

EMILY SCHMIDLAPP

MANAGER, MOVING TO FINANCIAL STABILITY,
COMMUNITY IMPACT



Tell me about your role at United Way.

I'm part of the Community Impact team where I have the privilege of supporting our partners in the Moving to Financial Stability portfolio. I also dedicate much of my time to two of our Community Change Collaboratives: the Free Tax Prep Coalition and the Alliance for Access and Assets.

What are two things you enjoy most about working here?

The people and the people! I absolutely love the team here at United Way. My colleagues are truly amazing. And then there are the people I get to work with outside of United Way—our funded partners, our tax partners—who are such a dedicated and inspiring group. The work we do is very important, but for me personally, it's the relationships I get to build with all these incredible groups that brings me the most joy.

What's a project or accomplishment you're most proud of?

I'm really proud of expanding the Free Tax Prep Coalition this year, and adding a new site on the North Side, which is where I grew up. This program means so much to so many members of our community. Last year, the Free Tax Prep Coalition generated nearly \$12 million in refunds across our region.

What are your interests outside of work?

I love spending time with my daughter and family, and I've recently reignited a passion for rock bouldering! I also really enjoy cooking, eating and talking about delicious food and hanging out with friends.

What's a fun fact about you that most people don't know?

I've participated in storytelling competitions. The Moth is a storytelling podcast that used to host story slams locally where you'd tell personal and true stories based on a specific theme, and then be judged on it. The story had to be under five minutes and you'd be on stage with no notes, though you could prepare ahead of time. I've done it a few times and I even won! This kind of performing struck a good balance for me as someone who loves attention, but doesn't want to look foolish.

If you could have any superpower, what would it be and why?

Karaoke queen! I've always dreamed of having a big presence on the karaoke stage, but I've never actually done it because I'm too scared of looking foolish! But the free-spirited, communal joy of karaoke really excites me and I want to be on stage bringing it. If I had a superpower, it would be crazy karaoke confidence and charisma!