with the Stars is held to support fundraising efforts.

2014: Student-led volunteer group begins on Arkansas State University's campus, now known as A-State United Way.

## 2020s



# UNITED IS THE WAY TO COMMUNITY





United Way seeks to improve lives across  
Northeast Arkansas by mobilizing the caring  
power of our community.



# THE POWER OF YOUR DOLLARS

The work of United Way is vast. In 2024, our team developed Community Connect as a way to highlight the work being done through our network that is “beyond funding”. Community Connect is simple--it connects immediate needs with immediate solutions. Community Connect is made possible by community connections, direct designations, grants, and business partners. United Way funds are also allocated to the following organizations: American Cancer Society, American Red Cross, Arkansas Children's Hospital Foundation, Bridge of Hope Ministries, Children's Homes Inc. (Paragould), Jonesboro Human Development Center, LeBonheur Children's Hospital, and Make-A-Wish Craighead County. etc.

## Options on Main

Our team partnered with Target and community donors to provide a cash donation and diapers to aid in the centers' efforts to meet the needs of local individuals facing unexpected pregnancies.

## CityYouth Ministries

First Security Bank joined us to provide lunch and operational supplies at the end of the summer program for kindergarten through sixth grade students living in the Jonesboro community.

## Helping Neighbors Food Pantry

When the pantry was facing the challenge of providing much needed supplemental food bags, our team partnered with Nestle to provide 200 bags of Starbucks coffee to help serve seniors receiving monthly supplemental food.

## IPS SUCCESS Achievement Academy

With the help of an Aldi grant and United Way funding, our team was able to provide supplemental take home food, as well as hygiene items, to stock the pantry for students attending SUCCESS school.

## Northeast Arkansas Humane Society

With direct donations, we were able to make a donation to the NEA Humane Society to assist their efforts to take care of surrendered or abandoned animals. We also provided a donation of pet food for their supply closet.

## Red Wolves for St. Jude

In support of Red Wolves for St. Jude, United Way made a donation benefiting St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, whose mission is to advance cures and means of prevention for pediatric diseases and assist in critical care free of charge for children.

## Salvation Army

During the holiday season, our team was able to provide hats and gloves, along with a meal, to help meet the needs of community members at the Salvation Army.

**\$33,795**

invested through  
Community Connect

# 2024 GRANT RECIPIENTS

The following organizations received monthly installments in 2024 to fund critical programs across Northeast Arkansas from January-December.

PARTNER AGENCY	ALLOCATION
AR Single Parent Scholarship Fund	\$9,500
A-State Food Pantry	\$3,100
CASA of 2nd Judicial District	\$13,000
Cherry Valley Food Pantry	\$10,000
CityYouth Ministries	\$10,000
El Centro Hispano	\$22,000
Family Crisis Center	\$43,000
Food Bank of NEA	\$45,000
Gateway CASA of 3rd Judicial District	\$10,000
Helping Neighbors Food Pantry	\$21,000
Hope Found of NEA	\$7,000
Jonesboro Church Health Center	\$18,000
Legal Aid of Arkansas	\$11,000
Mission Outreach	\$10,000
New Life Empowerment Development	\$10,000
The Hope House	\$10,000
The Learning Center of NEA	\$13,400
White River Women's Shelter	\$4,000







**70,351**

individuals served



**18**

nonprofit partners



**\$650,000**

invested locally



**100**

company partners



OUR REACH  
**BY THE NUMBERS**

# 2024 IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

From strengthening local resiliency to advancing health, youth opportunity, and financial security, United Way of Northeast Arkansas seeks to achieve a community where all can thrive.



## HEALTHY COMMUNITY

1,696

underserved  
individuals received  
healthcare access

6,495

underserved  
individuals received  
supplemental food



## YOUTH OPPORTUNITY

8,010

preschool aged  
children received a  
free monthly book,  
totaling 77,514 books

434

underserved children  
received specialized  
after school care &  
educational support



## FINANCIAL SECURITY

69

underserved individuals  
received multiple  
specialized services to  
“Get Back to Work”

16,969

individuals in Craighead  
County received  
direction to public  
benefits through 211



## COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

276

foster children received  
volunteer advocacy  
in efforts to “Change a  
Child’s Story”

2,227

underserved individuals  
received access to  
safe shelter and  
advocacy services



# THE POWER OF YOUR SERVICE

United Way volunteers continue to serve as the heartbeat of our organization. While many of United Way's volunteer opportunities are event-based, our volunteer work stretches well beyond the events and groups listed here, including our planning committees for events like Batting for a Better Tomorrow and Day of Caring. In addition, volunteers help us reach our goals through their service on our Board of Directors, Campaign Team, and Regional Impact Committee.

Thank you to each volunteer who served with United Way in 2024.



8,900

volunteer hours

## Volunteer United

Volunteer United allows community members to stay connected and up-to-date with the mission and work of United Way. When we work together, we have the opportunity to change the future of our community, but it requires collaborative efforts. Joining Volunteer United allows volunteers to have an inside look into our work through volunteering their time at our annual events and as needed throughout the year, helping us make the greatest impact possible.

## A-State United Way

Located on Arkansas State University's campus, this student-led group provides the campus community with a place to serve, learn, and make a statement by promoting and coordinating volunteer opportunities, while building relationships within the community. Funding raised by this group is allocated directly back to the A-State Food Pantry, which supports students, staff, and faculty.





## Stuff the Bus

Our 2024 Stuff the Bus event brought in over 43,000 school supplies and \$11,641 in cash donations to support students across Northeast Arkansas. The event benefited 20 local school districts and covered seven counties.

This supply drive provides students with needed supplies for the school year that otherwise may be financially impossible for families to afford without this drive. Thank you to our 2024 sponsors: K8, Jonesboro Media Group, Right Fiber, Regions Bank, Swept Away, and Black Hills Energy.

## Day of Caring

Last year's Day of Caring event celebrated 30 years of service in our community. More than 550 volunteers came together to complete 82 service projects, saving our community \$48,765 in construction and labor costs. Nearly 50 companies were represented and 45 local organizations, nonprofits, and individuals benefited from the event.

Thank you to our 2024 sponsors: First Horizon Bank, St. Bernards, Centennial Bank, Farmers & Merchants Bank, Rainwater & Cox, Arvest Bank, Image Realty, First Community Bank, Empower, First Security Bank, On Q Realty and Property Management.

**"...I served at countless Day of Caring events, task groups, committees, and board positions...but I never dreamed I would be a recipient of such giving to myself..."**

**-Carole Damron, Executive Director, 2010**





# 100% EMPLOYEE GIVING LEADERS

ARVEST BANK  
CITY WATER & LIGHT  
DIA  
ENCORE BANK  
EVOLVE BANK & TRUST

FIRST COMMUNITY BANK  
FIRST FINANCIAL MORTGAGE  
FIRST NATIONAL BANK  
FIRST SECURITY BANK  
FNBC

PASLODE  
SIGNATURE BANK  
SIMMONS BANK  
SOUTHERN BANK

## CORPORATE PARTNERS & EVENT SPONSORS

ABB  
Arkansas Children's Hospital  
Arkansas Community Foundation  
Arrow Screen Printing  
Arvest Bank & Foundation  
Bailey Contractors  
Black Hills Energy  
BNSF  
Centennial Bank  
City Drug  
Coca-Cola  
Empower  
Express Sign Company  
Farm Credit Mid-America  
Farmers & Merchants Bank  
First Community Bank  
First Horizon Bank  
First National Bank

First Security Bank  
FNBC  
Frito Lay  
Georgeous Custom Jewelry Designs  
Glen Sain  
Hytrol  
Image Realty  
Jonesboro A&P Commission  
Jonesboro University Rotary  
Matthew Farms  
NEA Baptist Memorial Hospital  
NEA Lawn Pro  
NEABOR  
Nelson Design Group  
Newport Rotary Club  
Nix Title Company  
North Delta Community Foundation  
On Q Real Estate & Property Management

Paragould Rotary Club  
Pro Land Title  
Rainwater & Cox  
Regions Bank  
Right Fiber  
Rotary Club of Jonesboro  
Rotary Club of Lawrence County  
Simmons Bank & Foundation  
Southern Bank  
St. Bernards Healthcare & Medical Group  
Stanley Woodard Law Firm  
Summit Utilities  
Swept Away  
Trinity Rail  
Walmart  
Woods Masonry & Repair  
Wynne Rotary Club

## EMPLOYEE GIVING PARTNERS

ABB  
Arkansas State University  
Bay Public Schools  
Benjamin F. Edwards  
Black Hills Energy  
Cadence Bank  
Carle Health  
Centennial Bank  
City of Jonesboro  
Colson Caster  
Craighead County  
Eli Lilly and Company  
Entergy

Farmers & Merchants Bank  
FedEx  
First Horizon Bank  
Focus Bank  
Frito Lay  
JCPenney  
Jonesboro Church Health Center  
Jonesboro Media Group  
Jonesboro Public Schools  
Jonesboro Chamber of Commerce  
Kroger  
Legal Aid of Arkansas  
Nettleton Public Schools

Northwestern Mutual  
O'Reilly Auto Parts  
Regions Bank  
Shelter Insurance Claims Office  
St. Bernards Healthcare  
Success Credit Union  
Summit Utilities  
Target  
The Jonesboro Sun  
The Learning Center  
Trinity Rail  
Union Pacific Railroad  
Waddell, Cole & Jones

## IN-KIND PARTNERS

Academy Sports  
Andy's Frozen Custard  
Anthem Pictures  
Bayer Crop Science  
Back Beat Music  
Central Baptist Church  
City of Jonesboro  
City Water & Light

Coca-Cola  
Frito Lay  
James Bickham Visuals  
Joey Glaub Portrait Art  
Jonesboro Media Group  
K8  
Play It Again Sports

Prairie Farms  
Sam's Club  
Shadrachs Coffee  
St. Bernards Healthcare  
Swept Away  
Target  
Wildflower Event Venue



# OVERALL LEADERS BY SECTOR



OVERALL LEADER: CITY WATER & LIGHT



BANK: FARMERS & MERCHANTS BANK



HEALTHCARE PROVIDER: ST. BERNARDS HEALTHCARE



MANUFACTURER: FRITO LAY



SPECIAL RECOGNITION: BILL AND VIKKI HARRISON FAMILY FUND + EARNEST & ANNA RITTER FAMILY ENDOWMENT

**FAB15** Through corporate donations, employee giving, and/or special events, our FABULOUS FIFTEEN company partners led the way in overall dollars raised for United Way in 2024. Thank you to each of these companies for their leadership and dedication to improving the lives of thousands of our neighbors across Northeast Arkansas!



## 2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Bethany Noto**  
Board President  
First Horizon Bank

**Mark Morrow**  
Campaign Chair  
Arvest Bank

**Pedro Ramirez**  
Campaign Co-Chair  
Centennial Bank

**Mitch Hovis**  
Treasurer  
First National Bank

**Audrey Guinn**  
Secretary  
Jonesboro Media Group

**Mike Phillips**  
Past President  
St. Bernards Healthcare

**Krissy Cantwell**, FMH Conveyors

**Misty Carr**, ABB

**Keith Cragg**, Summit Utilities

**Melanie Edens**, NEA Baptist Memorial Hospital

**Kim Hauge**, Farmers & Merchants Bank

**Steven Lamm**, Jonesboro Unlimited

**Marie Markland**, Halsey Thrasher Harpole Real Estate Group

**Drew Milner**, Gardner Milner, PLLC

**Lydia Parkey**, St. Bernards Foundation

**Bill Pate**, Coca-Cola Company

**Nate Schimmel**, City Water & Light

**Hannah Stroupe**, Simmons Bank

**Tony Thomas**, City of Jonesboro

**Jon Warren**, Hytrol

**Thad West**, Frito Lay



Farmers & Merchants Bank



## 2024 CAMPAIGN TEAM

**Aaron Hilton**, St. Bernards Healthcare

**Alejandra Morales**, City of Jonesboro

**Alexandra Bowen**, Simmons Bank

**Ana Jones**, City Water & Light

**Annalisa Meredith**, Simmons Bank

**Audrey Guinn**, Jonesboro Media Group

**Bethany Noto**, First Horizon Bank

**Catherine Spangler**, Centennial Bank

**Drew Weeks**, Simmons Bank

**Erica Huffstetler**, AllCare Homecare

**Ernesto Saucedo**, Swept Away

**Hannah Hosman**, Arvest Bank

**Hayley Tripod**, FNBC

**Jim Bryant**, Pinnacle IT

**Kim Hauge**, Farmers & Merchants Bank

**Mallory Hill**, Regions Bank

**Marie Markland**, Halsey Thrasher Harpole

**Mark Morrow**, Arvest Bank

**Matthew Davis**, St. Bernards Healthcare

**Noah Sitzer**, Encore Bank

**Robin Jones**, First Community Bank

**Sarah Newbern**, St. Bernards Healthcare

**Trenton Coles**, Black River Steel

**Whitney Dwyer**, Image Realty

## UNITED WAY STAFF

**Heather Coats**  
Executive Director

**Erin Calhoon**  
Development Director

**Katelyn Estes**  
Office Assistant

**Austin Shultz**  
Accountant



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