UNITED WAY

VOLUNTEER AND ENGAGEMENT PORTFOLIO
United Way Helps Those Who Want To Help

United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania connects companies and individuals with meaningful volunteer opportunities that help people in need. We create unique experiences that encourage more people to take an active role in strengthening communities and families. If you have a desire and the willingness to help, United Way is a good place to start.

Let us help you find a volunteer project that engages your employees, demonstrates your commitment to social responsibility and impacts the community and local people in significant ways. We’ll work with you to identify your goals, timing and areas of interest to create the ideal opportunity for your team.
DAYS OF CARING

Days of Caring allow your employees to shine. United Way will help you plan a volunteer program that can build team morale while helping to meet an important need in our community. Choose from an in-office project or an agency project, based on your needs:

• United Way’s in-office volunteer projects are a seamless and impactful way to build stronger teams and rally your employees around volunteerism right in your office. By working together to assemble kits for kids, seniors or families, you’ll be able to make a difference within our community. The kits are distributed to local United Way agency partners that serve these groups. United Way takes all the guess work out by ordering all the supplies you need and delivering them to your office. We will also be onsite to facilitate the project with your team. For more specifics on the projects you can choose from visit uwswpa.org/be-a-volunteer/.

• United Way can help identify or customize a project that benefits an agency partner. Projects are based on their needs and your interest, such as painting a mural in a youth maker space, hosting a social event with isolated seniors, presenting a career development workshop for youth and more.
ADOPT-A-SCHOOL

Adopt-A-School allows your company to engage children in valuable learning and exploration experiences while creating a meaningful volunteer opportunity for your employees. United Way’s Adopt-A-School program helps meet the needs of underserved schools and students. Through the program, United Way will help you identify a school to partner with, based upon your company’s priorities and desired volunteer experiences. Throughout the partnership, United Way will serve as a liaison between your company and the school to assist with setting an events calendar for the year and handling all coordination and communications.

Events may include hands-on activities such as teaching financial literacy, hosting mock trials or reading to classrooms; career learning experiences, such as field trips to your company’s offices or plants, career days hosted at the school; collection drives for essentials for students like clothing, food or school supplies; or Days of Caring to complete projects such as a library renovation or landscaping.

To participate in Adopt-A-school, companies invest $10,000 per year for a minimum of two years. The investment is used to facilitate the calendar of events throughout the year.
DIY COLLECTION DRIVES

United Way’s agency partners have a need for supplies all year long. Those who are struggling often lack every day essentials that many of us take for granted. You can help by hosting a collection drive of essential items that can help make life easier for people who need a helping hand. United Way makes it easy by giving you suggested items to collect and posters and other communication tools to use. To get started, visit our online toolkit: uwswpa.org/collection-drive-toolkit

Below are the current items in highest need in our area. Please select any of the packages or any items from the list to collect. All items must be new.

HYGIENE KIT - Help individuals feel or look their best by providing essential personal care items.
- Gender neutral body wash
- Comb and brush
- Men’s or women’s deodorant
- Chapstick
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Face wash or cream
- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Lotion
- Tampons
- Sanitary pads

CLEAN START KIT - Help families keep their homes clean and safe by providing essential homecare supplies.
- Laundry baskets
- Detergent
- Mops
- Floor cleaner
- Clorox wipes
- Sponges
- Brooms and dustpans
- Toilet paper
- Toilet bowl brushes
- Toilet bowl cleaner
- Paper towels

DIAPER DRIVE - Help support new moms by providing basic needs for their new babies.
- Diapers in sizes 2 and up
- Overnight diapers
- Wipes

PRE SCHOOL STUDENT SCHOOL BOX - Help set up pre school aged children for success as they begin their educational journey.
- Kids scissors
- Golf pencils with erasers
- Tissues
- Play-doh
- Colored dry erase markers
- Alphabet stamps
- Ink pads
- New children’s books

ELEMENTARY STUDENT SCHOOL BOX - Help prepare local kids for success in school by giving them the tools that will help them succeed.
- Markers
- Notecards
- Ruler
- Lined paper
- Folders
- Glue sticks
- 24-pack crayons
- Notebooks
- Pencils

For full instructions and tools to share your collection drive effort, please visit our online toolkit here: uwswpa.org/collection-drive-toolkit.
UNITED WAY EVENTS

When you’re ready to help, we’re ready with engaging opportunities through which corporations, individuals and other groups can mobilize and make meaningful contributions to the community. United Way plans events throughout the year that help families have access to food and other basic needs, help children have the tools they need to learn and more. United Way does all of the planning — all you have to do is show up to help. If you want to stay up to date on great events in your community, sign up for quarterly updates on what’s coming up at uwswpa.org/be-a-volunteer.
Making kits in-office along with coworkers is a great way to bring volunteerism into the work space and boosting company morale while making a difference.

**STEM Kits**

Curiosity naturally blooms in children and United Way wants to make sure every child has the chance to experiment and explore by providing hands-on learning opportunities to at-risk youth.

- Volunteers will prepare and assemble a stem kit for a child.
- Choose from a hoover craft kit or the engineering challenge kit.
- Each kit will have all the materials a child needs to participate in the STEM activity. Kits are distributed to various United Way agency partners for use.

* $4 per kit, minimum of 100 kits, need 1 hour for 15 volunteers to complete approximately 100 kits

**Literacy Kits**

Many children don’t have access to books of their own and therefore aren’t able to build critical literacy skills needed for success in their academic careers.

- Volunteers will give kids a special gift by decorating and assembling literacy kits.
- Literacy kits include new books and various tools to enhance at-home learning.

* $8 per kit, minimum of 100 kits, need 1 hour for 15 volunteers to complete approximately 40 kits
Weekend Food Bags for Children and Families

Nearly 18% of kids across Southwestern Pennsylvania do not have enough to eat, especially when they are at home and aren’t able to get breakfast and lunch at school.

• Weekend food bags are designed to ensure children (and their families) do not go hungry over the weekends or in times away from school.

• There are two options for food bags. The traditional weekend food bag feeds a child for a weekend. The family weekend food bag feeds a family of 4.

• The traditional weekend food is $6-8 per bag, minimum of 100 bags, need 1 hour for 15 volunteers to pack 100 bags.

• The weekend food bag for families is $20 per bag, minimum of 100 bags, need 1 hour for 15 volunteers to pack 75 bags.

Hygiene Kits

Underserved individuals and families often don’t have access to items readily used and taken for granted such as soap, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, and conditioner which leads to embarrassment of their physical appearance and hygiene. By collecting hygiene items, you can help eliminate a stressor for a family when having to choose between meeting a basic need or a personal care item.

• Volunteers will collect personal hygiene products and assemble them into kits to be distributed to individuals and families in need in Pittsburgh and the surrounding region.

$9 per kit, minimum of 100 kits, need 1 hour for 15 volunteers to complete approximately 100 kits.
THE POVERTY SPIRAL

Here’s the Scenario
Every day, thousands of our neighbors who live on the edge of poverty face decisions with enormous consequences. Good choices are rarely obvious, and it’s often a case of one step forward, two steps back.
The Poverty Spiral Simulation offers your team a chance for a unique bonding activity while they also gain a deeper understanding of how families in our community struggle to meet basic needs. Your employees have made generous donations to make United Way’s work possible, so we want to give them valuable insight on how vital their support is for the lives of so many.
Organizations who have already participated say it had a tremendous impact on their employees and really brought their team together in a meaningful, positive way. Thank you for your support of United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania. By helping foster empathy and creating a real connection with others, you’re helping make this a stronger community for us all.

Description
• Simulation play takes between 60 and 90 minutes.
• In teams of 6, participants will be assigned a profile of a real individual who is struggling financially.
• Participants will move their tokens based on decisions they make in attempt to navigate the spiral.

Objective
• Inspire meaningful conversation between co-workers on issues affecting our community.
• Gain a greater level of empathy for people in our community who face challenges that can critically impact their lives on a daily basis.
• Better understand how supporting those in need can positively impact the community.
If you are interested in more information contact Wendy Koch, Director of Volunteer Engagement, at: Wendy.Koch@unitedwayswpa.org.