

2022 United Way Campaign Talking Points

For staff, board and volunteers

Campaign Theme: Community power – amplified!

- Our world looks different than any of us could have imagined a few years ago.
- From social, racial and health inequities exposed and exacerbated by COVID to economic uncertainty to the war in Ukraine and its global impacts – the challenges we face are great.
- At the same time, our community’s ability to come together to address shared priorities has never been more inspiring – or more essential.
- We have seen our community rally in response to crisis and injustices.
- Community power – people helping people – is what United Way of Northwest Vermont is all about.
- United Way amplifies community power through collaboration, leveraging resources for greater impact, and unifying our region around local, community-driven solutions focused on 5 key strategies: meeting basic needs, promoting mental health, reducing substance misuse, fostering financial stability, and supporting families.
- Our work does not just put a band-aid on community problems—we bring people together from all sectors of public and private life to devise long-term solutions to complex community issues that no single organization can solve alone.
- The challenges before us are great but our community power is unlimited.
- That’s the power of #LivingUnited!

How We’re Helping – Our Investment

- **United Way’s *Total Community Investment* will be more than \$6.3 million in 2022.** The *Total Community Investment* includes Community Funding Grants, United Way’s own programs and initiatives, community engagement, and the measure of our volunteer impact as a dollar value.
- The community defines our priorities. Our investments address **5 Key Strategies: Meeting Basic Needs, Promoting Mental Health, Reducing Substance Misuse, Fostering Financial Stability, and Supporting Families.**



Thanks to generous community giving in our 2021 campaign, United Way is investing \$1.3 million in community funding in 2022 including:

- o Community funding grants to 33 funded partners collectively serving 114,000 people in Chittenden, Franklin, and Grand Isle Counties;
- o Sub-grants to 14 local programs and initiatives focused on reducing substance misuse among youth and young adults;
- o Special initiatives including a new Hickock and Boardman Equity Advancement Fund – funded by their record setting 2021 campaign this \$100,000 fund will. Improve, expand, augment our FY23 portfolio of grants to advance inclusion, equity, diversity and access goals and be responsive to needs and opportunities during a multi-year funding cycle.

Advancing equity through grants to:

- o Fill gaps (in portfolio and/or in community)
 - populations (e.g., people with disabilities, older adults)
 - geography (related to access)
- o Increasing access
 - decreasing gaps and/or barriers
- o Advance organizations' development re: equity goals & priorities
 - training, professional development
 - leadership support

We are making significant investments in two regional special initiatives addressing our key strategies:

- Our **Mental Health Initiative**, launched in January 2022, is bringing the region together to strengthen the system of care by focusing on three initiative priorities: addressing Vermont's critical labor shortage of mental health providers, strengthening and aligning resources for suicide prevention and responding to the rise in youth mental health needs.
- The **Northwest Vermont Regional Prevention Network**, launched in December 2021 as part of a 5-year strategic plan, is unifying the region around a holistic and comprehensive approach to preventing substance misuse among youth and young adults.
- United Way also runs our own programs, including:
 - o Working Bridges
 - o Common Good Vermont
 - o Foster Grandparents
 - o RSVP
 - o Bone Builders
 - o Volunteer Connection
- Collectively, United Way's community investments serve people and families of all ages and all backgrounds, living in every community and town in Northwest Vermont.



Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Access

- United Way's work has always focused on social justice and fixing inequities in our systems. Equity and inclusion are foundational principles and values, we are partners in this work – not saviors and thus seek to lift and center community voice in addressing our key strategies.
- But we know that we cannot continue this work without addressing the unique and exacerbated inequities in our system for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) communities specifically.
- Additionally, we know that we must focus on accessibility – for those with disabilities as well as those facing the intersectionality of race, gender, sexuality, and other systemic barriers that work much like physical barriers to limit our neighbor's participation in our community.
- We are actively working to address these inequities and create increased engagement in three core areas
 - Education – Amplify and increase both internal/external training opportunities for staff, volunteers, and community. Focus on ways to address micro-aggressions, calling in/out and the use of case studies to fuel dialogue and systems change.
 - Communication – Provide opportunities to amplify underrepresented voices, advocate for data systems and talk specifically about our work including what we have done and what's next.
 - Investment – Leverage our position to provide financial and technical assistance support to reduce barriers and change systems.
 - This includes creating the Hickock & Boardman Equity Advancement Fund to provide some additional resources to these efforts.

The Ask – Join Us!

- Community power is strongest when everyone participates.
- We all have valuable contributions to make and it's going to take all of us working together to build a better future.
- Join us as we reimagine and rebuild a stronger, more resilient region.
- We're amplifying YOUR community power to not only respond to our region's greatest challenges but to recover and rebuild.
- Together, we can build strong communities where everyone can thrive.
- Please GIVE, ADVOCATE or VOLUNTEER.
- Visit us at unitedwaynwvt.org to learn more.

