

30BY 2030

United
Way



United Way of Lewis County

30% OUT OF POVERTY BY 2030

FIRST QUARTER

COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

July - Sept, 2022



UNITED to Reduce Poverty in Lewis County

United Way of Lewis County has evolved from its roots as a fundraising organization to a critical community impact organization mobilizing local partners - including businesses, community leaders, and community residents - to break the cycle of poverty and expand opportunities for people to become self-sufficient.

We unite community resources to invest in solutions that lift families out of poverty in our community. Our board, staff, donors, volunteers, and community partners are committed to creating lasting, sustainable changes that transform lives and build a thriving community for us all.

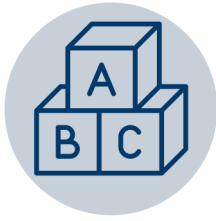
Our community impact approach is unique - we work towards changing systems so that individuals and families can overcome challenges altogether. It is about investing in the present and the foundation, as well as, the future.

A healthy community learns well, earns well, and lives well. We believe that every family deserves a fighting chance at success. With your support, together, we can change the story for struggling families in Lewis County.

United Way of Lewis County's new "Cradle to Career and Beyond" strategic direction supports programming in early childhood education, elementary reading, middle and high school success, career and college readiness, and continuing education.

Our goal is to help create a culture of inclusive educational opportunities to foster lifelong learning in Lewis County.

United Way of Lewis County is committed to serving our community members of all demographics. As part of this important work, our Board has initiated an equity and inclusion focus group to study and apply the principals of equity.



Early Childhood Education

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

United Way of Lewis County and the Lewis County Rotary Foundation are proud to sponsor Dolly Parton's Imagination Library in Lewis County. The Imagination Library program provides free, high quality, age appropriate books to children birth to five years of age living in Lewis County. The program is free to all children regardless of a family's income. 7904 books have been delivered to children. There are currently 2642 kids enrolled in the program. 196 new registrations were received this quarter.



Kindergarten Readiness Calendar



500 calendars were printed and given out. 250 in English and 250 in Spanish. Locations which received the calendars to hand out were Centralia College's ECEAP Program, and local businesses. Some of those businesses were Taqueria Lolita, Taqueria Juquilita, South Market Laundry, Plaza Jalisco, Taco El Rey, Azteca, and El Amigo Market.

Save The Children Book Delivery

United Way of Lewis County accepted a delivery of 2000 new books from Save the Children. The books were part of [The Peace and Equality Collection developed by Room to Read](#). The books were distributed to community partners and businesses to be handed out to their patrons. Centralia College's ECEAP program, Chehalis Children's Clinic, Cascade Mental Health Group, Kids Read Books, Centralia Prevention Coalition, Reading Buddy Program, Taqueria Lolita, Taqueria Juquilita, South Market Laundry, Plaza Jalisco, Taco el Rey, Azteca, El Amigo Market, Casa Ramos, Vicky's Salvadorian Restaurant, Los Agaves. Additionally, 266 books were handed out during the Mexican Rodeo in Centralia at the Southwest Washington Fairgrounds.





Elementary Reading

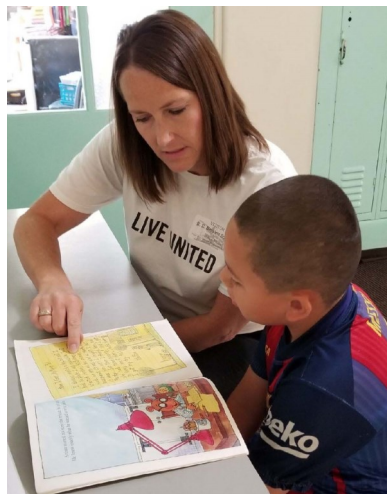
Reading Buddies



United Way of Lewis County brought back the Reading Buddies program for the 2022-2023 school year. The last time Reading Buddies was in Lewis County was in 2018. It was ran out of Thurston County United Way and included 3 elementary schools; Napavine, Centralia, and Chehalis.

This year nine school districts are participating in the Reading Buddies program. Those school districts are Centralia, Chehalis, Napavine, Toledo, Winlock, Onalaska, Adna, Mossyrock, and Morton.

Volunteers work directly with students on a weekly basis and have the power to help boost academic achievement for a child - setting the right track for a brighter future. Studies show that if a child is not reading at grade level by 3rd grade when they reach the stage where they need to “read to learn,” it greatly impacts their ability to graduate on time. There are currently 14 volunteers signed up as Reading Buddies. They will begin volunteering in the schools in November.





Middle and High School Success

Women United, Supplies Period Program



Women United launched a new program, Supplies Period. Supplies Period is an effort to reduce the number of middle school girls who have to miss school due to period poverty. 20% of girls have to miss school due to their inability to obtain period supplies.

United Way's Women United is helping middle schools in Lewis County provide period supplies for their students, helping to reduce the number of days girls have to miss school and miss out on education. For more information on Period Poverty visit, [Home - Alliance for Period Supplies](#).



Over 8000 period supply products were collected and just over \$1800. In September, the product was donated to Centralia Middle School.



Photo courtesy of The Chronicle



Career and College Readiness

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA)

United Way of Lewis County is partnering with Centralia College to increase the completion rates of the FAFSA and WASFA in Lewis County. Washington State currently has one of the lowest completion rates in the nation. United Way's focus will be on Non-Traditional and Under-Represented students as well as potential returning adult students. We have begun having conversations with local organizations to identify workplace education opportunities. In addition, United Way provided FAFSA and WASFA information in Spanish and English to 266 participants at the Mexican Rodeo which took place at the Southwest Washington Fairgrounds in Centralia.



Women United, Career Closet



Women United, in partnership with the Visiting Nurses Foundation, launched a new program recently - the Career Closet. The Career Closet allows participants to select up to five items of professional business attire, in preparation for a job interview or first few weeks of work. Women working to lift themselves out of poverty often struggle over a variety of hurdles. Even something as simple as a job interview can be difficult if one lacks the appropriate attire to make a positive first impression. The Career Closet eliminates this hurdle, empowering women to attain financial independence in a new career by providing work-appropriate attire and resources. There are currently 8 voucher locations with Centralia College being the newest addition.



Continuing Education

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Workshops

The Community Impact Director for United Way has been providing workshops and trainings with a variety of organizations. Some of those organizations have included Centralia College and Futurus High School. Additionally, she was invited to present EDI topics during the New Mexico State United Way Conference.



Women United - Financial Mentorship Program



Women United is committed to positively impacting the lives of women and children by encouraging self-sufficiency and empowerment. Our new Financial Mentorship Initiative brings bankers with financial expertise, directly to the people who need it the most through nonprofit and community-based partnerships.

By pairing bankers with financial acumen with community members who desire financial guidance, the opportunity to share information about how to engage in the banking system safely and successfully is enhanced. This moves people away from alternative services that are often predatory, such as payday loans, rent-to-own agreements, refund anticipation loans, pawn shops and non-bank money order and check cashing.



Financial Mentorship Initiative

The Financial Mentorship Initiative is a 4-to-8 week program designed to meet clients individually at the level of financial guidance needed. The goal is for individuals to successfully move through the program with strategies and tools necessary to attain financial freedom.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

EVENTS

Power of the Purse

United Way of Lewis County hosted its annual Power of the Purse on August 2nd! The theme was the Roaring 20s and 275 women attended. The program consisted of a presentation from guest speaker, Alta Smith. Additionally, there was a fashion show featuring a few local businesses. Jacki Jewell, Director of Visiting Nurses Foundation and Women United Co-Chair, gave a presentation highlighting of Women United programs. A Woman of Distinction Award was presented to Mayor Kelly Smith Johnston.



Supplies PERIOD.

The evening highlighted and supported Women United's program Supplies Period. Product and monetary donations were made.

Over 8000 period supply products were collected and just over \$1800. The product was donated to Centralia Middle School. In addition, The Power of the Purse event raised a net profit of \$38,000 towards United Way of Lewis County.



EVENTS

Mexican Rodeo



United Way of Lewis County's affinity group focused on increasing relationships and providing resources to our Hispanic/Latin community members, set up a booth at the Mexican Rodeo which took place at the Southwest Washington Fairgrounds on September 24th. 266 bags were handed out which contained the following materials. Most of the materials were in Spanish.



- ◆ Book from the Peace and Equality Collection
- ◆ Kindergarten Readiness Calendar
- ◆ UWLC's Reading Buddy program flier
- ◆ WASFA/FAFSA information
- ◆ Migrant Education Program flier provided by the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- ◆ Resource flier provided by the Equity Institute
- ◆ Resource flier provided by the Centralia Prevention Coalition
- ◆ Resource flier, pens, and hand sanitizer provided by Valley View
- ◆ Transitional Studies information flier, ECEAP program information flier, CTE program flier, and Financial Aid form provided by Centralia College



YOUR UNITED WAY OF LEWIS COUNTY TEAM



Christian Bruhn, Executive Director

I LIVE UNITED because, "poverty is closer to home than we realize and is more than a lack of economic resources. In Lewis County, 1 in 3 families living on the edge of poverty. At United Way of Lewis County, we are dedicated to helping struggling families become self-sufficient so they can thrive."



Chastity Pennington, Community Impact Director

I LIVE UNITED because, "I believe in the power of a community that works together to change or create systems which empowers individuals and families to overcome challenges together. At United Way of Lewis County we can aid in creating sustainable programs which support a healthy community."



Chris Judd, Resource Development Director

I LIVE UNITED because, "we are only as strong as our weakest link. I want to do everything in my power to help build a strong foundation for the future of Lewis County and United Way is leading that effort."



Jamie Cline, Office Manager

I LIVE UNITED because, "we need a voice for our community and at United Way, I can be that voice that connects people with the resources towards a good education, whether for a child or adult. I want to show people that they deserve the same chances and opportunities as anyone else."