



United Way of
Southwestern Pennsylvania

UNITED WAY VOLUNTEER AND ENGAGEMENT PORTFOLIO



SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Neighborhood schools play a major role in building strong foundations for the students they serve. And, they are an especially critical partner for students and families who live in under-served areas. Without them, many students would not be able to access vital resources that help them achieve success. As needs continue to grow, schools can rely heavily on corporate partners to help them provide tools and resources they may not have the ability or capacity to provide.

But, it's a win-win. Because companies that engage employees within the local community report increases in employee satisfaction and retention. Corporate volunteering has long been used to enhance companies' reputations as well as engage stakeholders. United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania has been a central partner in bringing together companies and schools to benefit children and their families across the region.

United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania offers three meaningful ways for companies and individuals to engage with local schools.

Adopt-A-School

The Adopt-A-School program offers your company an opportunity to engage children in valuable learning and exploration experiences while creating meaningful volunteer opportunities for your employees. 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. School partners are typically elementary or middle schools.



United Way of
Southwestern Pennsylvania



SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES (CONT.)

School Champion

The School Champion Program allows companies to make investments to improve local schools without on-going volunteer commitments. Through the School Champion program, United Way will help you identify a school partner, based upon your company's priorities. Once the school is identified, United Way will serve as a liaison to assist the school with development of a project plan, purchasing and implementation. Often, the School Champion Program is used as a vehicle to create or improve a STEM lab/Maker Space at the school. Other examples of this program include the purchasing of resources including new books and materials for school libraries, food and hygiene pantry supplies or attendance incentives.

To participate in the School Champion program, companies can select any budget over \$5,000 to invest. The program can be a one-time gift or a multi-year commitment.

Companies in a Classroom

The Companies in a Classroom program allows companies to make a small investment in a local school and provide their employees with an in-office and in-classroom volunteer experience. (In-classroom volunteer experiences are based upon school guidelines.) Through the Companies in a Classroom program, United Way will help you identify a school partner based on proximity to your company's headquarters as well as the schools with the most pressing needs. The company investment is used to purchase resources for the classroom library and create a hands-on lesson plan kit for teachers to use when reading the recommended books. Company representatives will also have the opportunity, when available, to join the classroom to read one of the new book titles to the students.

To participate in the Companies in a Classroom program, companies invest a one-time gift of \$1,500. School partners are pre-schools or elementary schools.



United Way of
Southwestern Pennsylvania

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: uwsdpa.org/collection-drive-toolkit

Below are the current items in highest need in our area.

HYGIENE KIT - Help individuals feel or look their best by providing essential personal care, such as body wash, deodorant, and lotion.

CLEAN START KIT - Help families keep their homes clean and safe by providing essential homecare supplies, such as floor cleaner, Clorox wipes and paper towels.

DIAPER DRIVE - Help support new moms by providing basic needs for their new babies, including diapers and wipes.

PRE SCHOOL STUDENT SCHOOL BOX - Help set up preschool aged children for success as they begin their educational journey with items such as Play-Doh, alphabet stamps, and 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, such as crayons, notebooks and pencils.

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



United Way of
Southwestern Pennsylvania

IN-OFFICE VOLUNTEER KITS

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.
- 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.

\$8 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.

\$10 per kit, minimum of 100 kits, need 1 hour for 15 volunteers to complete approximately 40 kits

Weekend Food Bags for Children

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 do not go hungry over the weekends or in times away from school by providing food for breakfast, lunches and snacks.
- Weekend food bags are distributed to school and United Way agency partners

\$10 per bag, minimum of 100 bags, need 1 hour for 15 volunteers to pack 100 bags.



United Way of
Southwestern Pennsylvania

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.

Description

- The simulation takes 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.

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.



United Way of
Southwestern Pennsylvania



RACIAL WEALTH GAP SIMULATOR

EXPLORING THE ROOT CAUSES OF WEALTH INEQUITIES

In the United States, White families on average have accumulated more than \$919,000 in wealth by age 60. However, Black individuals at the same stage of life only have \$140,000 in family wealth on average.* This wide disparity impacts health, life expectancy, and access to upward mobility. It also takes an enormous toll on our nation's economic capacity and the sustainability of our communities.

The Racial Wealth Gap Simulator

United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania believes the first step to addressing inequities is understanding the underlying factors that have created them in the first place. You may be surprised to discover that many laws and policies put in place to advance our society have in reality contributed to disenfranchising people of color in terms of housing, employment and access to capital.

To help elevate the discussion and build shared understanding of the facts, United Way introduces a highly engaging simulation designed for individuals and groups in our community.

How it Works

A trained United Way staff member leads the simulation for the group – either virtually or in-person – as participants accumulate or lose tokens representing wealth. This role-playing activity has been designed to challenge assumptions and stimulate discussion of how past policies and practices continue to have real-world consequences in our community.

The simulation typically takes 90 minutes and has been designed for groups of up to 48 people.

Knowledge Helps Close the Gap

Would you like to find out more about the Wealth Gap Simulator, and schedule the one-of-a-kind experience for your group or workplace? Please contact Wendy Koch at wendy.koch@unitedwayswpa.org.



Black children under 18 are nearly 3x more likely to live in poverty than White children.

– 2021 U.S. Census Report

Only 48% of Black families are homeowners compared to nearly 75% of White families.

– 2019 Survey of Consumer Finances

Nationwide, 22% of Black households experience food insecurity vs. 7% of White households.

– Based on 2020 statistics, USDA Food Security in America

**Urban Institute calculations from Survey of Changes in Family Finances, 1983-2016.*



The Racial Wealth Gap Simulator is presented by United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania based on an original program designed by Bread for the World.



United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania

If you are interested in more information contact Wendy Koch, Director of Volunteer Engagement, at: Wendy.Koch@unitedwayswpa.org. United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania serves Allegheny, Armstrong, Butler, Fayette, and Westmoreland Counties.