



Summer Wrap Up 2026

the COMMUNITY CIRCLE

Quarterly newsletter brought to you by United Way of Washington County-East



What's Inside?

Stuff the Bus
That's a Wrap!

You R You
Third Year = SUCCESS!

Lunch + Learn
Kick off to Campaign

NEW Partner Agencies
2026/2027

Kay Clint Partners
Let's Welcome them!

What's next on the calendar?
Looking ahead,
we've got a full Fall ahead!

Why does Summer go so quickly?

Minnesota summers seem to go by in the blink of an eye, and that's certainly true for your local United Way team. As we wrap up summer we're taking a moment to reflect on just how much can happen in three short months.

Our summer was filled with community, connection, and impact. Stuff the Bus was a HUGE success thanks to the incredible generosity of our community, and our You R You one-day retreat brought 88 girls together at Hidden Pines Ranch for a day dedicated to confidence, connection, and being themselves. Our annual Lunch + Learn welcomed new and familiar faces to learn more about what we do, how to get involved, and even challenged us to think about how we tell the United Way story.

Following our Community Investment process, we're excited to introduce our 2026-2027 partner agencies, along with three organizations receiving Kay Clint funding this year.

While summer may have flown by, we're not slowing down anytime soon. Keep reading to celebrate what we accomplished this summer and see what's coming up this fall!



Be sure to follow us on our social channels to stay connected to all things United Way!

Stuff the Bus

That's a wrap!

Year after year, Stuff the Bus reminds us that something as simple as a backpack filled with school supplies can represent a significant expense for families right here in Washington County. Through this program, we help ease that financial burden while making sure students head into the school year with the supplies they need – and a backpack that reflects their favorite colors, characters, and interests

This year, together we filled an incredible 1,036 backpacks, supporting numerous families across 22+ schools in Washington County as they started the new school year.

This effort would not have been possible without the incredible community behind us. **More than 150 volunteers** gave their time and energy to sort, organize, and pack thousands of school supplies. We are so grateful to every person who showed up and helped make it happen – Stuff the Bus is truly a community effort.

Our 2026 Volunteer Groups included:

- Andersen Windows and Doors
- Accacia Masonic Lodge
- Bridgewater Bank
- CSOS - Community Support of Our Students
- Diasorin
- Eckberg Lammers Law Firm
- First Resource Bank
- Fred C. & Katherine B. Andersen Foundation
- Market & Johnson
- Stillwater Noon Rotary
- Stillwater Area Kiwanis Club
- The Partnership Plan
- Washington County Public Works
- UWWCE Board Members & Staff
- Individual Community Volunteers

Supplies came in from across Washington County, with the help of local collection sites, OfficeMax/Office Depot, and everyone who purchased items through our online wish list. By packing week, our tables were filled and we had the supplies needed to get to work!

continue reading on next page



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United Way did another great job this year. It was super organized! And thank you for being so welcoming. We certainly felt appreciated

John Ranum – Backpack Stuffing Volunteer

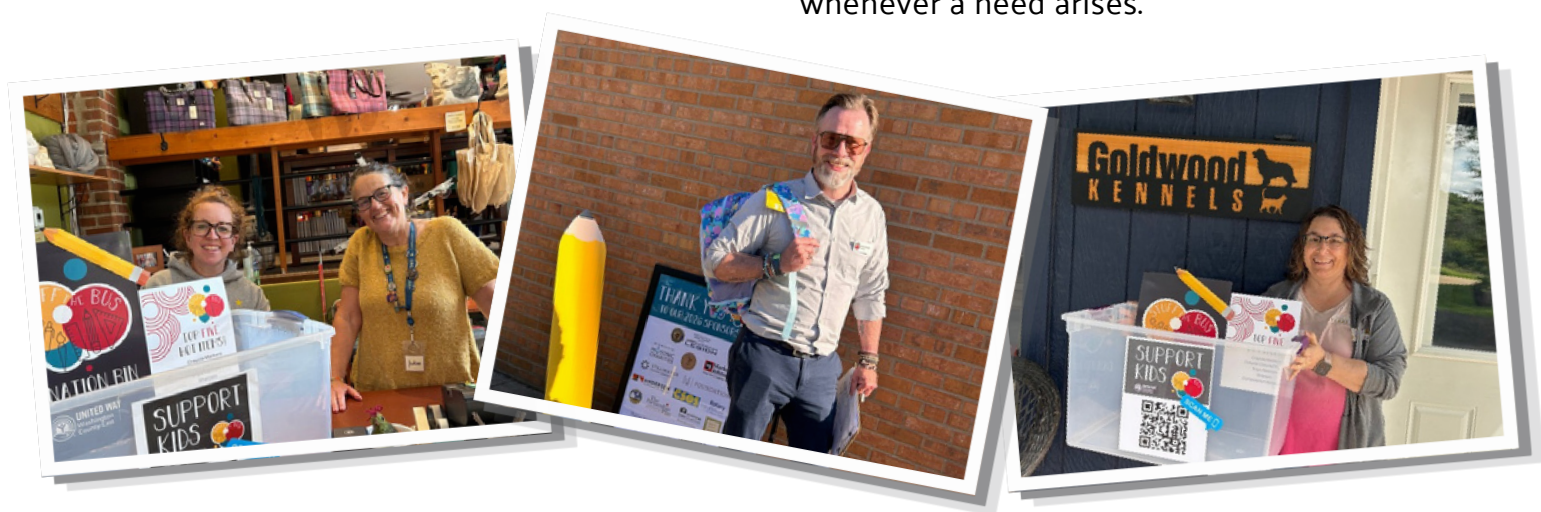
Our 2026 Collection Sites included:

- Align Optimal Wellness
- Ascension Episcopal Church
- Boutwell's Landing
- Cherry Street Bakery
- Community Thread
- Cornerstone Automotive
- Cub Foods
- Darn Knit Anyway
- Diasorin
- First Resource Bank
- First State Bank and Trust
- Goldwood Kennels
- Orchin+Orchin
- Pole Barn Studio
- Royal Credit Union
- St. Croix Soccer Club
- Stillwater Modern Dentistry
- Stillwater Public Library
- The Daily Grind Espresso Cafe
- Washington County Public Works

A special thank-you goes to our **Stuff the Bus sponsors**, whose generosity helped make this program possible. This year marked our highest number of Stuff the Bus sponsors yet! We are honored to stand alongside so many community-minded businesses and organizations committed to supporting local students and families.

We'd also like to recognize our incredible **Stuff the Bus Intern, Lily**, a junior at Gustavus Adolphus College. Lily brought **energy, passion, and organization** to Stuff the Bus, playing a key role in coordinating volunteers, trainings, and collection bins across the community. We were incredibly lucky to have her on our team this summer!

And while Stuff the Bus may be wrapped up for another summer, the need for school supplies doesn't end when the first bell rings. Your donations throughout the year help us continue providing supplies to local students and teachers whenever a need arises.



SPONSORS



You R You

What an amazing third year!

This single day at Hidden Pines Ranch has become something incredibly special – not only for the sixth-grade girls and Teen Guides who attend, but for the women who come together to make it happen.

It's a day filled with laughter, connection, dancing, singing, creativity, and so many little moments that remind us why You R You matters – and how powerful it can be when girls have the space to simply be themselves.

This year, 88 girls arrived at Hidden Pines Ranch, many with a little hesitation and uncertainty about what the day might bring. By 2:30 p.m., they were exchanging notes, making plans, and talking about when they would see their new friends again.

Sometimes the best way to measure the impact of You R You is simply to listen to what the girls are saying at the end of the day.

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One girl told her group she wished You R You wasn't just one day because she was having so much fun. In another group, girls who started the day not knowing each other left saying, 'See you tonight at orientation!'

– You R You Teen Guides



You R You

ONE DAY RETREAT

Throughout the day, girls participated in core sessions led by FamilyMeans, Tubman, Embolden You, and Margaret Smith, along with activities that gave them plenty of opportunities to move, create, reflect, and have fun. They made friendship bracelets, painted rocks, learned a dance routine with Inspiration Performing Arts, practiced yoga and meditation with Sprout Nutrition & Wellness, and explored “Unlocking the Power of You” with KSR Creative. A delicious lunch was provided by Son’s Deli!

We are incredibly grateful for everyone who poured their time and energy into making this day possible, including our teen guides, Women United Committee, Stillwater Modern Dentistry, La Vie Est Belle, and Nicole Larie Photography. And a huge thank-you to Hidden Pines Ranch for once again donating the beautiful space that makes this experience possible.

We love this day so much – and we’d love for you to be part of it! Whether you’re interested in volunteering, supporting the event, or getting involved in another way, email Sarah at sarah.mulford@uwwce.org to learn more.

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If you are thinking about going to You R You at all, you should because it’s really fun. If you are stressed about 6th grade it really helped with that and made all my worries go away. I’m really excited about starting 6th grade.

– You R You Participant



THANK YOU TO OUR 2026 PARTNERS



Lunch + Learn

What does United Way Do?

It sounds like a simple question, but during our Lunch + Learn, it sparked a much bigger conversation.

We welcomed a room full of community members eager to learn more about United Way, connect with one another, and discover new ways to support our community. Throughout the conversation, we talked about the many ways your local United Way responds to the needs of Washington County.

The truth is, it's hard to sum up everything we do in just one sentence.

We connect people and resources.

We invest in local organizations.

We bring people together.

And when our community tells us what it needs, we listen and find ways to help.

Our Lunch + Learn gave us a chance to step back and think about how we tell that story. The thoughtful questions, ideas, and conversations reminded us that sharing what we do is just as important as the work itself - and that there's always room for us to listen, learn, and grow.

A huge thank you to Stillwater Public Library for welcoming us into your space and to E's Gourmet Sandwiches for providing lunch for our guests. Most of all, thank you to everyone who spent their lunch hour with us and continue to care about the impact we are making together.

We hope Lunch + Learn wasn't the end of the conversation - just the beginning. If you want to keep the conversation going, check out our Fall Happenings on page 10 for ways to connect with United Way, or schedule a coffee with one of us!



THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

Stillwater
Public Library



2026/2027 Community Investment Partner Agencies

At United Way of Washington County-East, we believe in the power of our community to come together to address our most pressing and urgent needs. Each year, local nonprofits and organizations apply for funding for programs addressing needs across our four impact areas: Youth Opportunity, Healthy Community, Basic Needs, and Self-Sufficiency.

What makes our Community Investment process unique is that it is 100% community-driven. Community volunteers review grant applications, participate in site visits, and help determine how funds are allocated. This gives local community members the opportunity to see firsthand the impact these organizations are making and hear directly about the needs they are addressing.

We are incredibly grateful to the Community Investment volunteers who gave their time, insight, and care to this process. Their thoughtful questions, conversations, and commitment help ensure our community's resources are invested where they can make a meaningful difference.



This year, we are proud to invest \$500,000 across 20 local nonprofits, supporting programs that are helping our neighbors thrive.

Our work with partner agencies doesn't stop when funding decisions are made. Through the St. Croix Area Agencies Council (SCAAC), leaders from our partner agencies come together quarterly to share what's happening within their organizations, talk about emerging needs, and learn from one another.

These conversations create another opportunity for local organizations to stay connected, identify ways to collaborate, and continue working together toward a stronger Washington County-East community.

Visit our [website](#) to explore each partner agency.

2026/2027

PARTNER AGENCIES



Canvas Health
Cimarron Community Farm
Citizens Against Sex Trafficking
Community Thread
Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute
Evolve Family Services
FamilyMeans
Portico Healthnet
Serve Minnesota
Silver Sobriety

Solid Ground
St. Andrew's Community Center
St. Croix United Church
Stepping Stone Emergency Housing
The Connect Center
The Drawer
Tubman
Valley Friendship Club
Valley Outreach
Youth Service Bureau

2026/2027 Kay Clint Funding Partners

Sometimes the biggest community impact starts with a new idea.

The United Way of Washington County-East Kay Clint Fund provides one-time start-up funding for new, innovative, and pilot programs that respond to emerging needs in our community. Originally established in 1963 to spark pilot projects and inventive solutions to unmet needs, the fund was renamed in 1989 in honor of longtime Executive Director Kay Clint, who led United Way from 1974 to 1988.

This year, we're excited to support three programs bringing new ideas and opportunities to our community:

- Lakes Center
 - For Young People
- Sustainable Stillwater MN
 - From Climate Anxiety to Action
- Stillwater Community Education
 - PONIES Care

We're excited to see where these new and emerging programs go – and we can't wait to introduce you to the people behind them and share more about the work they're doing.

Keep an eye out this November as we highlight each of our 2026–2027 Kay Clint Funding Partners and give you a closer look at these exciting new programs.



**COMMUNITY
EDUCATION**

**Sometimes the biggest
community impact
starts with a new idea.**

United Way Week is here!

October 5–11, our community comes together for **7th Annual United Way Week!** There will be lots of ways to show up – from joining us at an event, supporting a local business partner, sharing United Way with your friends, or simply spreading the word about the work happening right here in Washington County.

On the next page, you'll find all the ways you can show up in person throughout the week. Whether you join us for an event, stop by a participating local business, or find another way to connect, we'd love to see you!

And if you aren't able to join us in person, a gift to your local United Way is another meaningful way to be part of the week. Every donation helps us continue investing in local programs, supporting our neighbors, and responding to the needs of our community.

However you choose to participate, thank you for showing up for your community.

**A POWERFUL
CELEBRATION OF
COMMUNITY,
GENEROSITY, AND
SHARED PURPOSE.**

Meet the Team Behind United Way Week

United Way Week wouldn't be possible without the incredible people who help bring it to life. Our Campaign Committee spends months connecting with local businesses and organizations, dreaming up ways to engage the community, and helping us create a week that feels truly local.

We are incredibly grateful for their time, energy, ideas, and belief in what's possible when our community comes together.

- **Jaculin Sparling**, Cornerstone Automotive
- **Joe Raleigh**, Lake Elmo Bank
- **Erin Hilton**, Goldwood Kennels
- **Aimee Pelletier**, Darn Knit Anyway
- **Tim Safe**, Pathfinder Insurance
- **Collin McGarry**, McGarry-Kearny Insurance
- **Jen McCormick**, Greater Stillwater Chamber of Commerce
- **Brad Junker**, Stillwater Police
- **Jayden Jonas**, Huntington Bank
- **Lindsay Belland**, City of Stillwater Council

To our Campaign Committee: thank you for showing up, bringing others along, and helping make United Way Week a celebration of what we can accomplish together.



▲ (Left to Right) Tim Safe, Jen McCormick, Lindsay Belland, Erin Hilton, Collin McGarry, Joe Raleigh, and Brad Junker

YOUR GUIDE TO UNITED WAY WEEK OCTOBER 5 - 11



SHOP. DINE. EXPLORE.

Throughout the entire week shop, dine, and explore locally at businesses that are giving back! Friday you might even see us poppin' around town visiting local businesses! Give Back Partners listed below, also visit our website for a full interactive map.



ON WEDNESDAY, WE WEAR BLUE!

Wear blue on **Wednesday, October 7**, snap a selfie or group photo, then tag United Way on social media **OR** text your photo to 651-390-2121. For every photo we receive, Capture Your Photos will donate \$10 to United Way!



DARN KNIT DONUTS

Join us for a morning of coffee, conversation, and DONUTS on **Tuesday, October 6 at 9am**
Darn Knit Anyway
423 S Main St. Stillwater, MN



SHERIFFS' CLAY SHOOT

Sporting Clays for United Ways with Sheriff Starry and Sheriff Knudson **October 8 from 3pm - 6pm** at Game Unlimited Hunting Club. Proceeds benefit UWWCE and United Way St. Croix & Red Cedar Valleys.
More info online at
www.uwwce.org/clayshoot

GIVE BACK PARTNERS

- Dave's Hot Chicken
- Goldwood Kennels
- Capture Your Photos
- Hudson Physicians
- Keys Cafe
- Oasis Cafe
- Pathfinder Insurance
- Datastream Connexion
- Johnson and Boog LLC
- Liftbridge Brewery
- Budget Blinds
- Valley Bookseller
- La Vie Est Belle
- Daily Grind
- Natural Care Woodbury
- Establish Salon
- Heritage Embroidery
- The Well
- The Mad Capper
- Darn Knit Anyway
- Gold & Eight
- Toxy Free
- Kari's Create and Paint
- Stokes Jewelry
- River Bank Gifts
- Zigneno Insurance
- Art N Soul
- Local Makers Market
- Nirvana Nail
- Candyland
- Carriage Realty
- Sprout Nutrition and Wellness Coaching
- Cherokee Bank
- Lake Elmo Bank
- First Resource Bank
- Wildwood Tavern
- Westfall/Moldcraft
- Lake Sotheby's
- Goosehead Insurance
- Lakeside Floral
- Frigaards Bar
- Dairy Queen - Mahtomedi
- Krueger's Christmas Tree Farm
- 350 Degrees Bakery
- Wild Bean Coffee Shop



WE ARE YOUR LOCAL UNITED WAY

MISSION

Through trusted relationships, generated resources, and effectively distributed funds we will unite and strengthen our community.

VISION

Create new ways to develop an empathetic and engaged community and generate abundant resources to meet or exceed our local community needs.

DEI STATEMENT

We are dedicated to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion in all we do. We strive for a vibrant and equitable community.



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 www.uwwce.org



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