

FACT SHEET

WHAT IS THE CAYUGA COUNTY UNITED WAY?

The Cayuga County United Way is you, your friends, and your neighbors. Volunteers who care enough about our community to donate their time and special talents to help people in the Cayuga County area help themselves. Volunteers do everything from setting the campaign goal and raising the money, to evaluating the partner agencies and deciding how the money will be allocated. Four staff members assist hundreds of volunteers by providing background information, training and record keeping.

WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED WAY MOVEMENT?

United Way traces its history to 1887 in Denver when a priest, two ministers and a rabbi planned the first united campaign for ten health and welfare agencies raising \$21,000. But the organizations as we know them today were developed in the twenties, thirties and forties, when business and labor leaders together sought to reduce the number of charitable appeals being made to them by conducting a single efficient fund-raising drive.

Today there are over 1,400 independent and autonomous United Ways in the United States supporting and serving more than 47,000 agencies. Approximately 32 million people, one out of every three people employed in the United States, contribute to United Ways each year.

WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF THE CAYUGA COUNTY UNITED WAY?

The Auburn and Cayuga Community Chest originated in 1922. Its purpose was to solicit, collect and disburse monies for charitable, philanthropic, benevolent and community purposes. It was succeeded by the United Fund of Cayuga County, in 1956. Its purpose was to continue the improvement and development of health, character, and well-being of the residents of this county. The name was officially changed to United Way in 1979 to promote identification with the National United Way movement.

HOW IS THE UNITED WAY GOVERNED?

The Cayuga County United Way is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. These volunteers come from all segments of the community. They serve on committees that plan and implement the campaign and that study needs and objectives in order to allocate funds in a fair and efficient manner.

This process of “citizen review” allows volunteers to help solve community problems, meet community needs, and plan for future community requirements.

WHAT AREA IS SERVED BY THE CAYUGA COUNTY UNITED WAY?

The United Way of Cayuga County serves a population of approximately 80,000 with the area of responsibility extending north to Fair Haven and south to Genoa.

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WHY ARE UNITED WAYS CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH WORKPLACE GIVING?

Business and labor leaders pioneered the United Way concept when a growing number of service organizations began increasing their individual fund-raising activities seeking separate support from employers for work-place campaigns.

To minimize fund-raising costs and volunteer time devoted to fund-raising, and to reduce the number of times employees and employers were contacted and asked for a contribution, many of these organizations were brought together under the United Way umbrella forming one efficiently run campaign. Many businesses provide employees with the option of making payroll deduction contributions through the United Way on behalf of these organizations, which makes giving at the workplace even easier and more cost effective.

DO UNITED WAYS ALLOW COERCION IN THEIR CAMPAIGNS?

United Ways are totally opposed to any type of coercion. Fund-raising success is dependent on how much potential donors know and understand the organization seeking support. Coercion only creates animosity, hinders communication, understanding and generally leads to less support.

The Board of Governors of the United Way of America and the boards of many local United Ways have adopted formal policy statements opposing coercion in fund-raising campaigns. United Way of America's written policy against coercion says, in part: "Giving is a personal matter. Whether individuals wish to give and how much they choose to give is a personal choice. No action which is coercive is acceptable, including promises or threats to personal economic status."

HOW MUCH OF THE MONEY RAISED GOES TO THE PARTNER AGENCIES?

Because the United Way relies on volunteers, operating costs stay low so more money can be spent on needed services. In 2008, the United Way withheld approximately 17.5% of the total campaign to help fund its operations.

These fund-raising and administrative costs are much lower than if each organization, supported by United Way, were to raise money completely on its own.

It is important to note that the funds raised by United Way are used to support a part of each partner agency's programs.