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United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania receives \$50,000 grant from Bayer Fund
Donation to help eliminate food insecurity through "Community Food Solutions" initiative

ALLEGHENY COUNTY / [January 9, 2024] – United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania has received a \$50,000 grant from Bayer Fund, a philanthropic arm of Bayer in the U.S., for its Community Food Solutions initiative and in support of a large-scale food packing event. In the spring of 2024, this event will bring together 200 volunteers to provide more than 1,700 healthy meal boxes to families in the area.

United Way's Community Food Solutions initiative unites local thought leaders and key stakeholders in the areas of healthy food and food security to collaborate in creating equitable access to healthy, affordable food. The program supports United Way's efforts to help families across the region meet their basic needs.

"United Way is extremely fortunate to have the support of Bayer Fund for our Community Food Solutions collaborative," said Sally Ellwein, director, Meeting Basic Needs, United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania. "Food insecurity doesn't exist in isolation and there are many factors that play into whether a family has equitable access to nutritious food. This grant will enable us to convene experts in our region to systematically address food insecurity and develop and implement pilot projects to increase access to healthy, sustainable food sources where they are needed most."

Many areas in and around the region are food deserts, meaning there is limited or no convenient access to healthy and affordable food. Also, many working families do not earn enough to pay for basic needs, including food, despite sometimes working two or more jobs. According to United Way's ALICE (Asset limited, income constrained, and employed) data set, 39% of people in United Way's five-county service area do not earn enough to pay for daily living expenses such as housing, food, child care, health care, transportation and basic technology. With the help of Bayer Fund, United Way is able to better coordinate with partner agencies working to overcome food insecurity.

So far, Community Food Solutions has established a steering committee of local experts. The program has funded 17 community led projects that address food insecurity. These include community gardens, hot communal meals, before- and after-school snacks for students and refrigerators where community members can pick out free perishable goods. Grantees receive technical assistance and support from members of the steering committee.

“Through Bayer Fund’s giving, we’re enabling and strengthening organizations that are working to make real, sustainable impacts in their local communities across the United States,” said Al Mitchell, president of Bayer Fund. “Programs like United Way’s Community Food Solutions bring providers together to innovate and collaborate, and we’re proud to play a role with helping even more people in our community have access to healthy, nutritious food.”

In 2023, Bayer Fund awarded \$12.1 million in grants to more than 2,300 charities and nonprofit organizations to help address essential needs in food and nutrition, STEM education and health and wellness. Since 2017, nonprofit organizations across the U.S. have received nearly \$90 million from the Bayer Fund.

To learn more about United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania visit [uwswpa.org](https://www.uwswpa.org).

To learn more about Bayer Fund visit [fund.bayer.us](https://www.fund.bayer.us).

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About United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania – United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania, serving Allegheny, Armstrong, Butler, Fayette and Westmoreland counties, convenes and mobilizes the caring power of individuals, the business community and organizations to help local people meet basic needs, move toward financial stability and build for success in school and life. Together with dedicated donors and caring volunteers, United Way creates long-lasting change for the betterment of our community.

About Bayer Fund – Bayer Fund, a philanthropic arm of Bayer in the U.S., is a nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening the communities where Bayer customers and employees live and work by providing funding for food and nutrition, education, and health and wellness projects. For more Information visit <https://www.fund.bayer.us>.