

United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania Investing in Results FY12-14 Funding Cycle

Community Impact Agenda Executive Summary

United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania is one of the region's leading change agents. Due to our close relationships with the corporate and government sectors, our credibility built on decades of experience and impact, our integral partnerships with thousands of health and human service agencies, and our connection to hundreds of workplaces that make it possible for tens of thousands of people to donate their time and money, we are uniquely positioned to generate positive social change in our community. With these assets, United Way is specifically able to:

- Identify and educate the community about human services needs;
- Mobilize community volunteers to support the work of the regional network of human services agencies;
- Develop and sponsor innovative solutions and quality improvement efforts aimed at strengthening the effectiveness of social service systems;
- Convene and lead collaborations with business, government and community organizations;
- Provide leadership in public policy advocacy focused on using public resources more efficiently and effectively to meet human needs;
- Raise funds through relationships with individuals, corporations, government and foundations; and
- Provide direct financial support to organizations.

Beginning in 2000, United Way embarked on an effort to improve our understanding of the needs of the community, set more specific objectives for enhancing the work of the human services infrastructure in the community, and become more effective in helping to solve community problems. This approach included data-gathering to assess how the work of agencies receiving United Way support actually aligned with these objectives, as well as undertaking a number of new and targeted initiatives to reinforce them.

Our main challenge was to set priorities for the use of our limited resources in order to maximize our impact on some of the most pressing issues in our region. The starting point for developing the priorities that are described in this document was to articulate clearly the criteria that are appropriate for selecting those priorities. We recognized that a United Way is not a traditional social service agency; it is not a taxpayer-supported human service provider; and it is not a foundation or a corporate giving program. A United Way plays a unique role in the community. How and why we choose to do what we do needs to respect that unique role.

As a result, the criteria for selecting our priorities were not designed simply to identify the most pressing needs of the community – our traditional approach. Instead, they were designed to help us choose from among the most pressing community needs by identifying where United Way is best positioned to have a significant impact. They are designed to help us optimize the use of United Way’s resources.

The priorities were tested against these criteria:

- They must be appropriate, practical, and achievable throughout our region (i.e., not just in Philadelphia) and challenge us to extend our reach more meaningfully throughout the Southeastern Pennsylvania community;
- They must make common sense and be easily understandable by donors, the media, service providers, consumers and the public at large;
- They must challenge us to use the full range of United Way’s capabilities (i.e., not just the money it provides to community agencies);
- They must enable us to assume a community leadership role relating to the priority, while supporting and integrating with other effective leadership efforts;
- They must be likely to attract more financial contributions and volunteer involvement from donors and other supporters.

As we transform from being a funder of agencies to being a leader in solving community problems, we also tested our priorities against one more criterion:

- Our priorities must be focused on supporting people at *critical* transition points in their lives – such as entering kindergarten, adjusting to middle school, struggling to complete high school, entering the workforce, facing the loss of independence because of age, etc.

We believe that this approach will help to assure the biggest impact – especially long-term impact – from the use of our limited resources.

The process of identifying the community needs that should be addressed as United Way priorities began with a review of a wealth of prior United Way planning documents, discussions with volunteers and donors, and numerous meetings with community and agency leaders. In 2007, United Way implemented its new investment strategy, which was focused around three long-term community level goals in the areas of education, income, and health.

Throughout the last funding cycle, United Way made significant contributions in the issue areas. With our support: more early childhood education centers increased and maintained their quality; participation in our professional development programs has helped more than 2,000 youth workers and volunteers improve their skills, resulting in positive outcomes for more than 25,000 youth; more individuals and families became financially stable; and older adults’ health was increased through high quality in-home care and other supportive services. But there is still more work to be done.

Since 2007, United Way has continued to do environmental scans and research to refine our community level goals. We have reviewed agency outcomes and conferred with leaders in these fields to ensure

that these goals remain accurate and attainable. United Way will continue to focus on priority areas related to education, income, and health during the upcoming three-year funding cycle. In these areas, we will specifically focus our resources on achieving the following measurable results that will assist us in creating real and lasting change in our region:

- Education – Preparing Children to Succeed in School and in Life
- Income – Building Financial Stability and Independence for Families
- Health – Keeping Seniors Healthy and Safe at Home

United Way will also remain committed to preserving the social fabric of our community. We will do this by helping to support a vibrant and responsive nonprofit sector. This can be accomplished through building the capacity of nonprofit organizations and helping them to adopt best practices. This includes recruiting volunteers who will use their skills to address the needs of nonprofits and help our community engage in positive change efforts.

Additionally, United Way will continue to support the basic and emergency needs of individuals through ensuring that they have access to needed services in times of crisis and helping them to recover and get back on track.

Through working with the larger community, including foundations, governments, universities, businesses, and nonprofits, United Way is creating long-lasting change by addressing the underlying causes of the problems in our region. We will continue to work to improve the education, income, and health of individuals and families in our community. The following information sheets provide more details on the specific strategies in our priority areas and our goals for the next three-year funding cycle.

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United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania improves people’s lives by mobilizing the caring power of donors, volunteers, and communities. Our focus is on Education, Income, and Health because these are the building blocks for a good quality of life.

Part I

EDUCATION: SUCCESS BY 6®

OUR GOAL: United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania helps children enter school ready to learn.

The Challenge

- Research is clear that children need high quality early learning experiences and proper parental nurturing to be ready for kindergarten and succeed in school.
- This region has more than 250,000 children under the age of 5, and the majority of them get neither high quality learning experiences nor proper parental nurturing. In fact, less than 17% of the more than 1,000 child care centers in the region are rated “high quality” by the Pennsylvania Keystone STAR quality rating system.
- Parents are their children’s first teachers and need guidance and support to provide a safe, caring and quality learning environment at home.

Our Strategies

- United Way’s Success by 6 ® program improves and sustains the quality of early learning experiences in child care centers by providing technical assistance, financial support and professional development opportunities.
- Provide better nurturing techniques in the home by supporting on-going, formalized parenting education programs.
- Increase the professional skills of those working with our young children and their families by supporting the Institute for Family Professionals program that provides professional development training to early childhood educators.
- Advocate for increased public support for high quality early childhood education.

Our Impact

- In less than 4 years, more than half of the child care centers that completed Success By 6 ® have achieved a Keystone STAR 3 or 4 rating, the highest levels in Pennsylvania’s quality rating and improvement system.

- Created a cadre of 300 early childhood and parenting educators who are better trained to help our young children have enhanced learning experiences.
- Established the Delaware Valley Regional Early Learning Business Council, whose purpose is to promote the importance and benefits of high quality early childhood education.
- More than 1,500 young children have been impacted by their parents' participation in parenting education programs.

Goals for the Next Three Years

- Our Delaware Valley Regional Early Learning Business Council will be successful in advocating that the state's early learning programs will maintain their current funding levels.
- 120 child care centers will achieve a top Keystone STAR rating, allowing our young children to receive the best opportunity possible.
- 100% of all child care centers enrolled in Success by 6[®] will maintain their high STAR rating, thereby ensuring our children have the best chance to succeed.
- 1,000 early childhood and parenting educators will have improved skills and knowledge in working with parents of young children.

Part II

EDUCATION: GRADUATION FOR ALL

OUR GOAL: United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania helps youth graduate from high school (or earn a high school credential if already dropped out) and acquire the skills necessary for college or vocational credentials.

The Challenge

- 4 of 5 students who do not pass 9th grade eventually drop out of high school.
- Approximately 6,000 young people in our region drop out every year.
- The dropout crisis is not just an urban problem – statewide, 1 of 8 youth in suburban districts fails to graduate.
- The lifetime earnings of dropouts are often only half of what high school graduates make.

Our Strategies

- Improve the quality of learning and developmental opportunities for youth at risk of dropping out of high school.
- Sustain the quality of learning and developmental opportunities for youth at risk of dropping out of high school.

- Enhance the ability of families to support their children’s education, learning and healthy development.
- Sustain the availability of intervention and prevention wrap around and social services that address barriers to learning and development.
- Enlist public support for high quality systems of learning and development for older youth.

Our Impact

- Participation in our professional development programs has helped more than 2,000 youth workers and volunteers improve their skills, resulting in positive outcomes for more than 25,000 youth.
- More than 125 out-of-school time programs that use United Way’s program quality assessment tool have shown improved ratings in management and infrastructure, results measurement, program design and youth participation and engagement.
- Our “Data-Driven Program Quality Improvement Project” was successfully piloted with 25 high school programs and close to 400 youth throughout the state resulting in program staff having greater capacity and systems in place to measure youth outcomes and inform sustainable program quality.
- Nearly 400 volunteers were recruited and referred to mentor programs that build caring relationships between youth and adults and help improve youth outcomes.

Goals for the Next Three Years

- Through our quality improvement and professional development services with 300 youth programs, more than 25,000 students will show improved academic success, learning and development.
- At least 1,500 program professionals and volunteers will gain the knowledge and skills they need to work with youth and their families.
- At least 1,500 parents will participate in our programs and improve their skills and engagement in the education, learning and development of their children.
- Mobilize multiple stakeholder groups to advocate for public support of quality educational opportunities for children through young adulthood.

Part III

INCOME: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

OUR GOAL: United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania helps individuals obtain or advance to living wage jobs.

The Challenge

- Research shows that a family of four, without access to food stamps or other government assistance, in Philadelphia needs \$60,365/year to survive. In the suburbs, the amount is close to \$70,000.
- Four out of every 10 workers in our region make poverty wages, many because they lack basic literacy, math, and writing skills forcing many families to choose between necessities such as food, healthcare and child care. These inadequacies frustrate an already difficult situation because employers say jobs are available that pay family-sustaining wages.

Our Strategies

- Develop and support comprehensive workforce development partnerships that engage employers in training design.
- Improve the ability of high quality adult literacy programs to meet workforce needs and connect directly to potential employers.
- Build the capacity of employers to implement workforce practices, standards, and partnerships that promote life-long learning and career advancement.
- Through advocacy and public mobilization, support adult literacy, workforce development, and life-long learning initiatives that help individuals earn family sustaining wages.
- Support supplemental services that promote the completion of associate degrees, provide job training and placement of ex-offenders and persons with disabilities, and provide professional grooming and dress services.

Our Impact

- Invested in the Job Opportunity Investment Network (JOIN), a public-private workforce partnership that moves low-income individuals into careers that pay family-sustaining wages.

Since 2008, United Way investments have helped:

- 101 individuals receive vocational or post-secondary educational credentials
- 125 individuals obtain or advance to jobs earning more than \$15 per hour
- 2,108 individuals advance one or more educational functional levels
- 206 individuals receive a high school diploma or GED
- 17 adult literacy programs improve their quality by participating in our Adult Baseline Standards Project

Goals for the Next Three Years

- Increase the number of students in United Way-supported adult literacy programs that raise their literacy scores by 2.5 grade levels in 10-12 weeks or equivalent industry benchmark.
- Increase in the number of workforce collaboratives created or expanded.
- Increase the number of workers earning family-sustaining wages.

- Transform key stakeholders into an aggressive advocacy group for public policies that advance our workforce development agenda.

Part IV

INCOME: ASSET DEVELOPMENT

OUR GOAL: United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania helps individuals increase their savings and obtain or preserve their assets.

The Challenge

- Hundreds of thousands of individuals in the region who are entitled to income supports and benefits are not even aware of their eligibility. In Philadelphia alone, there are more than 150,000 residents who currently qualify for food stamps but do not receive them.
- 20% of our region's households do not earn enough to pay for basic necessities such as food, housing, child care and health care.
- The housing foreclosure rate in our region has increased 11% in the past 24 months.

Our Strategies

- Impact the lives of more families by bringing high quality financial literacy, asset development and asset preservation programs directly to them.
- Increase the use of income supports, tax credit, asset development and asset preservation services among those who qualify for these programs.
- Support transitional housing programs to help low-income individuals withstand crises and prevent further financial instability.
- Advocate for public policy changes and increased public awareness on issues related to asset development and preservation for low-income families.

Our Impact

- Via federal, state, and public and private grants and donations, we have provided more than \$1.9 mm (in 3 years) to struggling families in our region.
- Our Creating Assets Savings and Hope (CASH) Initiative has resulted in almost \$450,000 going to low-income individuals pursuing college degrees, vocational trainings, and first home purchases.
- In the past two years, we have mobilized hundreds of volunteer tax preparers to offer more than 41,000 individuals and their families free tax preparation assistance, resulting in close to \$50 million in tax refunds to these families.

- More than 6,500 individuals have reported that United Way supported financial education programs have allowed them to increase their savings, be better prepared to purchase a home, or avoid foreclosure.

Goals for the Next Three Years

- Increase the number of families who have access to financial literacy, asset development and asset preservation services.
- Help financial education programs throughout the region directly impact a family's ability to become more financially stable, and to be able to measure that success.
- Convene key stakeholders to advocate for public policies that advance local and state asset development and asset preservation policies.

Part V

HEALTH: HEALTHY AGING AT HOME

OUR GOAL: United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania helps older adults stay healthy and safe in their homes and communities.

The Challenge

- Although it costs less than half to care for older adults at home versus an institutional setting, the state provides little funding for home and community-based services.
- Local senior centers play a significant role in older adults faring well in the home; however, the quality of center-based programming is inconsistent.
- Many older adults and their caregivers are overwhelmed trying to navigate the often confusing and sometimes uncoordinated spectrum of services for older adults.

Our Strategies

- Develop more innovative models that provide older adults with sustainable and coordinated community-based services (i.e., home maker services, in-home health services, home-delivered meals, minor home repairs, transportation to medical appointments).
- Improve and sustain the capacity, quality and programming of senior centers, adult day care providers, in-home health aides, and caregivers that serve older adults.
- Advocate for public policies and build public awareness around the need for, and success of, home and community-based services for older adults.
- Support benefit enrollment, depression screenings and intervention, in-home health aide services, and friendly visits to older adults.

Our Impact

- Supported more than 90% of all senior centers accredited by the National Institute of Senior Centers in Pennsylvania achieve this accreditation.
- Created an assessment tool for senior centers that helped them evaluate their effectiveness and impact on older adults in their neighborhoods.
- Invested in providers of in-home services who helped 12,000 older adults receive health assessments, meals and minor home repairs.

Goals for the Next Three Years

- Educate and mobilize more volunteers to support coordinated neighborhood and community networks of care.
- Target more older adults and families so they are better able to navigate the spectrum of services for older adults.
- Advocate for state-level policies that will increase resources available to support home and community-based care.
- Create effective and sustainable community-based networks of care.

Part VI

BASIC NEEDS

OUR GOAL: United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania ensures that individuals will have access to needed services in times of crisis to help them recover and get back on track.

The Challenge

- The recent economic recession has been devastating to many in the region. Tremendous job loss has caused more families in urban and suburban counties to either become homeless, struggle to maintain their housing, or face termination of essential utility services.
- In 2009, more than 316,000 residents in the Philadelphia area received help from a food pantry. The number of people who need food help is growing in our region, yet nearly half of food pantries turn people away because they run out of food.
- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, interpersonal violence is a safety and health issue that affects its victims medically, emotionally, personally, economically, and professionally. In Pennsylvania last year, local agencies serviced close to 3,000 victims of domestic violence.
- People in our community need the assistance and skills to prevent, prepare for and recover from disasters. Last year alone, the American Red Cross SEPA and the Salvation Army provided

disaster and emergency relief services to more than 50,000 people, most of them victims of fires.

- Pennsylvania is one of only three remaining states without a 2-1-1 system that helps callers navigate critical social service needs

Our Strategies

- Support disaster response services and emergency preparedness activities through partnerships with key providers.
- Lead the effort in establishing a centralized 2-1-1 system that helps residents of Southeastern PA connect to health and human service information and assistance.
- Support personal safety services to victims of domestic violence, child abuse and sexual assault.
- Support and build the capacity of emergency food, shelter, rent, mortgage and utility assistance providers in Philadelphia, Montgomery, and Delaware Counties.

Our Impact

- Through our role as the sole administrator of the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) in Philadelphia County for the past 28 years, United Way is a leader in supporting emergency shelter, food, and rent, mortgage and utility assistance programs and services.
- While the primary focus of our Community Impact Agenda is a preventive one that helps keep people on track at critical transitions in life, United Way recognizes that unexpected crises can also take individuals, children and families off the track for success. As a result of our support of basic needs programs and services in our community in 2009:
 - o 30,062 individuals or families received food, clothing, and/or cash assistance.
 - o 24,115 individuals or families received domestic violence, crime victims, or child abuse prevention and intervention services.
 - o 5,532 individuals or families received mental and/or behavioral health services.
 - o 1,411,043 individuals received disaster relief services and/or emergency preparedness training.

Goals for the Next Three Years

- Partner with NJ 2-1-1 to expand current call center and online portal (www.211sepa.org) services to the five counties in Southeastern Pennsylvania.
- Increase the organizational capacity of Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) agencies in our region to access diverse funding opportunities for their programs.
- Individuals in need will receive improved emergency housing and housing support services, food assistance services, personal safety services and disaster recovery services.
- Create a more robust, coordinated regional disaster response system that clearly identifies United Way as a key partner and stakeholder.

Part VII

SOCIAL FABRIC: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

OUR GOAL: United Way provides opportunities for volunteers to address the needs of nonprofits in our region and to engage in quality community change efforts.

The Challenge

- National, state and local statistics have shown sharp and steady increases in the overall number of people seeking volunteer opportunities within the last five years; however, many available opportunities go unfilled.
- The Corporation for National & Community Service's recent nonprofit sector surveys report that 80% to 90% of responding organizations have maintained or increased their use of volunteers during the economic downturn. This has helped them to maintain, or in some cases, even increase client services.
- It is estimated that targeted pro bono strategic management would unleash more than \$1.5 billion of services per year in the United States alone.
- The current spotlight on volunteerism presents tremendous opportunity for nonprofits to expand and even reinvent their concept of how volunteers can contribute to their organizations and communities by using this resource more strategically and effectively.

Our Strategies

- Support, develop and coordinate broad scale United Way community mobilization initiatives that focus on education, income, and health-related outcomes.
- Mobilize targeted constituencies of potential volunteers to expand the region's talent pool.
- Improve and increase the capacity of the region's human service nonprofits to employ best practices in volunteer management including recruiting, placing, training and retaining volunteers.

Our Impact

- Over 70,000 volunteers have been mobilized to support United Way initiatives and nonprofit partners.
- United Way Day of Caring volunteers contributed more than 200,000 hours of community service in 2009, providing an estimated \$4 million in human capital to our local community.
- In 2009, more than 1,200 referrals were made by United Way's web-based matching portal, <http://liveuniteddelval.volunteermatch.org>.

Goals for the Next Three Years

- Increase public awareness and involvement in issues related to education, income and health.

- Increase the quality, quantity and diversity of community engagement opportunities available in the SEPA Region that advance education, income and health priorities.
- Expand the diversity, skill level and overall availability of local volunteer talent.
- Identify effective and sustainable models of volunteer engagement for targeted populations for replication.
- Increase in “skilled” human capital and pro-bono services delivered to the community via corporate partnerships.
- Nonprofits in the region will increase their capacity to employ best practices in volunteer management.

Part VIII

SOCIAL FABRIC: CAPACITY BUILDING

OUR GOAL: United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania builds strong communities by maintaining a responsive and healthy nonprofit sector.

The Challenge

- Nationally, it is estimated that 640,000 new senior-level nonprofit managers will be needed in the next decade as a result of baby boomers retiring. Due to the changing nonprofit landscape, it is also imperative that local leaders receive professional development and participate in peer networks.
- Due to the economic constraints on funders, nonprofits are being forced to consider new ways of working together and restructuring their operations in order to meet their mission.
- There is a common expectation among most donors that nonprofits be able to demonstrate the impact of their work. Nonprofits face the challenge of securing the appropriate staffing, technology and financial resources to incorporate outcomes measurement into their work.

Our Strategies

- Increase the effectiveness of current and potential leaders serving on nonprofit boards and staffs.
- Support the implementation of strategic partnerships that increase nonprofits’ effectiveness and efficiency.
- Build the capacity of nonprofit organizations to effectively measure the impact of their work.

Our Impact

- 100 executive directors participate annually in high quality professional development.
- 38 young professionals have graduated from UWSEPA’s Emerging Leaders Program.

- The Strategic Partnerships Initiative funded a merger between three child care organizations as well as a planning process to support the shared operations of several human service organizations.
- 25 grassroots organizations are developing outcomes measurement systems.

Goals for the Next Three Years

- Increase the number of mid-level nonprofit professionals who receive training to prepare them for future leadership roles in the sector.
- Provide financial and in-kind support to nonprofits to help them execute successful strategic partnerships.
- Develop a methodology and funding support that helps nonprofits develop sustainable systems for outcomes measurement.

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