

United Way makes \$395,000 available to area human service programs

Allocating funds for the 21 programs provided by 19 agency partners in the United Way of Mifflin-Juniata demands balance the needs of many against the needs of one. This responsibility falls squarely on the shoulders of the Community Investment Committee of the United Way of Mifflin-Juniata.

The Community Investment Committee's primary responsibility is to make sure that it is responding to the existing, developing, and long term needs of the community. Twenty-two volunteer team members devoted 205 hours to the review of the programs because funding decisions are often difficult. This year was even more challenging because there was a 5% shortfall in the annual campaign. The United Way Board of Directors has committed to containing their own costs, including holding employee salaries, in order to allocate the same amount of funding to the community as last year - \$395,000.

"We felt a real responsibility to commit as much help as possible to people in the most need. While our donation level has remained relatively flat, the community needs continue to rise. We felt the burden of the anticipated demand for basic needs due to economical hardships placed upon the community citizens while trying to maintain ground with the quality programming that is currently provided," said Chris Warfel, UW Community Investment Chair.

The United Way sought input from community leaders to identify critical problem areas. "We are always looking for the most efficient way to meet the needs of our community. We are very aware that we must adjust funding in times of crisis; like this year with the anticipated demand on families with increased utility and heating fuel costs," said Warfel. "If we are able to quickly adjust to address those issues, then our community is a better place."

Each year volunteers for the United Way review the applications of agencies asking for support and do face to face interviews. Agencies that provided similar services or served like constituencies were grouped together for review to avoid funding of duplicated services thus freeing up dollars to be distributed to other critical needs. Volunteers looked closely at the quality of services delivered, not simply at the number of people served, always asking the hard questions, "Are we giving people a hand up or a hand out?" "Are agencies moving people toward self sufficiency or deeper into dependency?"

Community Investment Volunteers also closely scrutinized each agency's financial history and development plans. Again they asked the tough questions; "Are the agencies applying for funding operating in a cost efficient manner – are we getting the best bang for the buck?" "Are they seeking foundation grants or other sources of funding to complement United Way funding?"

"The assumption is that by being on the frontlines, agency directors know the extent of human service needs in the county and the amount of money they required to meet those needs," said Marie Mulvihill, United Way Executive Director. "Although there is no doubt that agency directors are aware of their *own* client's needs, United Way has to look at the bigger picture."

Three new programs were added this year, Telephone Advice Project – MidPenn Legal Services, Coalition of HOPES (Help Offering Programs & Essential Services) – Shelter Services and the MJ Community Clinic Project. These organizations met strict "operational" and "financial" guidelines required by all United Way partners. Some requirements are whether the organizations meet a critical community problem, whether their services were duplicated by other non-profits, and whether United Way funding would "significantly increase or improve the services they offer."

LIVE UNITED. It's more than just a slogan. It's a message and a call to action.

It means being part of the change you want to see in Mifflin and Juniata counties. It means reaching out to your neighbors in need. It means working together to advance the common good, creating opportunities for a better life for all.

“Donating to United Way is the best and most effective way to give for several reasons; one donation addresses a wide range of critical health and human service needs, funding is invested only in service programs that are proven to be effective and efficient, the funding decisions are made by knowledgeable community volunteers and backed by current, quality data. “I would like to thank the people of Mifflin and Juniata counties for their continuing support of the United Way during these difficult economic times when fuel and food costs continue to rise,” said Chris Warfel, volunteer Community Investment Chair.

Where The Money Goes:

Successful Children and Youth- Strengthening youth and families by providing opportunities and resources that allow children to succeed and families to thrive. **\$129,750**

Connecting With Kids	Lumina Center	\$22,800.00
Youth Program	Delauter	\$4,000.00
Comprehensive Youth Development/Camping	Boy Scouts	\$28,000.00
Summer Playground Program	MC Playground Ass.	\$12,000.00
GS Leadership Experience	Girl Scouts in Heart of PA	\$8,500.00
Child Care Subsidies	Child Care Inform. Services	\$20,000.00
Mentoring Programs	Big Brothers Big Sisters	\$15,000.00
Youth Services	JC Library	\$19,450.00

Basic Needs and Self-Sufficiency – Aiding people with resources to meet basic needs, such as food, shelter, clothing, and utilities that allow them to move towards self-sufficiency. **\$126,610**

Telephone Advice Prpject	MidPenn Legal Services	\$5,000.00
Hollister House	Abuse Network	\$26,500.00
Seeing a Brighter Future	Juniata Association of the Blind	\$14,500.00
Emergency Services	American Red Cross	\$20,000.00
MJ Coalition - HOPES(Direct Asst.)	Shelter Services	\$43,110.00
MJ Coalition - HOPE (Direct Funds)		\$17,500.00

Community Life and Health – Providing children, adults, families and seniors with education, awareness, and recreation opportunities to improve daily life. **\$108,640**

Community Life Connections	Special Needs Center	\$48,500.00
Playground Program	Fayette Area Lions Den	\$6,000.00
Dental Subsidies/children	MJ Dental Clinic	\$22,000.00
Healthy Lifestyles	YMCA	\$24,000.00
	MJ Community Clinic	\$8,140.00

Education – Supporting youth and adults by providing resources that promote life-long learning.
\$30,000

Libraries Change Lives (Adult)	MC Library		\$12,000.00
Early Literacy and Beyond (Youth)	MC Library		\$18,000.00