

ABOUT

# A Brief History



United Way  
of Snohomish County

## OUR MISSION

Leading positive change that transforms our community and improves people's lives in Snohomish County.

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For more than 68 years, United Way of Snohomish County has been the most effective and efficient way to make a difference here at home. It is still the best way to make an investment in our community. Beyond simply making a contribution, United Way understands that people really want to see their gift is making the largest impact, working for the greatest good, and improving the lives of those who need help most.

United Way started in Snohomish County on November 8, 1940, when a group of local citizens met and organized the Everett Community Chest. The first campaign in 1941, under the leadership of Roy Sievers, raised \$41,191.77 in just nine days. Eleven agencies shared allocations from that inaugural effort. Programs at some of those agencies still receive funding from United Way today. Over the years, the organization has undergone several name changes from the Everett Community and War Chest to United Good Neighbors and finally, United Way of Snohomish County.

In 1980 with the leadership of Max Gellert of ELDEC Corporation, United Way led volunteers to campaign results over the \$2,000,000 mark for the first time. Before the decade ended, that figure had more than doubled. The closing of the 1980s saw United Way spearhead the first-ever community-wide needs assessment, the development of a homeless task force, and the presentation of a community-wide forum on children and drugs in Snohomish County.

United Way entered the 1990s not only as the county's largest fundraising organization, but as a community problem-solver as well. The first-ever Day of Caring in 1993 and brought out more than 150 corporate volunteers to spend a day working in teams at hands on projects. Day of Caring is now the largest one day volunteer event in Snohomish County, with more than 1000 people participating. In 2006, Day of Caring volunteers gave over 5,000 hours of free labor to nonprofit organizations that otherwise simply might not be able to afford to have the work done.

United Way is sharply focused on what matters most to Snohomish County. It brings the whole community together to create long term, sustainable change in conditions like poverty, violence and isolation. United Way transforms communities and strengthens lives through partnerships, programs and strategies that deliver tangible results. United Way also continues to generate substantial resources, directly raising more than \$53.8 million over the past five years, and helping channel millions of dollars more through successful advocacy for affordable housing, the 2-1-1 information line, early childhood learning, and programs to increase families' financial independence such as Individual Development Accounts and free tax preparation.

## **Relationship to National Organization, United Way of America**

United Way of Snohomish County is a separate non-profit organization governed by a local volunteer Board of Directors. It raises and invests contributions in carefully selected nonprofit programs, manages several of its own nonprofit initiatives, and works in other strategic ways to impact our communities, our families and our children. United Way of Snohomish County also supports a broader spirit of philanthropy by directing funds to local, national and international charities as designated by the donor. United Way of America is a system that includes approximately 1,350 local United Way organizations. Each is independent, separately incorporated, and governed by local volunteers. UWA provides valuable services in the areas of marketing, training and technical assistance to support local United Ways.

## **United Way of America Origins**

The United Way movement originated in Denver, Colorado, in 1887. There a woman volunteer, a priest, a rabbi, and two ministers founded the Charity Organization Society. As the forerunner of the first United Way, the organization planned and coordinated local services and conducted a single fundraising campaign for ten agencies. The idea spread and soon most of the larger cities were conducting one campaign for support of multiple services. As United Ways across the county brought community leaders together for fundraising campaigns, these organizations naturally developed into leading community planning and fundraising in the health and human services arena.

Building on more than 100 years of community service and leadership, United Ways today serve communities across America by bringing the right people, ideas and resources together to understand community priorities and lead the efforts to improve the lives of all residents. United Ways are creating new solutions to long-standing community issues, bringing more resources to bear, and engaging more volunteers than ever before.

## **Significant Dates in the History of United Way**

- 1888 First campaign in Denver for ten agencies raised \$21,700.
- 1894 Charitable institutions received exemption from first federal act imposing tax on "all corporations organized for profit."
- 1900 The Cleveland Chamber of Commerce formed the Committee on Benevolent Associations to set standards and monitor charities. The first attempt at self-regulation, it was established to protect the donor.
- 1908 The first community planning organization, Associated Charities, was formed in Pittsburgh.
- 1911 National Association of Societies for Organizing Charity was formed. The forerunner of United Way's national organization, it would have several different names before becoming United Way of America in 1970.
- 1913 Cleveland became the first modern United Way organization when it developed a program to allocate campaign funds.

1918 The National Information Bureau - later to become the National Charities Information Bureau (NCIB) - was established to collect information and act as a clearinghouse on charitable organizations nationwide.

Executives of 12 fundraising organizations established the American Association for Community Organizations - the forerunner of United Way of America. Its purpose was "to encourage and stimulate collective community planning, and the development of better standards in the work of community organizations for social work."

1919 Rochester, NY, used the name "Community Chest," a name widely adopted by United Way organizations and used until the early 1950's.

1931 President Hoover permitted Washington, DC. Community Chest to solicit federal employees. The local Red Cross chapter joined in the campaign.

Community Chests mobilized to fight hunger and need created by the Great Depression. On October 10, 1931, in the CBS Studios, the chests made their first televised appeal to report on the progress of their campaigns. Total funds raised passed the \$100 million mark.

The National Women's Committee, headed by Eleanor Roosevelt, joined the effort to mobilize resources to meet human needs. This was one of the first national responsibilities ever undertaken by a President's wife.

The Depression, loss of jobs, and President Roosevelt's New Deal for the "forgotten man" frightened many people of wealth. Voluntary giving declined and reliance on the federal government increased.

1935 With support and encouragement from United Ways and their national association, Congress amended the income tax laws, permitting corporations to deduct up to five percent of taxable income for charitable contributions.

1939 With the advent of World War II, United Relief, Inc. - later to become the National War Fund - was organized to coordinate foreign relief appeals.

1942 AFL and CIO leaders and United Way solidified a partnership in community service by establishing labor liaison programs.

United Way leaders formed the National War Fund to raise and allocate funds for war-related programs. The war sparked a surge in fundraising results. Nearly \$167 million was raised, a 53% increase.

1943 Compulsory withholding of federal income and social security taxes from employee wages paved the way for payroll deduction of charitable contributions.

1944 During the last full year of the war, \$226 million was raised by nearly 800 United Ways.

1948 Over 1,000 communities had established United Ways.

- 1949 Detroit became the first community to adopt the name "United Fund."
- 1955 AFL and CIO merged and established a Community Services Committee.
- 1957 President Eisenhower signed an executive order creating the "Uniform Federal Fund-Raising Program," permitting local federated campaigns to ask federal employees for pledges.
- 1961 President Kennedy signed an executive order saying that health and welfare agencies and "such other national voluntary agencies as may be appropriate" were eligible to receive gifts from federal employees.
- 1963 Los Angeles became the first community to formally adopt the name "United Way." More than 30 Community Chest and United Fund organizations in the Los Angeles area merged to become United Way, Inc.
- 1964 The War on Poverty began. Payroll deduction plan for soliciting federal employees began. This was the beginning of the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) as it is known today.
- 1967 United Way campaigns raised over \$700,000,000.
- 1970 The national association reorganized under the name "United Way of America." Volunteer leaders adopted a resolution to encourage members to use the United Way name. William Aramony became national executive and initiated a "Thirteen Point Program for Rebirth and Renewal of United Way."
- 1972 National Academy for Voluntarism (NAV) was established to provide ongoing education to volunteers and professionals who managed and administered voluntary, nonprofit organizations.
- 1973 "Standards of Excellence for United Way Organizations" was published. The publication provided guidelines and operating principles for United Way organizations providing community service.
- "United Way of America Services Identification Systems (UWASIS)" was published. The publication provided clear definitions of service categories intended to help voluntary agencies, governments, social organizations, and United Ways plan and manage all aspects of human service work.
- 1974 "Accounting & Financial Reporting: A Guide for United Ways and Not-for-Profit Human Service Organizations" was published.

United Way undertook the largest public service campaign in the nation's history. A major part of that campaign was the United Way National Football League "Great Moments" series of television commercials. United Ways in the US and Canada raised a total of \$1,038,995,000, marking the first time in history that an annual campaign of a single movement raised over one billion dollars.

United Way International was formed to help establish United Way organizations in other countries.

- 1975 The Filer Commission, appointed by President Ford, released its report titled "Private Philanthropy and Public Needs."

United Way of America launched long-range strategic planning, and the effort spread among United Ways.

United Way of America created the National Corporate Development (NCD) program to encourage better understanding of United Way by employees of national corporations.

- 1978 The National Long Range Planning Committee identified and reported on five critical issues facing United Ways: inclusiveness, area-wide service arrangements, voluntarism and public policy, agency relations, and personalization.
- 1980 The federal government expanded its Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) to include national agencies, women and minority organizations, and environmental and social action groups.
- 1981 United Ways raised \$1.68 billion, an increase of 10.1% over the previous year - the greatest fundraising effort in 25 years.
- 1982 United Way of America opened a new national service center. The center increased United Way of America's ability to assist and support the nation's 2,200 United Ways, and enabled UWA to respond to the needs of emerging health and welfare organizations.
- United Way of America launched its Volunteer Leadership Development Program. The program's purpose was to identify and recruit potential volunteer leaders and help them acquire the skills needed to effectively manage and administer nonprofit organizations.
- 1983 United Ways across the country adopted "full service orientation" - shifting their emphasis from primarily fundraising to active participation in resolving their communities' problems.

Congress made a first-of-its-kind \$50 million emergency food and shelter grant to the voluntary sector. A national board, chaired by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), comprised representatives from United Way of America and five other national nonprofits. The board coordinated distribution of the grant to civil jurisdictions through local boards which resembled the make-up of the national board. United Way of America served as fiscal agent for the national board. The grant provided over 51 million meals and more than 6.2 million nights of shelter. Later that year, Congress made an additional \$40 million emergency food and shelter grant to the FEMA program. The supplemental grant was estimated to affect some 50% of the nation's unemployed individuals.

1985 United Ways raised \$2,335,000,000, an increase of nine percent over 1984's total.

A white paper, "Rethinking Tomorrow and Beyond," set forth a vision of the United Way of the future. It outlined five core strategies United Ways should implement to achieve that vision.

Congress appropriated a total of \$250 million for allocation by the National Board of the Emergency Food and Shelter Program.

1987 United Way recognized its centennial by saluting the American volunteer through many programs, including dedication of a United Way postage stamp by the U.S. Postal Service.

1989 The NFL gave United Way \$1.25 million to aid victims of the October 1989 earthquake that struck northern and central California. Sony Corporation and Sony Corporation of America contributed \$1 million to earthquake-relief efforts.

1991 During the Persian Gulf War, a fully staffed operations center at United Way of America worked closely with other organizations to ensure that those in need received help.

1992 William Aramony resigned as president and Kenneth W. Dam served as interim president and chief executive officer.

Former Peace Corps Director Elaine L. Chao was selected as United way of America's president and chief executive officer, the first Asian-American and first female to assume this position.

1993 A national conference on block grants, hosted by United Way of America, provided valuable insight to nearly 250 attendees on the past and future performance of block grants, focusing on their implications for United Ways, as well as their agencies and the people they serve.

The corporate community began demanding easier, more cost-efficient ways to process workplace campaigns. United Way took the first steps in ensuring that it continues to be the premier workplace fundraiser because of its ability to change to better meet customers' needs through the use of new technology.

1994 United Way of America was selected by Financial World magazine as the charity of choice for its leadership in not-for-profit ethics and accountability.

This was the first year of United Way of America's Quality Awards, modeled after the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Awards. These awards recognize United Way organizations that demonstrate measurable progress in customer satisfaction, accountability and productivity. United Way of Allegheny County in Pittsburgh, PA, United Way of the Piedmont in Spartanburg, SC, and United Way of Southeastern New England in Providence, RI, were the first recipients of this prestigious award.

- 1995 The Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) announced its selection of United Way of America and the United Way system as the primary provider of community support and volunteer services for the 1996 Olympic Torch Relay. In its role, United Way was responsible for assisting ACOG with the selection of torchbearers, organizing community celebrations to greet the arrival of the Olympic Flame, and coordinating volunteers for those functions.

United Way of America's Board of Governors unanimously approved the adoption of Strategic Direction for United Way: Charting the Path for Building Better Communities.

- 1996 United Way of America developed two Internet products, United Way Online for local United Ways and a website for the general public.

Betty Stanley Beene was selected as United Way of America's new president and chief executive officer. Prior to her selection, Beene served as President and CEO of the Tri-State United Way.

In October of 1996, United Way of America identified healthy children, healthy families and healthy communities as focus areas under the strategic plan.

- 1997 United Way of America and the United Way system were asked by the organizers of the President's Summit for America's Future to join with them in leading the selection process for the 1,400 delegates from 140 cities across the nation. The focus of the Summit was to help youth through volunteer efforts.

- 1998 In 1997-1998 campaigns, United Ways collectively raised \$3.4 billion, boosting revenues by more than \$150 million for a 4.7 percent increase over 1996-1997 levels.

United Ways and the NFL celebrated the 25th anniversary of their unique partnership and the longest-running sports/charity public service announcement campaign of its kind. The partnership has enabled United Way to share its special message with 110 million viewers during football season. Over 950 spots have aired since 1973.

- 1999 Bank of America Foundation donated \$50 million over five years to local United Ways in 22 states where they conduct business to support United Way's Success by 6®. Bill and Melinda Gates donated \$10.5 million to support vital United Way programs and services to strengthen the United Way system.

- 2000 The Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Boy Scouts of America to set its own membership and leadership standards. This decision prompted many United Ways to evaluate their funding policies and determine the needs of their communities in light of this issue. Since each community must decide the way it will address this issue, United Way of America cannot and will not establish a national policy on the funding of local Boy Scout of America programs.

The Federal Communications Commission approved a petition filed by United Way of America and The Alliance of Information and Referral Systems and others requesting national designation of 211 for health and human services information and referral.

211 is an easy-to-remember and universally recognizable telephone number that makes a critical connection between individuals and families in need and the appropriate community-based organizations and government agencies.

United Way of America Board of Governors established the Task Force on Strengthening the United Way System to propose a strategic direction and governing mechanism for the United Way system. Chaired by Jack Little, Retired President and Chief Executive Officer, Shell Oil Company and Member of the Board of Governors, the Task Force is comprised of 24 individual volunteer and staff leaders, representing United Way of America's Board of Governors, member United Ways, corporations and organized labor.

United Way of America launches the United Way State of Caring Index™. This dynamic index measures the needs of Americans and the caring and compassion of the nation, as well as each state. Consisting of 32 social and economic indicators, the Index, which will be updated annually, is aimed to spark new debate and discussion on local, statewide, and national levels, as United Way and community decision-makers set their caring agendas for the coming years.

UWA's Board of Governors approved implementation of a national charitable gift annuity program to benefit member United Way organizations and their donors. A charitable gift annuity is one of the most popular forms of planned giving. It is a simple contract between a donor and a charity. The donor makes an irrevocable gift to charity. In return, the charity pays the donor, or income beneficiary named by the donor, a fixed income (annuity) over a lifetime. At the death of the donor, or income beneficiary, the amount remaining is available to be used for charitable purposes. In 1999-2000, United Ways raised \$3.77 billion, a 5.4 percent increase over the past year.

2001 Betty Beene resigned as President, and Chris Amundsen served as interim President and Chief Executive Officer.

NCL celebrates 25 years. Combined, NCL companies operate in over 12,300 locations and contribute nearly \$860 million to United Ways annually, one-quarter of all funds raised by United Ways nationally.

United Way of America announced the development of the new Brand Fellowship to help promote and sustain the momentum the field has created around the brand new United Way.

The Brand Fellowship is an opportunity for a local United Way executive to measurably enhance United Way's national brand position. Rich Audsley, Chief Operating Officer, Mile High United Way, Denver, Colorado, accepted the first fellowship.

Citing a new 50-state survey that found that the majority of all parents and caregivers are not taking the proper action to protect four-to-eight year old children in motor vehicles, Ford Motor Company launched the Boost America! safety program to shift attitudes and behavior in favor of better protection for child passengers

through increased booster seat use. This \$35 million investment in child safety helped to distribute one million booster seats in the first year of the campaign with 500,000 given to United Ways for distribution to needy families.

In the 2000-2001 campaigns, United Ways generated a record-breaking \$3.91 billion in resources. For the fifth year in a row, campaign growth outpaced inflation. Additionally, with United Ways' responses to the resource development continuum survey, United Way of America was able to calculate the dollar value of resources that United Ways leveraged beyond the campaign. Combined with campaign dollars, United Ways generated \$4.7 billion in 2000-2001.

Terrorists attack the United States of America. The United Way and The New York Community Trust establish the United Way September 11th Fund to mobilize financial resources to respond to the pressing needs of the victims and their families and all those affected by the tragedy. The Council on Foundations supports the effort. Cuba Wadlington, Jr., Executive Vice President of Williams and President and CEO of Williams Gas Pipeline, announced that Williams made a gift of \$1,000,000 to United Way of America which helped launch the response fund. The fund provides immediate support to established emergency assistance agencies, such as the American Red Cross. It also brings together the resources of other nonprofit health and human service agencies. Funds are administered by the two organizations, which formed a distribution committee to ensure that resources are deployed effectively in New York and other cities affected by these tragic events. William Aramony released from prison.

- 2002 Brian Gallagher becomes president of United Way of America. The UWA Board of Trustees assigns a national taskforce to strengthen the United Way system. Recommendations from the taskforce are adopted by the Board of Trustees, beginning a transformation of the system to "community impact".

UWA begins developing the tools and training needed to carry the idea of community impact out to 1,400 local independent United Ways. A whole new marketing strategy is proposed, to be launched nationally in 2003.

Volunteer Solutions becomes a national online system for connecting volunteers to opportunities to serve their local community.

- 2003 UWA selects United eWay as a new technology platform to deliver online pledging for workplace campaigns.

New stricter membership standards are adopted by the national Board of Trustees. The new standards clarify and strengthen accounting practices across the United Way system. (United Way of Snohomish County reviews its policies and procedures and confirms that it is operating according to the highest nonprofit standards.)

- 2007 Over 118 years later, United Way is still focused on mobilizing the caring power of communities and making a difference in people's lives.