



UNITED WAY
Southeast Minnesota

2025-2026 ANNUAL REPORT

STANDING UNITED. BUILDING WHAT'S NEXT.



MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Dear Friends and Supporters,

The 2025–2026 fiscal year marked an important transition: the close of our Centennial year and the beginning of United Way of Southeast Minnesota's second century of service.

It was also a year that tested our community. The federal immigration-enforcement operation known as Metro Surge brought heightened fear and disruption to immigrant families and communities. Interruptions to WIC and other public benefits during the federal shutdown, along with persistently rising costs, reinforced the importance of a community prepared to respond together.

Through it all, your generosity never wavered. Together, United Way and our community partners served more than **36,000 people** and invested more than **\$2 million** in local nonprofit programs, direct services, and community initiatives.

We also deepened our understanding of the four-county region we serve by listening to residents, strengthening relationships, and investing in local organizations.

We completed our first century with substantial community impact. We expanded our regional understanding. We continued investing in strong local organizations. And what we learned is shaping a United Way that not only supports good work, but strengthens the connections that help our community work better together.

Thank you for standing with us.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jerome Ferson". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "J" and "F".

Jerome Ferson
President, United Way of Southeast Minnesota

2025-2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jerome Ferson
President of United Way

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President of United Way

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Grace Pesch*
Vice President of Community Impact

Stephanie Rudeen
Vice President of Resource Development

Julie Ruzek
C2C Executive Director

* indicates former employee

Publication made possible through the generosity
and continuous support of Mayo Clinic.

GROWING OUR REGIONAL IMPACT

Following our transition to United Way of Southeast Minnesota in 2025, we have continued expanding our impact across our four-county region. During 2025–2026, we conducted community learning initiatives in Winona and Dodge counties. By engaging residents, nonprofit partners, and community leaders, we gained a deeper understanding of each community’s unique strengths, challenges, and opportunities.

These six-month community learning processes identified service gaps, accessibility barriers, and emerging needs by listening directly to those most impacted. The findings were compiled into community-led reports that guided targeted grant investments to local organizations addressing each county’s highest priorities.

**TOGETHER, WE’RE CREATING A FUTURE
WHERE EVERYONE EVERYWHERE CAN
REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL.**

This work continues in Fillmore County in 2026, furthering our commitment to ensuring every community we serve is heard, supported, and empowered. By listening first and investing where needs are greatest, we are building a stronger, more connected Southeast Minnesota—together.





PEOPLE SERVED IN OUR FOUR-COUNTY AREA

36,320



people were served by United Way services, funded programs, and partnerships across our community last year.

While most of our direct services and funded programs remain concentrated in Olmsted County, our regional expansion is intentionally unfolding over time. During 2025–2026, we focused on listening, building relationships, and identifying locally defined priorities across Dodge, Fillmore, and Winona counties—laying the groundwork for future work and deeper community impact.

**OLMSTED
COUNTY** | **34,888**

**WINONA
COUNTY** | **76**

**DODGE
COUNTY** | **1,342**

**FILLMORE
COUNTY** | **54**



IMPACT AREA: YOUTH OPPORTUNITY



11,095

children supported



41,767

free books delivered
to children



278

students improved their
academic performance

**INVESTING IN BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.**

HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE REALIZE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

CELEBRATING THE JOY OF READING: IMAGINATION FEST

Stories have the power to inspire, connect, and spark imagination. At United Way's inaugural Imagination Fest in March 2026, more than 500 children and families celebrated the joy of reading. The event featured 12 hands-on Imagination Stations that brought books to life, a Book Nook with special guest readers, and a free book for every child.

Thanks to generous community support, the event raised nearly \$15,000 for United Way's operation of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. These funds help provide free monthly books to more than 3,500 local children, creating opportunities for families to read together and nurturing a lifelong love of reading.

The impact of Imagination Fest reaches far beyond a single day. Every book delivered to a child's mailbox sparks curiosity, strengthens early literacy skills, and builds the foundation for success in school and beyond.

Together, our community is opening new chapters for local children one book, one mailbox, and one child at a time.





IMPACT AREA: **HEALTHY COMMUNITY**



14,418

individuals received
support for their health



196,843

nutritious meals provided
to our community



2,114

rides scheduled to
medical appointments

**REMOVING BARRIERS TO HEALTH FOR
A STRONGER COMMUNITY.**

IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELL-BEING FOR ALL

CARE ROOTED IN COMMUNITY: PAMOJA WOMEN



Families deserve care that is accessible, culturally responsive, and built on trust. That's why United Way partners with Pamoja Women to help East African women and families navigate health systems and access the resources they need to thrive. United Way has supported Pamoja Women since 2023, and this fiscal year, we provided grant funding for both their food security and health access programming.

Through health access support, transportation, interpretation, women's health education, maternal health and doula care, youth programming, and family engagement, Pamoja Women meets families where they are and walks alongside them through the process of accessing care.

Led by Executive Director Khadija Ali, Pamoja Women bridges gaps between families and providers by connecting families with volunteers who offer interpretation, accompany them to appointments, and support informed health choices.

The partnership between Pamoja Women and United Way reflects our commitment to building healthier, more connected communities where every family can feel supported, understood, and empowered.



IMPACT AREA: FINANCIAL SECURITY



4,578

people accessed financial
security services



1,064

evictions prevented



3,047

people served through
free tax preparation

**HELPING WORKING HOUSEHOLDS
SURVIVE AND THRIVE.**

CREATING A STRONGER FINANCIAL FUTURE FOR ALL

WORKING YET STRUGGLING: BEING ALICE

Everyone deserves the opportunity to earn a living that can sustain a family and build security for future generations.

Yet 32% of households in Southeast Minnesota struggle to meet their needs. ALICE stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed. ALICE households earn above the Federal Poverty Level but their income is not enough to cover the rising costs of basics like housing, childcare, food, transportation, and health care.

United Way of Southeast Minnesota is responding by helping families build housing and financial security. Last year, we invested **\$150,000+** in housing stability partners, supported VITA free tax prep, and continued ALICE data work.

These efforts helped 212 individuals stabilize housing, prevent 1,064 evictions, and increase disposable income for 223 families—helping families move from crisis toward stability for themselves and future generations.





IMPACT AREA: COMMUNITY RESILIENCY



6,229

people impacted



96%

families connected
to the help they need



15,272

volunteer hours

**BUILDING A RESILIENT COMMUNITY
THAT IS READY FOR ANY CHALLENGE.**

ADDRESSING URGENT NEEDS TODAY

CONNECTING NEIGHBORS TO HELP: 211

Everyone faces crises—your car breaks down, you’ve run out of baby formula, you need mental health support, or you don’t know where to start. That’s where 211 comes in, offering free, multilingual, and confidential guidance 24/7.

For more than 40 years, 211 has helped individuals and families find free, confidential support in moments of need. When you call 211 and provide your zip code, you’re paired with a Community Resource Specialist who will listen and understand your needs. The difference between 211 and a quick web search? You’re speaking with a real person who has access to thousands of community resources that are updated daily.

This past year, **211 responded to over 5,250 calls**. Callers requested assistance with housing and shelter, utilities, food security, legal services, and essential material goods such as diapers, mattresses, and baby clothing.

In 2025, Southeast Minnesota families most often reached out for help with:



2,792 calls

Financial Support/
Assistance



1,455 calls

Housing



250 calls

Utility Assistance

Each connection offers a path forward while helping United Way and community partners better understand and respond to local needs.



GRANT PARTNERS

LOCAL NONPROFIT PARTNER

PROGRAM RECEIVING UNITED WAY FUNDS

Ability Building Community

General Operating Support

Barbershop & Social Services

Junior C.E.R.T.

Bear Creek Services

Independent Living Services

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern MN

General Operating Support

Byron Public Schools

Byron School Readiness

Catholic Charities of Southern MN

General Operating Support

Center City Housing

Gage East Early Childhood Program

Change You

Change You

Channel One

Food Shelf and Home Delivery

Children's Dental Health Service

Dental Home for Underserved Children

Community Health Service, Inc

Pediatric Services

Dodge County DARE

General Operating Support

Dodge County Salvation Army

Transportation Assistance

Elder Network

Medical Transportation

Faith in Action Dodge County

General Operating Support

Families First of Minnesota

School Readiness

Family Promise Rochester

Shelter Prevention and Diversion

Family Service Rochester

General Operating Support

Family Service Rochester

Senior Nutrition

Good News Children's Center

GNCC Early Learning

Healthy Smiles

General Operating Support

Infants Remembered in Silence (IRIS)

General Operating Support

JULY 2025 - JUNE 2026

LOCAL NONPROFIT PARTNER

PROGRAM RECEIVING UNITED WAY FUNDS

Ironwood Springs Christian Ranch	General Operating Support
Journie	8 Steps to Promotion
K-M Area Care & Share	General Operating Support
Legal Assistance of Olmsted County	Eviction Prevention Program
Life and Community Development	After School Academic Program
Lifegate Services	Cultural Food Program
NAMI Southeast Minnesota	Dual Diagnosis Support Group
NAMI Southeast Minnesota	General Operating Support
Pamoja Women	Pamoja Women Food Pantry
Pamoja Women	Services for East African Women
Recovery is Happening	General Operating Support
Rideability	General Operating Support
Salvation Army	Access Home
Semcac	General Operating Support
Semcac	Kasson Contact Resource Center
Sisters Save Sisters	Community-Based Sisters Save Sisters
Sports Mentorship Academy	SMA Recreation Center
The ARC MN	General Operating Support
Women's Shelter and Support Center	General Operating Support
Women's Shelter and Support Center	Housing Stability Fund
Zumbro Ridge Estates	Groceries and Garden Project
Zumbro Valley Medical Society Foundation	Street Medicine



FINANCIALS

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FROM AUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT

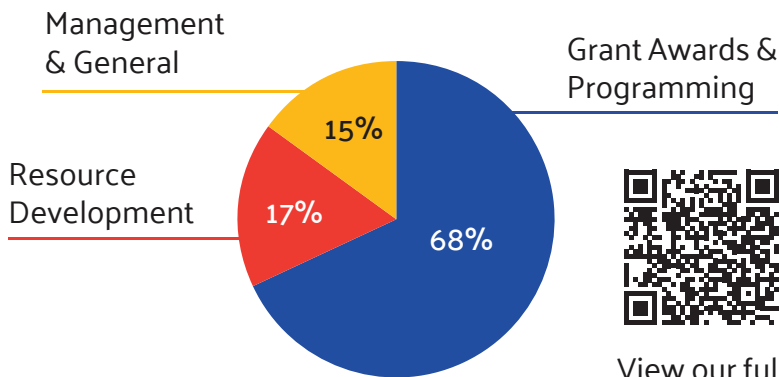
REVENUES, SUPPORT, AND GAINS	WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS	WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS	TOTAL
Campaign Support	\$ 550,135	\$ 1,867,656	\$ 2,417,791
Less Donor Designations	-	\$ - 241,359	\$ - 241,359
Less Allowance for Doubtful Acct	-	\$ - 67,356	\$ - 67,356
Grant & Other Income	\$ 862,383	-	\$ 862,383
Net Assets Restored to Restrictions	\$ 1,574,042	\$ -1,574,042	-
Total Support & Revenues	\$ 2,986,560	\$ - 15,101	\$ 2,971,459
EXPENSES			
Community Grant Awards	\$ 938,040	-	\$ 938,040
Internal Initiatives & Partnerships	\$ 822,129	-	\$ 822,129
Advocacy, Grant Making & Result Tracking	\$ 431,202	-	\$ 431,202
Resource Development	\$ 548,078	-	\$ 548,078
Management & General	\$ 485,058	-	\$ 485,058
Total Expenses	\$ 3,224,507	-	\$ 3,224,507
Net Income	\$ - 237,947	\$ - 15,101	\$ - 253,048

Revenue, expenses, assets, and liabilities for our fiscal year April 1, 2025 - March 31, 2026. Financials have been summarized to fit this report.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Current Assets	\$ 3,026,053
Non-Current Pledges	\$ 71,491
Fixed Assets	\$ 439,228
Total Assets	\$ 3,536,772
Current Liabilities	\$ 531,374
Net Assets: Undesignated	\$ 160,318
Board Restricted	\$ 846,911
Invested in Property	\$ 439,228
With Donor Restrictions	\$ 1,558,941
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 3,536,772

EXPENSES BREAKDOWN



View our full audited financials

LEADERS IN GIVING

2025 - 2026

CORPORATE LEADERS IN GIVING

Tanzanite (\$400,000+)

Mayo Clinic Rochester

Gold (\$2,000-\$2,999)

Alliance Event Design*

Davies Printing Company

Pearl (\$20,000-\$49,999)

Scheels

GEOTEK

Think Bank

Silver (\$1,000-\$1,999)

Xcel Energy Corporation

Premier Banks

Hammel, Green and Abrahamson, Inc.

Avient MN Winona

Costco

First Alliance Credit Union

Seneca Foods Corporation

Olmsted Medical Center

Diamond (\$8,000-\$19,999)

McNeilus Truck & Manufacturing Inc

The Boldt Family Fund Inc

Emerald (\$5,000-\$7,999)

Rochester Motor Cars

(Rochester Chevrolet Cadillac)

Olmsted County

Altra Federal Credit Union

Bronze (\$500-\$999)

Daikin Applied

Associated Bank

K-M Lions Club

Weis Builders Inc

Oertli & Pleschourt, LLP

Minnesota Energy Resources Inc

City of Rochester Office of the Mayor

Elation Properties*

Forté Living Apartments

North Risk Partners, LLC

Platinum (\$3,000-\$4,999)

Park Place Motor Cars

The Luther Holding Company

(Luther Automotive)

Stencil Group

* in-kind gift

ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE SOCIETY (\$10,000+)

Susan Ahlquist
Daniel & Pamela Bretkopf
Elaine Case & Bill Wiktor
Jerome & Brooke Ferson
Morie & Marcia Gertz
Rich & Sue Greenberg
Thomas & Beverly Hagen
Marita Heller & Rick Orvold
Keith Bible & Mary J Kasten
Jennifer St Sauver & Mark Keegan

Vanda A Lennon
Mark & Kris Litzow
Ron Menaker & Linda Mansfield
John & Pat Noseworthy
Kenley & Susan Schmidt
Mary Ellen & Mark Warner
Ben & Brie Wiltsie
2 Anonymous

HOPE LEGACY SOCIETY

Jeffrey Allman
Emily Colbenson
Maureen Gwynn
Donald R Halley
Debbie Hoffman
Betty A Hutchins
Janet Notheis Volkmar
Beverly Livesay

Doug & Sue Luebbe
Dick & Joanne Rosener
Bonita & Russell Schultz
Judy & Jim Sloan
Mark & Mary Ellen Warner
April Sutor & Peg Winters
2 Anonymous

LEADERS IN GIVING

2025 - 2026

WOMEN UNITED

Susan Ahlquist
Ingrid Albu
Amy Alexander
Rodica Alexander
Duska Anastasijevic
Susan Anderson
Jennifer Anderson
Karen Andrews
Grace Angelondous
Debbie Antolak
Kelly Arroyo
Elizabeth Atkinson
Marie Christine
Aubry
Judith Auger
Brenda Badzinski
Maureen Bahr
Ellen Balderes
Kathleen Bartemes
Ellen Bauman
Andrea Beck
Kristelle Behle
Sherry Bennett
Brenda Berg
Heather Bestler
Audrey Betcher
Deepika Bhargava
Gail Bishop
Lorena Bite
Jennifer Bjorgum
Kelly Boice
Emily Bond
Tammy Bonnicksen
Jane Brandhagen
Pamela Breittkopf
Julie Brown
Melissa Brudwick
Carla Brunsvold
Pamela Brust
Sally Burns
Natalie Caine

Nicole Callahan
Heidi Campbell
Jane Carlon
Jane Carlson
Bridget Carns
Elaine Case
Iris Kemler Cattaneo
Amy Caucutt
Mary Christiansen
Patricia Christofferson
Meredith Clark
Susan Clausen
Amy Clayton
Erin Collins
Melissa Connor
Laurie Cook
Kathryn Cook
Sarah Cooke
Tina Cornell
Joanne Crawford
Susan Crowell
Sarah Cuello
Toni Cunningham
Neera Dahl
Jane Dahlen
Michelle Daiss
Barbara Daugherty
Amy Degnim
Sharon Deml
Joan DiMagno
Rose Schuh Dodge
Debra Donahue
Lisa Drage
Susan Dripps
Sherilyn Driscoll
Lindsay Duda
Laura Lynn Eckelkamp
Amanda Ellenbaum
Denise Ellingson
Beth Elliott
Lynn Estes

Susan Fargo
Darci Fenske
Brooke Ferson
Carol Fitzgerald
Carol Foley
Jean Fox
Janelle Fox
Wendy Francis
Anna Froehling
Jennifer Boland
Froemming
Brenda Fyles
Lydia Gammell
Pat Geier
Kaylene Geiger
Michelle Gerdorn
Karthik Ghosh
Deanne Gill
Sheryl Good
Amy Gores
Terry Gorman
Karen Graszer
Sue Greenberg
Therese Greenberg
Linda Gregory
Katrina Hacker
Beverly Hagen
Wanda Hagquist
Michele Hanson
Cynthia Hargenrader
Mary Harper
Dianne Havlik
Elizabeth Hayes
Julie Hebert
Lisa Heimer
Linda Helberg
Marita Heller
Angela Helm
Jessica Hemenway
Michele Heminger
Margy Hendrickson

Eleanor Hodgson
Sandra Hohberger
Georgia Hurley
Bernice Huseby
Dawn Inman
Linda Iossi
Colleen Irlbeck
Holly Iverson
Kelly Jacob
Deborah Jacobsen
Kari Jadin
Judy Johnson
Stacy Johnson
Julia Johnson
Carole Joyce
Manju Kalra
Kejal Kantarci
Beth Karon
Mary Kasten
Kathy Kerska
Karen Finneman
Killingier
Lisa Kirkland
Kyle Klarich
Darci Kopischke
Sandra Kopp
Laura Kotten
Francine Kovash
Susan Krecke
Sarah Kruse
Jennifer Kugel
Jeanne Kuhlmann
Linda Kukowski
Iris Kuo
Amanda Kuper
Charlene Kyle
Suzanne Lagerwaard
Joan Lamer
Bethany Larson
Dana Larson
Elizabeth Larson

The Women United affinity group works to create opportunities to advance the health and vitality of our community. Leadership contributions of \$650+ qualify you for a Women United membership.

Lisa Lee
 Laura Lehrian
 Maureen Lemens
 Vanda Lennon
 Tina Liebling
 Judith Lien
 Michelle Liepold
 Kris Litzow
 Kathy Lohr
 Christine Lohse
 Sherry Looker
 Monica Loppnow
 Anna Lovrien
 Susan Luebbe
 Lorie Luedke
 Evangeline
 Lundstrom
 Amy Mahon
 Cynthia Martenson
 Pamela McCabe
 Patricia McCleese
 Julia Gerak McEligot
 Robbyn McNeill
 Laura Meiners
 Cresta Melcher
 Peggy Menzel
 Judi Mersel
 Kimberly Metzger
 Kathleen Meyerle
 Amanda Mikhail
 Elizabeth Miles
 Deborah Miller
 Chelsea Mir
 Dawn Mitchell
 Susan Modry
 Bethany Moen
 Cheryl Moertel
 Kristyn Mullin
 Jean Murray
 Terri Narr
 Karen Fairbairn Nath

Renee Nation
 Lynnette Nelson
 Gail Nelson
 Karen Newcomer-Aney
 Julie Nigon
 Pat Noseworthy
 Marcia O'Brien
 Gwen Oeth
 Terry Oh
 Keri Olson
 Michelle Oyen
 Preeti Pachaury
 Margaret Parsons
 Peggy Paul-Lienau
 Roxanne Pederson
 Patricia Pellikka
 Amanda Peloquin
 Amanda Penrose
 Patricia Perkins
 Shirley Peter
 Karen Petersen
 Kailey Peterson
 Arlene Pfeiffer
 Ivy Pillers
 Siobhan Pittock
 Beth Plaetzer
 Roshelle Plutowski
 Janet Postier
 Rachel Pringnitz
 Melissa Raveling
 Christine Reid
 Jane Reiman
 Kate Remmes
 Amy Seegmiller Renner
 Christy Richards
 Jennifer Ridgeway
 Jessica Rindels
 Lisa Rodysill
 Martha Roemer
 Joanne Marie Rosener
 Kristine Rossman

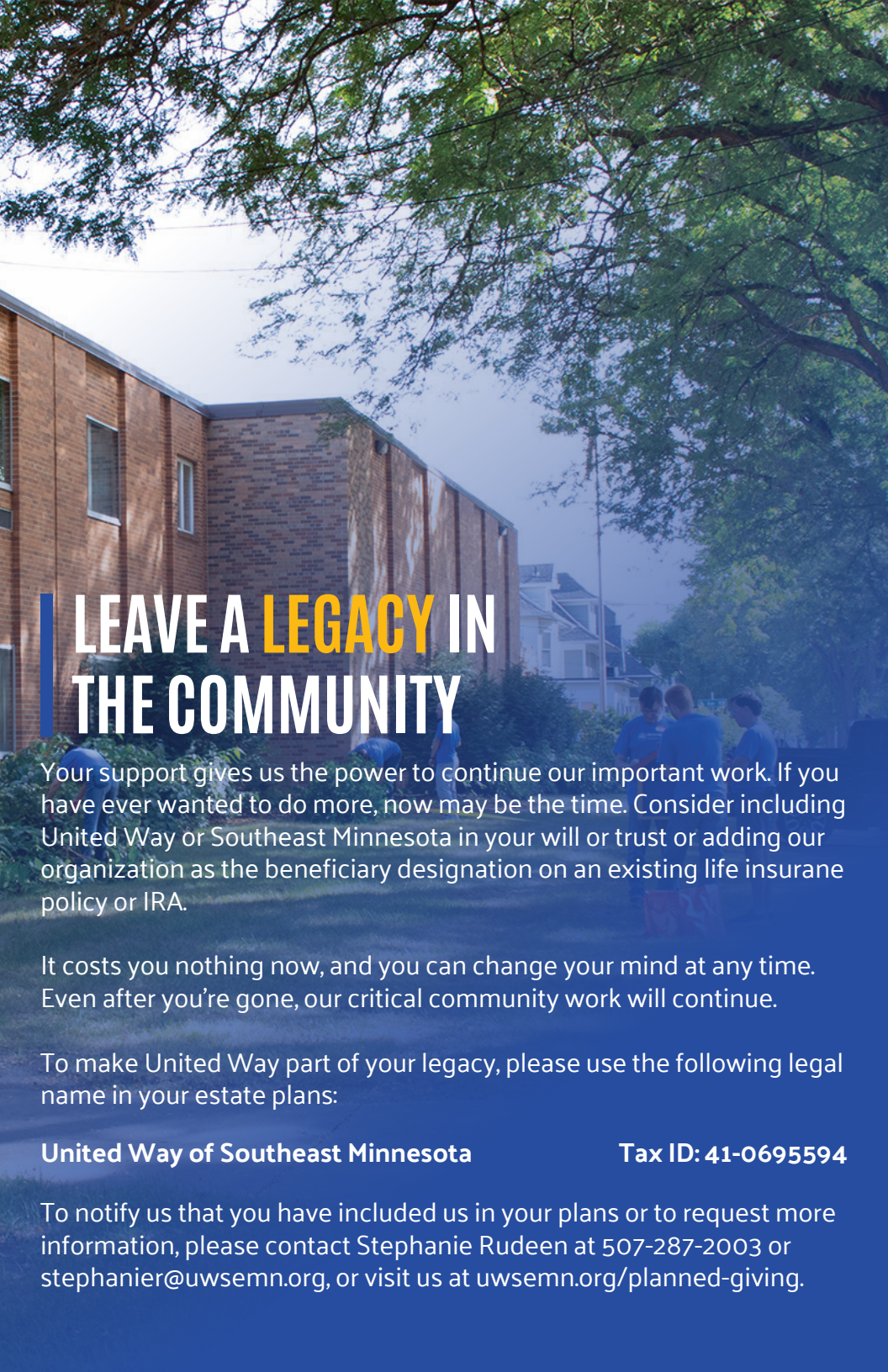
Stephanie Rudeen
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 Tracey Wozniak
 Rutherford
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 Linda Sanders
 Hannah Saunders
 Jennifer St Sauver
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 Diane Schmidt
 Susan Schmidt
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 Karen Sheedy
 Jane Shellum
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 Sheila Unni
 Danielle Vlazny
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 Julie Warner
 Mary Warner
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 Margaret Weglinski
 Ruth Weispfenning
 Carla Weller
 Mary Wellik
 Judy Wendland
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 Constance Williams
 Megan Williams
 Jaymi Wilson
 Irene Wiltsie
 Brie Wiltsie
 Stacey Winham
 Margaret Winters
 Debbie Witte
 Diane Wottreng
 Pamela Wright
 Satsuki Yamada
 Linda Young
 Barbara Braun Zinser
 68 Anonymous



Scan the QR code or visit
uwsemn.org/planned-giving
to make your gift today.





LEAVE A LEGACY IN THE COMMUNITY

Your support gives us the power to continue our important work. If you have ever wanted to do more, now may be the time. Consider including United Way or Southeast Minnesota in your will or trust or adding our organization as the beneficiary designation on an existing life insurance policy or IRA.

It costs you nothing now, and you can change your mind at any time. Even after you're gone, our critical community work will continue.

To make United Way part of your legacy, please use the following legal name in your estate plans:

United Way of Southeast Minnesota

Tax ID: 41-0695594

To notify us that you have included us in your plans or to request more information, please contact Stephanie Rudeen at 507-287-2003 or stephanier@uwsemn.org, or visit us at uwsemn.org/planned-giving.

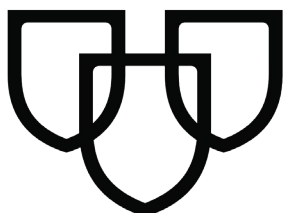


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Rochester, MN 55902

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<CITY>, <STATE> <ZIP>

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