

July 2007 - June 2010 Program Grant Recipients

KEY ■ Kids Matter ■ Families Matter ■ Community Matters

American Red Cross Snohomish County Chapter	■ Health and Safety Preparedness Education \$7,500 ■ Armed Forces Emergency Services \$26,000 ■ Disaster Relief \$80,000		Lutheran Community Services Northwest	■ Family Support Centers \$115,000 ■ Foster Care \$21,000 ■ Multicultural Parent Education and Families Advocacy \$18,000
Boys and Girls Clubs of Snohomish County	■ Youth Development Program \$100,000		Northshore Senior Center	■ Greater Mill Creek Senior Program \$5,000
Bridgeways	■ PACT Program \$52,500		Northwest Youth Services	■ Transitional Living Program \$12,000
Camp Fire USA	■ Small Group Development \$58,000 ■ Camping Youth Development \$17,000		Parent Trust for Washington Children	■ Continuum of Family Support Services \$7,000
Catholic Community Services	■ Retired Senior Volunteer Program \$7,000 ■ Youth Recovery Program \$57,000 ■ Family and Children Services \$20,000 ■ Housing \$47,500 ■ Counseling \$56,000 ■ Volunteer Services \$10,000		Providence General Foundation	■ Integrated Mental Health Services at Everett Healthcare Clinic \$80,000
Center for Human Services	■ Northshore Family Center Early Childhood Program \$15,000		Providence Hospice & Home Care of Snohomish County	■ Hospice Care Program \$58,650
Cocoon House	■ Cocoon Advocate Program \$20,000 ■ Cocoon Complex Youth Development \$30,000 ■ Emergency Shelter \$30,000 ■ Project Safe \$15,000 ■ Way Out Program \$15,000 ■ Cocoon Complex-Self Sufficiency \$38,000 ■ Emergency Shelter for Teens \$28,500		Secret Harbor School	■ Foster Care Program \$21,000 ■ Residential Treatment Center \$15,000
Community Health Center of Snohomish County	■ Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Health Care \$43,000		Senior Services of Snohomish County	■ Family Caregiver Resource Program \$9,000 ■ Transportation Assistance Program \$13,500 ■ Senior Information and Assistance \$40,500 ■ Senior Nutrition \$67,500
Community Resources Foundation	■ Stanwood Camano Community Resource Center \$27,500		Sherwood Community Services	■ ExCEL's Tech STEP Program \$5,400 ■ Sherwood ExCEL (Exceptional Children's Early Learning) Program \$24,000 ■ Sherwood Learning Center \$45,000
Compass Health	■ Children's Intensive Services and Therapeutic Foster Care \$25,000		Snohomish County Center for Battered Women	■ Transitional Housing Program - Case Management \$66,025
Deaconess Children's Services	■ Gateway \$35,000 ■ Teen Parent Advocacy \$50,000 ■ Parent Trust \$35,000 ■ Kids On the Move \$22,000 ■ IMPACT \$47,000 ■ Darrington Family Support and Resource Center \$48,000		Snohomish Seniors	■ Comprehensive Senior Program \$18,700
disAbility Resource Connection	■ Bridges \$27,468 ■ Adaptive Technology Dynamics \$31,710		South County Senior Center	■ Comprehensive Senior Development and Well Being \$27,000
East County Senior Center	■ Comprehensive Senior Development \$19,200		Stanwood Community and Senior Center	■ Stanwood Connects with Seniors and the Community \$27,700
ElderHealth Northwest	■ DayBreak Senior Respite Program \$9,500		Stillaguamish Senior Center	■ Comprehensive Senior Social Services \$34,500
EquiFriends	■ Therapeutic Equestrian Program for People with Disabilities \$9,534		The Arc of Snohomish County	■ Parent and Sibling Support \$20,000 ■ Leadership and Connections \$14,500
Friends of Youth	■ Healthy Start \$15,000 ■ New Ground \$28,500		Volunteers of America Western Washington	■ Sky Valley Community Resource Center \$30,000 ■ Camp Volasuca Education and Youth Development. \$30,000 ■ Support to Early Learning Professionals \$35,000 ■ Social Connectivity for Developmentally Disabled \$23,500 ■ Snohomish County Food Bank Distribution \$122,083 ■ Community Voice Mail \$16,000 ■ Emergency Services \$71,250 ■ Care Crisis Response Services \$48,750 ■ Funding Assistance for Child Care \$64,400
Hearing, Speech & Deafness Center	■ Parent Infant Program \$16,000		Work Opportunities	■ Connecting Persons with Disabilities to their Communities \$30,200 ■ Transition to Community Inclusion \$10,000 ■ Employment for People with Disabilities \$45,500
Housing Hope	■ Community Empowerment Project \$12,000 ■ Tomorrow's Hope Childcare \$36,000 ■ Homeless Teen Parent \$20,000 ■ Homeless Families On The Move \$100,000 ■ College of Hope Learning For Life \$21,000		YMCA of Snohomish County	■ Big Brothers Big Sisters School-Based Mentoring Program \$40,000 ■ Early Childhood Education \$50,000 ■ School Age Childcare \$100,000 ■ Teen Services \$35,000 ■ Y-Service Learning & Civic Engagement \$21,500 ■ Y-Community \$47,500
Intercommunity Mercy Housing	■ Service-Enriched Housing \$19,000		YWCA of Seattle King County-Snohomish County	■ Dawson Place Children's Advocacy Center \$33,500 ■ Building Healthy Families \$100,000
Kids Place Early Learning Center	■ Kids Place \$21,000			
Little Red School House	■ Toddler Preschool for At Risk Children \$20,000 ■ Early Intervention \$71,000 ■ Tulalip Early Learning \$17,000 ■ Services to Families in Shelters and Transitional Housing \$17,100		Totals	\$3,293,670

Q&A on United Way Grants



Barbara Davis,
Vice President of Impact
& Community Investment
at United Way of
Snohomish County

“We started out very analytically and were able to get into the merits of the request.”

— Sue Betz
Kids Matter Vision
Council Chair

“The group process really works. It isn’t just one viewpoint making tough decisions. The proposals that rose to the top were meeting the needs of the community.”

— Stephen Smith
Community Matters
Vision Council Chair

“I appreciated the chance to meet with the volunteers. I have been to many of these presentations and this was probably the best.”

— Colleen Wartelle
Little Red School House

“We looked for programs that could clearly demonstrate change. All of these we felt will do an excellent job in carrying out the work of United Way.”

— Pete Grodt
Families Matter Vision
Council Chair

Donors often ask, “How does United Way decide where the money goes?” Grants to local nonprofit programs are one way that United Way improves people’s lives in Snohomish County. The largest grants are awarded every three years in a highly-selective process. That process has just been completed for July 2007 - June 2010.

Barbara Davis, VP of Impact & Community Investment, answers questions on how it works.

Q: How does United Way decide what agencies get funded?

A: Actually, it’s not agencies we fund, it’s solutions. To achieve those, we have moved from the broad-brush approach of awarding grants to agencies to awarding grants to individual programs. It’s a fine distinction, but an important one because it allows us to focus in on areas of high priority for our community. United Way’s grants process is methodical, thorough and based on merit. We look for programs whose goals align with ours. We ask programs to tell us what they expect to achieve and how they will measure their results. Frankly, it’s demanding for both the programs applying and the volunteers reviewing grant requests.

Q: Who decides where the money goes?

A: Volunteers. I think many people are surprised by that. United Way professional staff support the work, but specially trained volunteers make the decisions. Three volunteer Vision Councils work all year long, educating themselves about our community. What are the needs? Where are the gaps? They look for creative ways to address those needs and monitor the progress of funded programs. Teams of these volunteers also read new grant requests. The grant process we’ve just completed involved 49 volunteers from the Kids Matter, Families Matter and Community Matters Vision Councils.

Q: How does United Way ensure the grants are awarded fairly?

A: The process has a lot of checks and balances. We also do thorough training and stay within our guidelines. Each volunteer spends 40 hours reading a dozen or so grant applications, then another 20 hours meeting with their teams. They also meet directly with the applicants for a question-and-answer session. The teams discuss each application several times before making their recommendations on grant awards. The recommendations are reviewed and approved by the Vision Council Coordinating Committee, and, finally, must be approved by the Board of Directors. That’s what keeps the grant process fair.

Q: Don’t the same programs just get funded every time?

A: No. Grant awards start fresh every three years and every program that wants a grant has to reapply. Some new programs apply and some that had grants before

don’t apply again. Volunteers don’t even look at what was funded last time and for how much. Instead, they look at the strength of the program’s proposal and measurement plan and how it aligns with their Council’s priorities.

Q: Is this a change from before?

A: The biggest change is in measuring effectiveness so that United Way, donors and the programs providing the services can all know what they are actually causing to happen—not just that someone had shelter for the night, but how has the person’s life improved.

Q: Is it really better? Can’t you get good results without all that?

A: What is better is that we award grants every three years instead of annually, so the programs have a more stable source of funding. We require yearly reports and financial statements, and we work with programs to help them measure their effectiveness. Does it take time? Yes, but the programs learn a lot, too: what effect they are having, where to improve, and even how to market themselves better. A program that is effectively measuring its services is also better positioned to receive funding from other sources because the story is so compelling.

I think the Vision Council structure is an improvement because the volunteers are so knowledgeable. It’s also better because they are working in many ways—not just through grants—to get the results they want for our community. Launching a free tax preparation site this year, for example, was a creative way to tackle food insecurity, because it put hundreds of thousands of dollars back into the pockets of low-income families.

Q: What’s the hardest part?

A: The single hardest part of grant-making is not having enough money for all of the programs that come to the table. The reality is that each program that comes to United Way for funding has some very good points and reasons for funding it. We always receive twice as many requests as we can fund. The Vision Councils have to make hard choices. But they go right back to their priorities. They look at the dollars they have to invest and make the choices that are going to create the biggest difference for the people ultimately served by those programs.

Every single volunteer has the wish that one day we’d have not only enough money to fund all the grants, but to fill in the gaps. I feel so privileged to watch the hard work they do—to watch how much they dedicate, how passionate they are, how seriously they take their work, how they struggle. It’s an awesome responsibility. At the end of the day, I know that the decisions are good ones—they did good work.

Grants are listed on page 4 and on United Way’s web site at www.uwsc.org at “grants” under Projects and Partners.