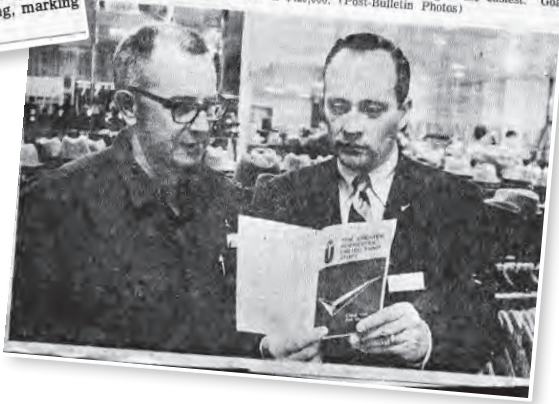


100 YEARS OF THE UNITED WAY, 100 MOMENTS



UNITED WAY
Southeast Minnesota

Celebrating a Century of Impact, Building Bridges to the Future

BY JEROME FERSON

This year, we celebrate 100 years of United Way's presence in Southeast Minnesota—a century of people coming together to lift one another up, solve problems, and create a stronger, more resilient community. What began in 1925 as the Community Chest of Rochester has grown into a regional force for good, investing more than \$150 million in vital programs that improve lives.

This incredible impact has been made possible by the generosity of thousands of individuals, businesses, and community organizations that have fueled our mission over the past century. The \$150 million invested in Southeast Minnesota isn't government funding—it's the result of people voluntarily choosing to give back.

From workplace campaigns at companies like Mayo Clinic, IBM, McNeilus Truck and Manufacturing, and hundreds of other local organizations, to individual donors making small but meaningful contributions, every dollar represents a commitment to mak-

ing our community stronger. This tradition of generosity has ensured that families in crisis have had a place to turn, children have had access to opportunities, and our region has remained strong through economic and social change.

A Legacy Rooted in Collaboration

United Way has always been a connector—bringing together individuals, businesses, nonprofits, and public agencies to create solutions that no one organization could achieve alone.

From longstanding partnerships with private businesses and governmental agencies to grassroots collaborations with community-based organizations and individual donors and volunteers, we have worked together to address the critical needs of individuals and families.

Over the years, our role has expanded beyond fundraising—we have become a problem-solver and catalyst for lasting change in tackling community challenges. As we look ahead to the next century,

we are deepening that commitment through our Building Bridges initiative, which is still being designed with partners.

Resilience in the Face of Challenges

United Way has always stepped forward in times of crisis. Whether leading flood relief efforts in 1978, responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, or helping families recover from job loss and economic downturns, we have been a source of stability and support.

But we know that crisis response alone isn't enough—we must ensure that our ability to bring people and resources together remains strong, even as the challenges we face continue to evolve. The Building Bridges initiative is being designed to build on this legacy, ensuring that United Way is positioned to navigate change effectively while continuing to deliver real impact.

Innovation to Strengthen Opportunity for All

United Way has always been at the forefront of community-driven solutions, from



Jerome Ferson

conducting the first community needs assessments to launching transformative partnership-driven initiatives like Full-Service Community Schools and Cradle 2 Career. Today, we continue that work by focusing on removing barriers, strengthening local partnerships, and making it easier for families to get the support they need.

We are working to ensure that United Way remains a leader in connecting people with resources, strengthening systems of support, and maximizing the impact of every dollar invested in our region.

Looking Ahead: The Future of United Way

As we celebrate this historic milestone, we recognize that our work is far from done. The same values that shaped our past—collaboration, resilience, and forward-thinking solutions—will guide us into the future.

Later this year, we will launch a special fundraising campaign to formally introduce Building Bridges to the community. This effort will strengthen our ability to connect families with the resources they need—ensuring that when people reach out for help, United Way is there.

This is a pivotal moment for our region, and we invite you to join us in shaping the future.

Together, we will build on our century-long legacy and shape a stronger, more resilient Southeast Minnesota.

Thank you for being an integral part of this journey. United, we thrive.

With gratitude,
Jerome Ferson
President, United Way of Southeast Minnesota



100 Years, 100 Moments in the United Way

Legacy of Community Investment and Leadership

1 A Century of Community Investment

Over the last 100 years, United Way of Southeast Minnesota has invested more than \$150 million into our community. That's comparable to the GDP of Puerto Rico or the cost of a Boeing 787-3 Dreamliner!

2 Our Humble Beginnings (1925)

Established as the Community Chest of Rochester in 1925 with a \$30,000 budget, our first partner organizations were the Red Cross, Civic League, Salvation

Army, Rochester Park Band, Boy Scouts, and the YMCA.

3 Expanding Our Reach: United Way of Olmsted County is Born (1972)

February 1972 marked the establishment of United Way of Olmsted County, extending services beyond Rochester to include Byron, Dover, Eyota, Stewartville, and rural townships. This consolidation eliminated separate fund drives and brought essential services to communities across the county.

4 Adapting to a Changing Community:

United Fund of Greater Rochester (1962)

In May 1962, the United Fund of Greater Rochester evolved from the Community Chest of Rochester. This new organization aimed not only to raise and distribute funds but also to foster collaboration among citizens and agencies, adapt services to meet emerging needs, and evaluate their effectiveness for lasting impact.

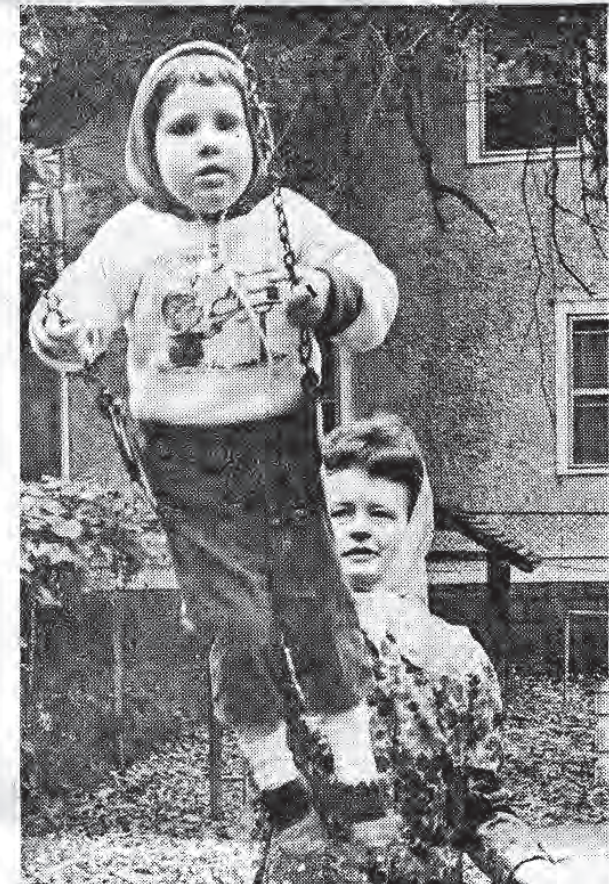
5 Martha Frey's Gift Seeds Long-Term Impact (2012)

In 2012, United Way of Southeast Minnesota was entrusted with a legacy gift from the estate of Martha Frey.



JUNGLE-JIM TIME—Outdoor play is a large part of the activities planned for the children each day at the Civic League Day Nursery. On the "jungle-jim" from left: Jimmy Sather, 4, son of Mrs. Dawn Sather; Michael Castellano, 4, son of Mrs. Dianne Castellano; Becky Mathison, 4, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Mathison, and Kenny Jordan, 5, son of Mrs. Elizabeth Jordan. All are of Rochester. (Post-Bulletin Photos)

United Fund Supported—Civic League Day Nursery Is Modern, Well Staffed



(EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the third in a series of articles explaining the services and activities of some of the agencies which share in contributions to the Greater Rochester United Fund. This year's goal of \$550,000 will be divided among 25 voluntary health, family and child care, education and recreation organizations serving the greater Rochester area.)

By JON PETTENGILL
Post-Bulletin Staff Writer

More Rochester area mothers are working outside their homes than ever before with the knowledge that their children are in the trained hands at Civic League Day Nursery.

Aided by the United Fund of Greater Rochester and the former Community Chest since the late 1930s, the nursery is today a fully-licensed, modern, well-staffed day care center for some 38 Rochester area children between the ages of 3 and 5. This year the UF contributed \$25,000 for its support.

When the Women's Civic League of Rochester inherited the nursery's present house at 405 W. Center St. in the late 1920s, it had been specified in the will that the house be used as "a sort of rest room" where women might go during shopping trips to Rochester. League members felt a greater need, however, and in 1930 established

Happy Anniversary!

Congratulations

on the incredible impact you've made in our communities.

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100 Years, 100 Moments



Martha came to our community for medical treatment and then gave back with a lifetime gift given to use as best seen fit. As a tribute to Martha's generosity, her gift was placed into a permanent endowment. Earnings from the United Way Endowment Fund continue to help change local lives and provide opportunity for all to thrive.

6 Power of the Purse (2005)
In 2005, United Way of Southeast Minnesota held its first annual Power of the Purse event.

7 Founding of the Alexis de Tocqueville Society (1997)
In 1997, United Way of Southeast Minnesota joined the Alexis de Tocqueville Society, a group of United Ways with donors who have made gifts of \$10,000 or more. Founding members Steve Barlow and Andy Chafoulas laid the foundation for this tradition of generosity, which continues to today.

8 Campaigns That Inspire (1990)
United Way's Campaigns in the 1990s reached new heights, mobilizing thousands and raising millions. In 1990 specifically, 85 Campaign presentations were delivered, campaign materials reached 2,400 businesses and employee groups, and a promotional video inspired 5,017 individuals.

9 A Legacy of Giving at RPS (1938)
In 1938, Rochester Public Schools employees and students donated \$847 to United Way – equivalent to \$19,087 today. This early act of generosity exemplifies the strong tradition of giving that continues in our schools.

10 A Parade of Community Spirit (1961)
United Way's Campaign kickoffs were community-wide celebrations. In 1961, downtown Rochester hosted a "service to the people" pageant and parade with

nearly 1,000 attendees. Highlights included speeches by Mayor Alex Smekta, local faith leaders, and the five-year-old Miss United Fund.

11 An Evolving Mission
While United Way's mission statements have evolved over the decades, our commitment to collaboration, community, and care remains steadfast: 1965: A vehicle for community cooperation, citizen action, and service responsive to a growing and changing population to area civic, business, and professional leaders. 1984: Reaching out to encourage and reinforce our community's organized capacity for caring. 1998: Increase the organized capacity of people to care for one another. 2025: Responds to the greatest needs in our region by inspiring people to get involved, give back, and take action.



12 Honoring the First Maude Finch Awardee (2009)
In 2009, United Way of Southeast Minnesota honored Karel Weigel, a respected leader in the Rochester community with the inaugural Maude Finch Award. Named after the first recording secretary of the Rochester Community Chest, this award is presented annually by United Way of Southeast Minnesota's Women United group.

13 Merging with United Way of Dodge County (2023)
In January 2023, United Way of Dodge County and United Way of Olmsted County merged. From that point on, United Way of Southeast Minnesota began serving Dodge County in addition to

Winona, Fillmore, and Olmsted counties.

14 New Name, Same Impact (2025)
In its centennial year, United Way of Olmsted County has proudly changed its name to United Way of Southeast Minnesota. This new name reflects the organization's expanded regional impact, serving communities across Dodge, Fillmore, Olmsted, and Winona Counties.

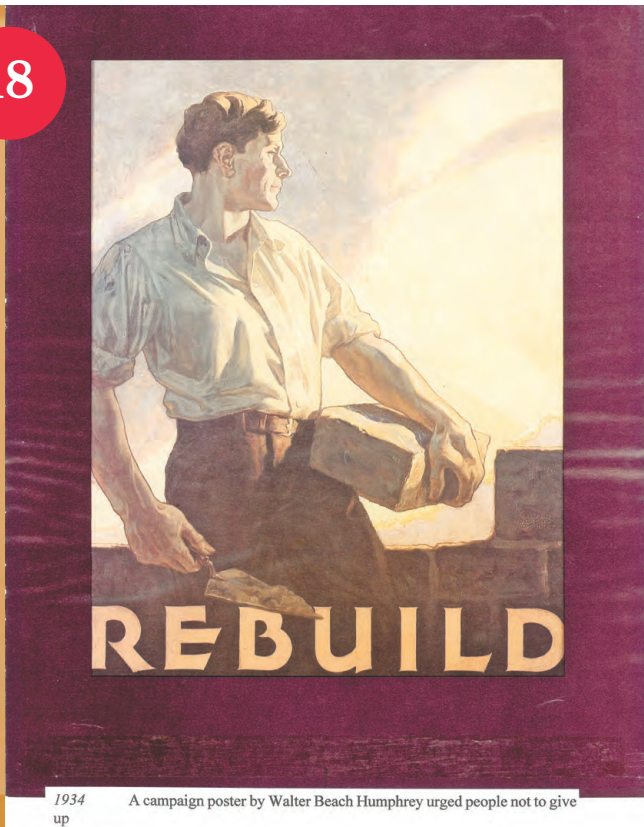
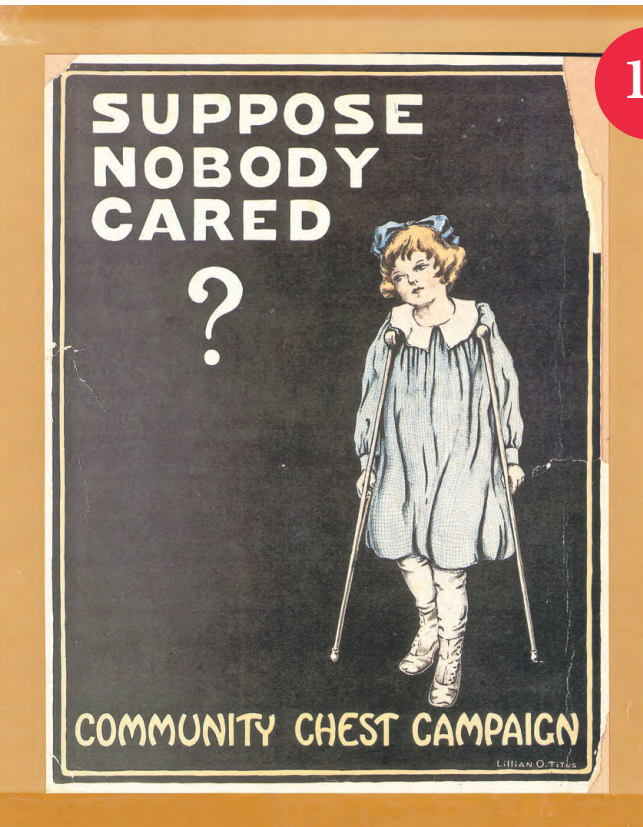
15 The Year of The United Way (1987)
In 1987, Governor Rudy Perpich declared it "The Year of the United Way" in Minnesota, recognizing the outstanding volunteer contributions of United Ways across the state.

16 Crossing the Million-Dollar Mark (1978)

In 1978, United Way of Southeast Minnesota's Campaign raised over \$1 million for the first time. At the time, United Way supported 26 local nonprofits, improving the lives of tens of thousands of residents.

17 A Day of Caring (2000)
The first annual Day of Caring in 2000 united hundreds of volunteers to complete hands-on projects across Olmsted County, exemplifying the community's collective commitment to making a difference.

18 Campaign Themes Over the Years
United Way of Southeast Minnesota's annual campaigns have long inspired generosity through memorable themes, including:



1934 up A campaign poster by Walter Beach Humphrey urged people not to give

in the United Way



1925-1927: Suppose Nobody Cared?
1935: Thanks for the Break, Neighbor
1942-1943: You Take Care of the Home Front
1961: Give the United Way Working For All of Us
1970s: Thanks to YOU It's
1981: Be A Hero, Share Your Love
1994: No One Makes It Alone

19 Carrying the Torch of Community Spirit (1996)
In 1996, United Way of Southeast Minnesota selected 25 local residents to carry the Olympic torch through Rochester. These “community heroes” exemplified the spirit of service and unity.

20 Connecting the Community (1994)
In 1994, CommunityNet launched as a resource and referral network, later merging with United Way of Southeast Minnesota. Today, United Way continues this mission through services like the 211 resource and referral line, which connects over 5,000 local residents with help and information annually.

21 Building a Strong Foundation
Since 1925, United Way of Southeast Minnesota has funded over 125 local organizations, including longstanding partners like Ability Building Community, Family Service Rochester, and the Salvation Army.

22 A Powerful Voice of Gratitude (2023)
At United Way of Southeast Minnesota’s 2023 Annual Meeting, Minnesota Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan was the keynote speaker. “United Way, thank you so much for everything that you have done...there are thousands of families that you have supported to help make life a little bit easier, to bring relief to families, to allow them to focus on their community, on themselves, and simply on joy.” - Peggy Flanagan, 2023

23 Inspiration to Give Back
“I am inspired by United Way’s commitment to mobilize the caring power of our community. They’re creating conditions where we can all participate, prosper, and reach our full potential.” - Wafa Elkhailifa, United Way Supporter, 2023

24 A Legacy of Transformative Leadership
Throughout its 100-year history, United Way of Southeast Minnesota has been guided by visionary leaders dedicated to making a lasting impact on the community. United Way’s current President since 2014, Jerome Ferson, continues this legacy of innovation, collaboration, and compassion.

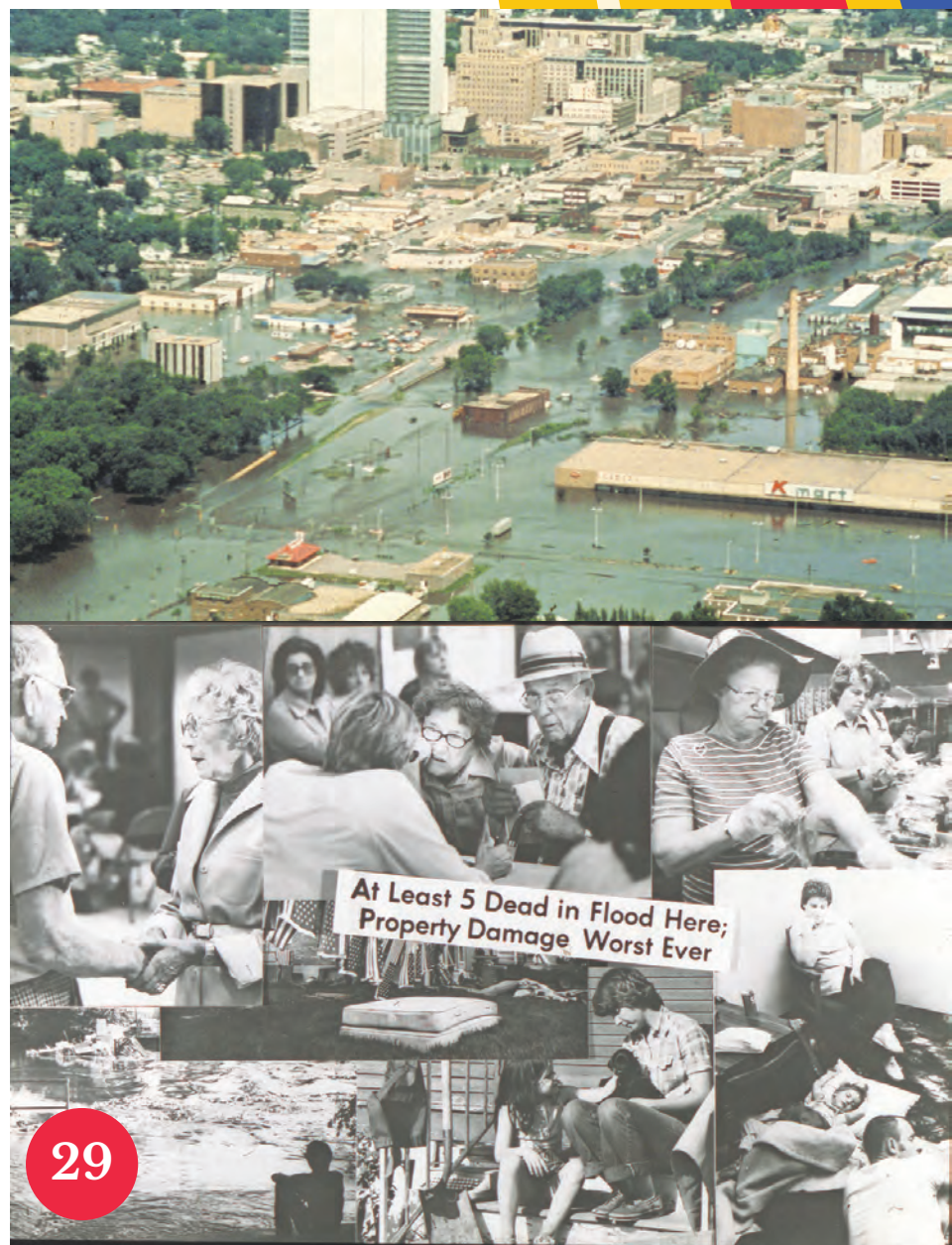
25 Transforming Lives, Strengthening Communities

“For over three decades...I’ve had the privilege of witnessing the profound impact this organization has had on countless lives in our community. I’ve seen children nurtured into lifelong learners, families rising above adversity, and neighborhoods transforming into safer, more vibrant places to live.” - Jerome Ferson, United Way of Southeast Minnesota President

26 Honoring Paul Tieskoetter (1958 - 2024)
United Way of Southeast Minnesota remembers Paul Tieskoetter, a dedicated board member, campaign chair, and donor. His legacy of generosity continues, as does his impact on United Way. “Since my first pledge 35 years ago, I have always participated in the [United Way] workplace campaign...it all adds up when everyone does what they can, and it can really make a difference!” Paul Tieskoetter, 2018

27 Generations of Impact
Over the past 100 years, United Way of Southeast Minnesota has touched the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. In 2024 alone, more than 37,000 individuals benefited from its programs and partnerships.

28 Giving Made Simple (1980s)
In the 1980s, United Way of Southeast Minnesota’s “Guide to Giving” encouraged generosity



with straightforward recommendations: 1% or more for those earning \$10,000 or above 1 hour’s pay per month for full-time employees ½ hour’s pay per month for part-time employees

Responsive to Crises and Emerging Needs

29 Responding to Crisis (1978)
In the wake of Rochester’s devastating floods in July 1978, United Way of Southeast Minnesota led disaster relief efforts alongside the Red Cross and other partners. Together, we raised \$373,606 to support recovery efforts – an early testament to our community’s resilience and generosity.

30 A Lifeline During COVID-19 (2020)
During the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, United Way of Southeast Minnesota invested over \$1 million into critical community support. We partnered with Rochester Area Foundation and other local organizations to create the TOGETHER Fund to rapidly support Rochester area nonprofits that experienced unforeseen challenges due to the pandemic.

31 Addressing Community Needs (1990-91)
United Way of Southeast Minnesota has a long legacy in the community of needs assessments,

well before other organizations. United Way initiated a comprehensive community-wide needs assessment in 1990. This effort aimed to raise awareness about community challenges and ensure contributions were directed toward the most impactful solutions.

32 Listening and Learning in Our Community (2016)
In 2016, United Way of Southeast Minnesota held 45 community conversations with over 400 people to learn how fellow community members are experiencing life in our community. In this way, we grounded our work in the realities faced by many.



100 Years, 100 Moments

33 Responding to a Changing Community (1989)

In 1989, United Way of Southeast Minnesota demonstrated its commitment to addressing emerging challenges by identifying evolving community needs. Priorities for the year included heart-healthy living programs for students, support groups for parents of children with ADHD, and pioneering mental health services in classrooms. By staying attuned to local concerns, United Way informed the public and adapted its efforts to create meaningful, lasting impact.

34 Co-Developing the Triennial Community Health Needs Assessment (2012)

In 2012, United Way of Southeast Minnesota was asked to help participate in drafting a set of potential indicators for a community health needs assessment and improvement plan (CHNA) initiated by Olmsted County Public Health Services, Olmsted Medical Center, and the Mayo Clinic.

35 Helping the Region Recover (2010)

In the fall of 2010, communities in Southeast Minnesota were once again struck by floods. Working with local disaster response teams, United Way of Southeast Minnesota's Volunteer Center mobilized volunteers for relief and recovery. Working with local groups and other regional United Ways, we established a \$140,000 long term recovery fund.

36 Responding in the Face of Crisis (2008)

In 2008, during historic flooding across Southeast Minnesota, United Way mobilized thousands of volunteers to play a critical role in the emergency response. United Way also distributed thousands of dollars in relief funds to aid in flood recovery.

37 Evolving Our Approach to Community Impact (2000s)

In the early 2000s, United Way of Southeast Minnesota adopted a Community Impact Model, shifting from legacy funding to an outcomes-based grantmaking approach. By conducting a community needs assessment United Way refocused its efforts on creating measurable and data-driven community impact. This new approach strengthened United Way's effectiveness and ensured our work was rooted in addressing our community's most pressing needs.

38 Persevering Through the Pandemic (2020)

Running Start for School began as a traditional school supply drive, with community members donating items in person. However, the COVID-19 pandemic made this approach impossible. To ensure students still received the supplies they needed, United Way adapted by transitioning the drive to an online marketplace, allowing individuals to purchase supplies digitally.



39 A Family's Story (1991)

"After Al left for the Persian Gulf, I was scared. Joshua was only a few months old and we were running short on money to pay bills. Thanks to United Way, we got enough to tide us over. We've donated to United Way for years – it's nice knowing United Way is there when people really need them." - Al, Lynn, and Joshua Larson

40 War Defense Fund (1939-1945)

During World War II, United Way played a vital role in raising local funds to support the national war efforts. In 1943 our Campaign goal increased by \$32,571 to meet a \$74,571 target, contributing to the War Fund and Services to Armed Forces.

41 Jason's Story: Building Independence

"I live in a United Way-funded apartment complex for disabled people. Without United Way, I wouldn't have the self-respect and independence I now enjoy. I really appreciate it." - Jason Zylstra

42 Anna's Story: A Lifeline at Home

"I have had various medical problems over the years. As a result, I've needed a homemaker in order to stay in my home. United Way has always been there when I've needed them." - Anna Wein

43 Tackling Root Causes (2019)

"I have always been active in the community, but I count on United Way to really peel back the onion and look at what are the sources, and not just the symptoms, but what are the root causes of many of our problems, to gather data and really figure it out." - Barbara Jordan, United Way Supporter (2019)

44 Vanessa's Recovery Journey (2019)

"...It was hard, but today I've got a year and two months clean and that's the longest I've made it. It is all through the help of sober living, treatment, Recovery Is Happening, and United Way. If it weren't for programs like this, and people like you...I would be dead." - Vanessa,

Recovery Is Happening Participant (2019)

45 Spotighting ALICE (2024)

In 2024, United Way of Southeast Minnesota joined 30 other states to adopt the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) framework. This data highlights the 20,000 families in Olmsted County who live paycheck to paycheck and will drive future strategies to improve financial stability in our community.

46 Street Medicine: Caring for the Homeless (2023)

United Way of Southeast Minnesota invests in Zumbro Valley Medical Society's Street Medicine Initiative, providing direct care and advocacy for homeless individuals in our community.

47 Uniting to Address Challenges

"United Way is a key partner in helping identify and convene the community on problem solving and bringing a solution on the issues that...the community can't solve on its own. This work of community is not for the weak. These are issues that are thorny...that communities have been trying to solve for a long time. It takes grit and guts." - Karen Mathison, Former United Way of Southeast Minnesota President (2002 – 2012)

48 Empowering Donor Choice (1994)

In 1994, United Way of Southeast Minnesota introduced designated giving, allowing donors to designate their gifts to specific nonprofit organizations or United Way initiatives. This practice, which continues today, reflects our commitment to honoring donor choice while supporting community needs.

49 Keeping the Community Warm (2000s)

Throughout the 2000s and 2010s, United Way of Southeast Minnesota, in collaboration with over 40 community partners, worked to collect and distribute warm winter outerwear to thousands of individuals in need across Olmsted County.

50 Financing Solutions (2020s)

United Way of Southeast

Minnesota's recent five-year grant to Ability Building Community (ABC) allowed them to purchase new vehicles for their individualized home support program. As a result, ABC staff no longer have to use their personal vehicles while supporting community members living with disabilities.

51 Ron and Linda's Trust in United Way

"When we're supporting United Way, we're supporting the whole

community. We trust United Way to understand the whole community needs." - Ron Menaker & Linda Mansfield, United Way supporters for over 50 years.

Fostering Partnerships for Greater Impact

52 An Essential Partnership

Mayo Clinic has been a cornerstone partner in United Way of Southeast Minnesota's mission throughout our

history. Over the last 25 years alone, Mayo Clinic Rochester employees have raised over \$40 million through their Community Giving Campaigns. These funds have fueled United Way partners and programs and have been designated for countless nonprofits nationwide.

"Mayo Clinic was instrumental in helping us make sure that the United Way stayed strong through times of turmoil." - Karen Mathison, Former United Way of Southeast Minnesota President (2002 – 2012)

53 A Lifeline for Survivors (1980)

The Women's Shelter joined the United Way of Southeast Minnesota as a member agency in 1980, marking the start of a partnership that continues to provide critical support for survivors of domestic violence today.

54 A Home for Community Support (1984)

United Way of Southeast Minnesota transformed the old Lincoln School into the United Way Services Building in 1984, purchasing it from Independent School District #535 for just \$1. This central hub brought together United Way and nine partner agencies to provide easier access to vital services – a vision that continues to shape our operations today.

For nearly 70 years,
Rochester IBMers' legacy of giving
has made a lasting,
positive change in
the lives of those
who need it most.

Congratulations,
United Way of
Southeast Minnesota
for 100 years of
making a difference.

Your friends at

IBM
ROCHESTER

in the United Way



55 Collaborating for Service Delivery with IBM (2009)

United Way of Southeast Minnesota partnered with IBM to develop the Community Information Sharing System (CISS), a “smarter” solution producing better data analytics in the social service sector. CISS made it possible for over 16,000 clients of partnering agencies to input their basic information only once, reducing wait times and simplifying access to services. The participating agencies could also serve clients more effectively while gathering data to track progress, assess needs, evaluate initiatives, and allocate resources effectively.

56 Increasing Access to Technology (2009)

United Way of Southeast Minnesota’s CompuSwap program, in partnership with IBM, collected old computers from local governments and businesses, refurbished these computers, and then distributed them to nonprofit organizations in Southeastern Minnesota. In 2009, we distributed 351 computers, 424 monitors, and 14 printers to 59 organizations and 271 individuals.

57 Establishing the Caring Club (2005)

In 2005, United Way of Southeast Minnesota established its Caring

Club, a rewards program to thank the organization’s supporters and encourage engagement with local businesses. The Caring Club continues today.

58 Innovation Meets Community Engagement (1966)

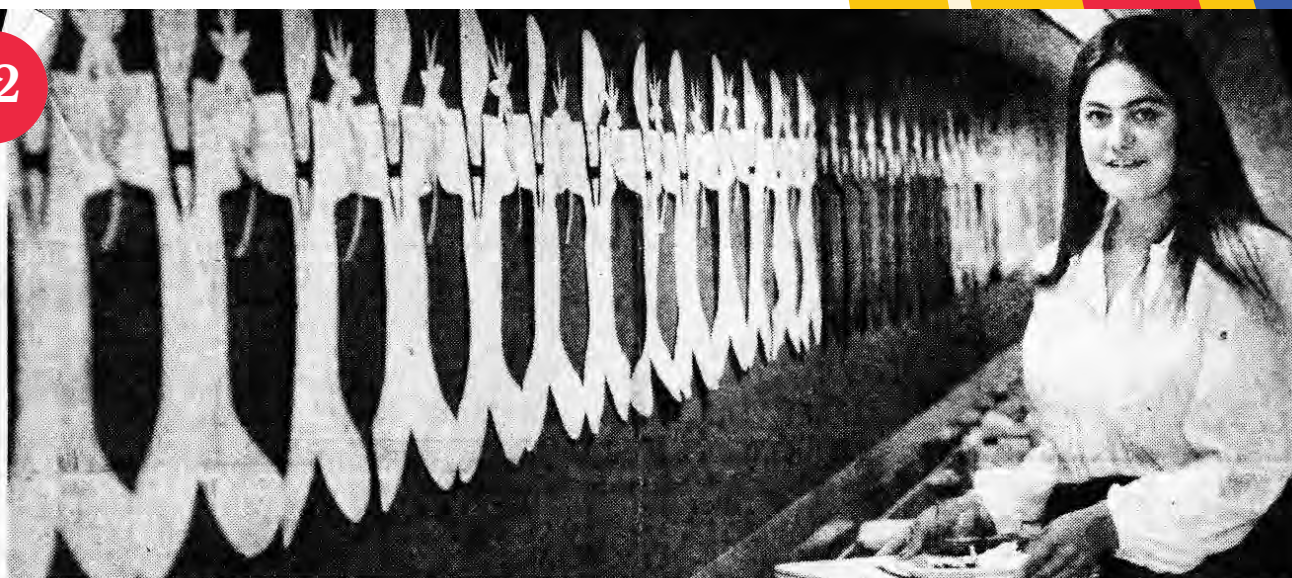
In 1966, IBM introduced a unique “statistical machine” that allowed Rochester residents to test their knowledge of United Way’s mission and operations. Developed by IBM’s suggestions manager, Francis Polt, this innovative tool was placed in public places throughout Olmsted County.

59 IBM’s Legacy of Partnership

Over the past 25 years, IBM employees have raised more than \$17 million through their workplace campaign, helping fuel United Way of Southeast Minnesota programs and initiatives. For many years, IBM’s fundraising efforts even surpassed those of larger employers.

60 Teaming for Technology (1999)

In 1999, United Way of Southeast Minnesota brought the “Teaming for Technology” initiative to Olmsted County. This national partnership with IBM and AmeriCorps*VISTA enhanced local nonprofits’ capacity by providing technology training, planning, and support.



United Way reminder in mural form

Mary Ayshford of the St. Marys Hospital Public Affairs department stands beside the United Way mural that rings the hospital cafeteria. Teen-age volunteers cut out the 210 paper figures and Ayshford painted them and attached them to form a mural that will remind

St. Marys employees about the United Way campaign that begins next week. United Way officials will start this year’s fund drive Tuesday with the annual kick-off breakfast.

Post-Bulletin Photo by Jerry Olson

61 Partnering for a Brighter Future with IMAA (1984)

In 1984, United Way of Southeast Minnesota supported the founding of the Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association (IMAA) to aid refugees and immigrants resettling in Rochester. This partnership continues to foster independence and well-being today.

62 Building Digital Skills (2009)

In 2009, United Way of Southeast Minnesota partnered with the Rochester Public Library to help job seekers create resumes and apply for jobs online. This program bridged the digital divide, giving individuals tools for success.

“I’m going to go home with hope,” shared Lili-ana Schulz, a program recipient.

63 Long-Standing Partnership with McNeilus Steel

For over 25 years, McNeilus Steel employees have contributed more than \$2.8 million to United Way of Southeast Minnesota, fueling essential community services and programs through their workplace giving campaigns.

64 City of Rochester: A United Way Ally

United Way of Southeast Minnesota and the City of Rochester have partnered for decades on community challenges. City employees have raised over \$1.2 million in the past 25 years, demonstrating their commitment to a stronger community.

65 Collaborating with Olmsted County

For over 30 years,

United Way of Southeast Minnesota has partnered with Olmsted County to address pressing community needs, including funding critical initiatives like CHAP. County employees have raised more than \$1.3 million in the past 25 years to support United Way’s mission.

66 Partnering with Catholic Charities (1968)

United Way of Southeast Minnesota began funding Catholic Charities’ child welfare program

in 1968, shortly after its establishment in Rochester. Today, the partnership remains vital to addressing the community’s most pressing needs.

67 Strengthening Leadership Skills (1977)

In 1977, United Way of Southeast Minnesota partnered with IBM to provide management training for executive directors of member agencies. Training topics included leadership, personnel evaluation, and effective communication.

68 Driving Change with the Give United Drawing (2021)

In partnership with Rochester Motor Cars, United Way launched the Give United Drawing in 2021, offering donors the chance to win a two-year car lease.

“Too often people say my \$5 doesn’t matter, but I know it does.” - Elisabeth Wadman, 2022 Give United Drawing Winner and United Way Donor.



Machine Answers United Fund Queries

Rochester residents are being given the opportunity to discover how much they know about the operation of the United Fund by testing their knowledge on this statistical machine now set up at Peoples Natural Gas. G. David Gentling, left, tries out the machine while Howard Paskach, center, and Francis Polt look on. Polt, suggestions manager at IBM, developed the machine with the assistance of IBM engineers. It was used by the Cancer Society during the Minnesota State Fair. Right or wrong answers are indicated by lights on the panel of the machine. It will remain at Peoples Natural Gas through Thursday and then be placed in other heavily-trafficked buildings throughout Rochester. The annual UF campaign begins Sept. 27. Goal is \$364,500. (Post-Bulletin Photo)

United Way begins renovation work at Lincoln School site

By ALETA CAPELLE
Post-Bulletin Staff Writer

About 100 people gathered this morning for ground-breaking ceremonies conducted by the United Way at the site of the former Lincoln School at 903 West Center St.

The school, closed at the end of the 1981-82 school year, has been purchased by the United Way of Olmsted County and will be renovated for use as a community services building.

The building, sold to the United Way for \$1, will house eight United Way-affiliated agencies under a lease agreement.

The school was built in the early 1900s and an addition was added to it in the 1960s. The old northern section will be demolished and the newer south section will be renovated. A new structure will be built on the site of the old structure and joined to the remodeled portion of the building.

Completion of the project is ex-

pected in February.

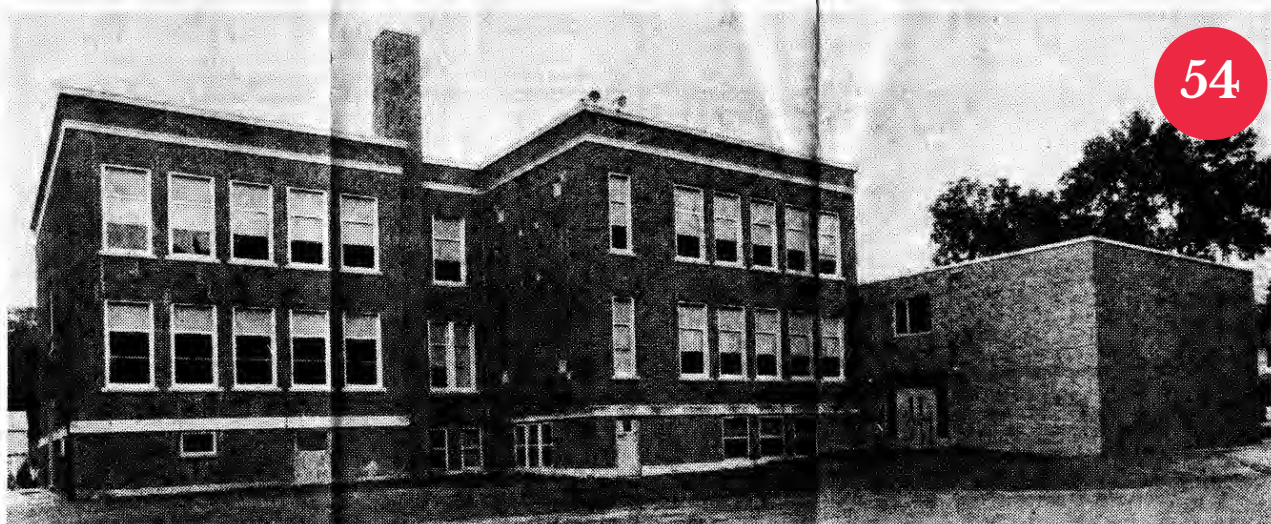
United Way building committee chairman Frank Kottschade said substantial work would have been needed to renovate the older section of the building. That option was ruled out after cost estimates were received, he said.

Construction costs, including renovation of the south wing and demolition of the old structure, will total about \$680,000. Of that total, \$650,000 will be financed through industrial revenue bonds.

United Way President John Quello told the gathering. “We are here for a very meaningful and momentous occasion.”

Rochester Mayor Chuck Hazama and Rochester School District Superintendent Harry Vakos also were among speakers.

Members of the building committee and representatives from the various United Way agencies that will be housed in the facility joined in the ground-breaking ceremony.



The former Lincoln School building at 903 W. Center St., has been purchased by United Way of Olmsted County and will be converted into a community services building housing eight United Way

The facility will be used by the United Way, eight affiliated agencies and the Rochester School System, which will retain use of one classroom and storage space for eight years under part of the sale agreement.

The school gymnasium and playground will be available for use by neighborhood and community groups and the building will continue to be used as a polling place.

None of the funds to be raised

agencies. As part of renovation of the building, the old part of the structure, at left in picture, will be taken down and an addition built in its place. The new section, at right, will be renovated.

during the fall United Way campaign will be used in construction or renovation of the new facility.

Tenants in the new structure will be the American Cancer Society, Catholic Social Services, Child Care

Resource and Referral, Family Consultation Center, Legal Assistance of Olmsted County, Lutheran Social Services, Olmsted County Association for Retarded Citizens and Rochester Chemical Dependency Services.

100 Years, 100 Moments

69 Proud to Support a Caring Community (2019)

"That's what I like about United Way, either they step in and do something directly, or they know of a partner organization that can step in and help out in that situation. And it's great that United Way and other partner organizations can match that need with the volunteers that want to help out, so that's why

I'm proud of Rochester and United Way." - Bill & Elaine Case, United Way Donors and Supporters

70 Securing Financial Stability through Tax Assistance

For decades, United Way of Southeast Minnesota has offered free tax preparation services, through partnerships with MyFreeTaxes and VITA. Together, we help over 3,000 taxpayers

annually access critical refunds and achieve greater financial stability.

71 Strength in Collaboration "Ability

Building Community (ABC) is committed to running United Way Workplace Campaigns because we always want to get involved in anything that helps support other nonprofits. Because although we all have

our separate missions, I think it's important for any nonprofit to work together. It's not a competition." - Sarah Timmerman, ABC Executive Director

72 Supporting Family Service

Rochester (1964)

United Way was a founding supporter of the Family Consultation Center, now Family Service Rochester (FSR). Established in 1964, FSR has grown into a trusted resource for families, and our collaboration and funding support continues to this day.

Strengthening Youth and Education

73 Youth Voice at the Table (1980)

In 1980, United Way of Southeast Minnesota appointed its first youth member to the Board for a one-year term, paving the way for the creation of a Youth Advisory Panel. This milestone brought young voices into decision-making and addressed the need for greater youth involvement in an organization that supported 25 youth-focused agencies.

74 Investing in Early Childhood (1990s)

The Success by 6 initiative, launched in the 1990s, championed the mission that "every child is a successful child." By focusing on early childhood development, United Way of Southeast

Minnesota highlighted the long-term benefits of investing in young learners. This commitment to early education has created ripples of impact that continue to benefit families across Olmsted County.

75 Bailey's Story: Supporting Local Student Success (2018)

Thanks to United Way of Southeast Minnesota's support of Rochester Full-Service Community Schools, Bailey, a local student, was able to get the extra support and resources she needed to explore, learn, thrive, and engage with the community. Thanks to the support she received at the Alternative Learning Center, Bailey overcame mental health challenges to graduate on time, going on to pursue veterinary courses at RCTC.

76 Launching Community Schools (2016)

In 2016, Rochester Public Schools and United Way of Southeast Minnesota came together to help local children and youth reach their potential through a new Full-Service Community Schools model. The Rochester Community Schools Partnership began as a two-year pilot in Gage and Riverside Central Elementary Schools. Today, seven unique Rochester Full-Service Community Schools support students holistically from elementary through high school.

77 Collaborating on Job Skills Training (2012)

In 2012, United Way of Southeast Minnesota launched the Job Skills Training Collaborative Partnership to develop local vocational training initiatives. Students then interviewed with employers immediately after completing their coursework, ensuring a direct path to employment.

78 June McCormick's Story (2012)

"The United Way, Hawthorne, RCTC welding program... has changed my life dramatically. Before this program I was homeless, had legal problems, lived on the streets, didn't know where I was going, didn't have no outlook for the future... Now I have full time employment. I got my finances in order." - June McCormick, Job Skills Training Collaborative Partnership Participant, 2012

79 Community Gang Initiative (2008)

In 2008, responding to growing concerns about gang related incidents in our community, United Way of Southeast Minnesota developed a Community Gang Initiative: Operation Starfish. We convened leaders from across Rochester to review gang activity and discuss community options.

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Jeffrey Pieters, jpieters@postbulletin.com

Carol Berteotti, left, helps Lilliana Schulz prepare a resume at the Rochester Public Library.

EMPLOYMENT / JOB-HUNTING SKILLS

Wanted: Resume help

By Jeffrey Pieters

jpieters@postbulletin.com

With a background that includes a childhood in Colombia, work experience in massage therapy and evangelical preaching, and aspirations to become a professional translator, could Lilliana Schulz cram it all into one succinct resume?

She got a good start on it, at least, with help from a volunteer-staffed program at the Rochester Public Library.

"I'm going to go home with hope," Schulz said.

The program, jointly offered by United Way and the library, runs twice weekly through April on a trial basis to gauge public interest.

Its purpose: to help inexperienced job-seekers, like Schulz, prepare resumes and apply for jobs online.

More and more people are job-hunting all the time. At the same time, many more employers require applicants to first contact them online.

Those separate facts added up to a single effect. Reference librarians were fielding a disproportionate share of questions from inexperienced job-seekers about resumes and job applications. Those time-consuming questions were taking them away from being available for general reference.

Library director Audrey Betcher solicited help from United Way. The nonprofit organization supplied a handful of volunteers, and the library provided a second-floor conference room and a half-dozen or more laptop computers linked to the Internet.

On Wednesday, the fourth day of the program, Schulz and volunteer Carol Berteotti huddled around one of those machines to plot Schulz's job-seeking strategy.

Wis., company but used to teach resume writing.

"You have to pretend that you're a box of soap, and selling yourself," she said.

Such salesmanship doesn't come naturally to many people, especially women, Berteotti said.

Schulz, though, can boast a broad background of experiences, as well as fluency in Spanish and English, Berteotti said.

"She's got a lot of experience that will help her," she said.

The resume assistance program is scheduled for 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Wednesdays and 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Saturdays. Those times were selected to avoid overlap with the Minnesota Workforce Center, which offers the same service.

Some job applicants need help setting up an e-mail address for the first time, said Becky Nahvi of United Way. Program volunteers can help with that.

They also share a seven-page packet showing applicants where on the Internet to go to find job listings, financial aid for college, veterans' services and other information.

A usual night sees two to three people arrive seeking help, Nahvi said. The program, which operates as basically no cost, will continue as long as there is demand for it and volunteers remain interested.

"We envisioned lines of people waiting (for service)," Nahvi said. "And then we envisioned one to two people kind of ambling in."

The program has been on that smaller side, which isn't necessarily bad, because it gives everyone a chance to get to know each other.

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80 Building Brighter Futures (2013)
“Through this program, one of our boys was placed in an internship with a chef at one of the best restaurants in Rochester – last night was the last night of his internship and he was asked to stay on as a permanent employee!” - Community Gang Initiative/Operation Starfish Family, 2013

81 Boosting Kindergarten Readiness (2010s)
United Way of Southeast Minnesota’s School Preparedness Collaborative brought together early childhood education experts to make sure our youngest neighbors were ready for their first day of kindergarten. Together, we increased the developmental readiness of children in several local programs from 49% to 85%.

82 Founding Cradle 2 Career (2016)
In 2016, United Way of Southeast Minnesota collaborated with the three Rotary Clubs, the Rochester Area Foundation and many other community organizations to help establish Cradle 2 Career. The initiative aimed to create a community-wide approach to improve literacy and educational outcomes, leading to better economic mobility for children. United Way continues to play a crucial role in providing administrative support to the initiative.

83 Giving Students a Running Start (1998)
In 1998, United Way of Southeast Minnesota began managing Running Start for School, a program providing free school supplies to local students. In 1998, Running Start provided school supplies to 500 youth; in 2024, it served nearly 3,500 students.

84 Bringing Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library to Rochester (2006)



County Employees Ready for UF Drive

Olmsted County employees met Wednesday for solicitor training and general United Fund kick-off activities of the annual fund drive. County employees, along with those at Marigold Dairy, the Sheraton Hotel, Olmsted County Bank and Libby, McNeill and Libby, are conducting pacesetter drives in advance of the general campaign which will begin in September. Standing left to right are Bernard Meillier, Loren Weisbrod,

Leonard Teigen, Dean Narveson, Morris Heydon, Maynard Westergaard and John Huns. Seated around the table from left are Mrs. Haddow Keith, local UF president, Mrs. Richard Norby, Mrs. Harry Evans, Miss Eileen Nigon and Mrs. Luverne Stevens. The citywide United Fund drive goal is \$500,000, \$25,000 higher than the 1968 campaign goal. (Post-Bulletin Photo)

United Way of Southeast Minnesota began operating Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library program in Olmsted County in 2006 This beloved program distributes age-appropriate books monthly to our youngest residents, ages 0-5.

85 A Place to Play (1992)
United Way of Southeast Minnesota helped establish the Rochester Play Room in 1992, a free indoor play area at Apache Mall. Today, PipSqueaks Indoor Playground at the United Way Services Building continues this

legacy, offering a warm, safe space for children during colder months.

86 Empowering Readers, Changing Lives (2010s)
United Way of Southeast Minnesota was an early supporter of Rochester Public Library’s Rochester Reading Champions Program. This initiative focused on helping low-income children and adults struggling with literacy. Participants achieved remarkable progress, with an average improvement of 2.7 grade levels.



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Congratulations to the United Way and their 100-year commitment to our community!

100 Years, 100 Moments

Agency Receives UF Support— Family Consultation Center Offers Variety of Services

EDITOR'S NOTE — This is the second in a series of articles explaining the services and activities of some of the agencies which share in contributions to the Greater Rochester United Fund. This year's goal of \$550,000 will be divided among 25 voluntary health, family and child care, education and recreation organizations serving the greater Rochester area.)

By JON PETTENGILL

More than 200 couples each year in Rochester are turning to the Family Consultation Center for guidance when financial, family and marriage problems confront them. Through qualified social workers and homemakers, this United Fund supported agency provides an extensive counseling service to troubled families and in-the-home care to families temporarily without the services of their mother. The center, with offices at 724 1st Ave. SW, received \$48,035 from UF this year.

Most families using the center appreciate the impartial atmosphere it offers. "When you've only been married for a year, you do not like turning to your relatives or friends with troubles that come up," says one wife. "It is better to talk over

your troubles with a third party."

Marriage counseling is the most frequent service provided by the center, according to Glenn Van Laningham, director of the center. Young couples are often referred to the center by attorneys, but the majority come on their own, he says. "A skilled attorney can guide to the offices of a counselor those families for whom divorce may not be any answer." The counselor, too, may, in some cases, discover that the termination of a marriage will be the healthiest solution for the couple and other family members, he says.

The homemaker's service most frequent request is to substitute for a mother who is ill or hospitalized. "The mother of two children who was recently hospitalized had great anxiety over a homemaker substituting in the family for her," said Van Laningham. "Following the service by the homemaker, the mother said, 'It was as though somebody dropped into our home from Heaven. I found I had nothing to worry about. The lists of things I had made for her to do had not at all been necessary.'"

Mrs. John Fitzgerald supervises the homemaker staff of six.

Another social worker and a secretary complete the staff.

Other related services are also being conducted by the Family Consultation Center. It provides consultation to families using the services of the Civic League Day Nursery, another United Fund agency. "Through

interviews with families enrolling their children at the nursery, the social worker is able to alert the staff to the particular needs of that child," says Van Laningham.

Another program of the center is the administration of a scholarship fund to children of nursery school age. Handled at the request of the United Fund, the program is geared to enable children with special needs to attend the Aldrich Memorial or Bethany Nursery Schools in Rochester.

The comfort and care of elderly citizens is the aim of a new program being started by the homemaker service. "As medical services continue to expand the average life span, there will need to be more services devoted to the comfort and care of our elderly citizens," explains Van Laningham.

Although a United Fund agency, the center does charge a fee for its services based on the family's ability to pay. "In this way," says Laningham, "it is hoped that no area family would be denied any services of the center because of a lack of financial means."



A FAMILY HELPER — Family Consultation Center, through its homemaker service provides help to growing young families. Miss Herbert Schroeder, standing left, helps here with

twins Tom, left, and Andrew, sons of Dr. and Mrs. Robert Altman of 1612 7th St. NE. Mrs. Altman holds son John and Peter is seated at the table with his father.



87 Championing Youth Service (2012)

Since 2012, United Way of Southeast Minnesota has spearheaded the Varsity Letter in Community Service initiative, encouraging local high school students to volunteer 100+ hours annually.

"I have grown as an Olmsted County

community member and as a person in general over my four years of lettering. Independence, generosity, service, and kindness are the characteristics that I have adopted from my time of service, and I will be able to take these skills with me into college and my future." - Kiley Jones, Varsity Letter in Community Service participant

for four years, totaling over 400 hours of community service in Olmsted County

88 Tackling Community Challenges for Student Success (2019)

In 2019, a Rochester Full-Service Community School, Gage Elementary, launched the "Walking School Bus." This United

Way-funded initiative provided students with consistent support to ensure they arrived at school safely and on time, helping to overcome barriers to attendance.

Championing Equity and Inclusion

89 Launching Civic Engagement Grants (2022)

In 2022, United Way of Southeast Minnesota developed our first round of civic engagement grants. This first round of funding supported six culturally specific organizations to help more people get involved in making

positive changes in their communities.

90 Empowering Culturally Specific Organizations (2021)

United Way of Southeast Minnesota invested over \$250,000 into the transformational capacity building program, Culturally Powered Communities. The program was designed to strengthen the health, education, and financial stability of Olmsted County's cultural communities by strengthening the organizations that serve them.

91 Launching a 21-Day Equity Challenge (2021)

In 2021, United Way of Southeast Minnesota engaged nearly 2,000 Minnesotans in a 21-Day Equity Challenge, creating a shared opportunity for learning, action, and growth.

92 Supporting the 2020 Census Count (2020)

United Way of Southeast Minnesota joined with other nonprofits and local government to lead the Olmsted County Complete Count Committee for the 2020 Census to ensure that everyone in our community is represented, including renters, those without stable housing, isolated seniors, and children under 5.

93 Co-Developing the Meadow Park Initiative (2019)

United Way of Southeast Minnesota partnered with other local organizations to develop the Meadow Park Initiative in southeast Rochester. This intercultural neighborhood initiative created community connectedness, fostered relationships, and broke down barriers so all could thrive.

94 Engaging Local Experts Through Participatory Grantmaking (2023)

Between 2021 and 2023, United Way of Southeast Minnesota implemented a participatory grantmaking process to give Black and African American community members in Olmsted County the space to determine how best to invest in their community. This process resulted in a three-year Youth Empowerment grant to six local Black-led organizations.

95 National Recognition for Impact Study (2002)

United Way of Southeast Minnesota received a national award from United Way Worldwide for its 2002 Community Impact Study, recognizing its innovative approach to community assessment and impact measurement. The study's findings highlighted significant disparities in graduation rates among different ethnic groups, prompting a shift in focus towards addressing the needs of the most vulnerable populations.

96 Honoring Peace and Resilience (1995)

In 1995, United Way of Southeast Minnesota held a local Victory Luncheon celebrating the end of the Bosnian War.

97 Revitalizing Neighborhoods (1995)

United Way of Southeast Minnesota launched the Neighborhood Initiative Program in 1995 to revitalize local communities. This work continues today through place-based initiatives that foster safety, vibrancy, and connection in neighborhoods like Meadow Park.



in the United Way



98 A Commitment to Racial Justice (2021)
In 2021, United Way of Southeast Minnesota launched the Commitment to Action Towards Racial Justice grant fund in partnership with Rochester Area Foundation, investing over \$30,000 to help local organizations advance equity and inclusion.

99 Homeownership Support (2018)
“United Way plays an important role in supporting Three Rivers’ work in addressing barriers to homeownership faced by households throughout Olmsted County. Through United Way’s support, we are able to deliver local culturally-tailored financial coaching services that help first-time homebuyers successfully purchase affordable homes in

the community.” -
Adbirahman Hassan,
Three Rivers, 2018

100 Zeni Aly: A Heart for Service (2024)
In 2024, Zeni Aly, United Way of Southeast Minnesota’s Impact Operations Associate, received the McKnight Foundation’s Heart of Community Honor for her work supporting newcomers and youth in Rochester.



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