

1917



# » 2017



**GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.**  
 **UNITEDWAYSEM.ORG**

660 Woodward Ave. • Suite 300 • Detroit, Michigan 48226





# We Live United for universal success and prosperity in Southeastern Michigan, to lift people up and lead our community forward.



Dear United Way Supporter,

In 2017, United Way for Southeastern Michigan marked its centennial year in our community.

I am honored to serve you and our community during this historic time. And I am sincerely inspired by the dedication and commitment of partners like you. It is with heartfelt gratitude that I extend my thanks and appreciation for your support.

While our nation faced a year of political and ideological divisiveness, United Way continued its mission to bring people of all different backgrounds together. Whether red or blue, black or white and everything in between, we all share commonalities: hopes and dreams for a better tomorrow.

Throughout this annual report, you'll see examples of the lives you helped impact for the better. Thanks to our partners and supporters like you, more children were able to access healthy meals. More parents took workshops to strengthen their caregiving skills. More students got out of the classroom and into a career setting to prepare for life after graduation. And more individuals were able to access financial coaching resources to support their households.

These stories fill me with optimism, but there is still *more* work to be done.

As a business leader and community member, I believe we all have a responsibility to make our region a great place to live, work and play. But in order for our region to prosper, we must have an educated, skilled workforce and jobs that can support a family's needs. United Way has a plan to get us there — but we will need you by our side.

I hope you are inspired by what you helped accomplish in 2017, and I hope you're energized for the year ahead. It's going to be a busy one.

Thank you,

Mark Petroff

2017/2018 Board Chair, United Way for Southeastern Michigan  
President and CEO, Marketing Associates LLC







# OUR YEAR

IN REVIEW



With a nod to the past and a look toward the future, United Way for Southeastern Michigan's 2016-17 fiscal year focused on a century of impact, widespread accomplishments and a world of potential for our region.



In 2017, we marked 100 years of Living United in Southeastern Michigan. A century of existence is a major milestone for any organization, and for United Way, it's made possible only through the generosity and dedication of countless individuals, civic-minded employers, and our nonprofit and corporate partners.

Our donors helped parents access caregiving resources so that children enter kindergarten with the skills they need to succeed. Our volunteers gave their time to make sure more children had a healthy meal to eat. Our advocates spoke out to tip the scales toward policies that protect families. Our employees answered the call to compassionately help families find food, shelter and medical resources through our 2-1-1 helpline.

This is just the short list of all the voices, united under one mission, that make an impact in Southeastern Michigan. Together, we've created a legacy and a movement around

what it means to Live United, building healthy communities where people can access a quality education and good jobs to support the most important resource in our community — our children.

During our centennial year, we focused on making it even easier for everyone in the community to give back in a meaningful way, from volunteering to spreading awareness about — and investing in — our many programs.

"Our supporters are the heartbeat of United Way," said Mark Petroff, United Way for Southeastern Michigan board chair, and president and CEO of Marketing Associates. "Each and every person has a talent and gift to share, and we are grateful for our supporters who continue to share their gifts with us."

From pilot programs to new partnerships, we've demonstrated that we can accomplish more when we work together.





*Between the resilience of the people who live in Detroit and United Way's heart for service, I was really inspired.*

— Mahogany Jones  
Detroit poet, community volunteer

## ON OUR WAY

"Together, we are a song. We are a triumphant troop, walking united for another hundred years."

That's how recording artist, arts educator and United Way brand ambassador Mahogany Jones summed up United Way's work in the new brand anthem video we debuted over the summer. During a community search for a local poet, Mahogany's "On Our Way" submission was a clear winner.

"It's an honor," Mahogany said of being chosen to star in the video. "United Way really supports a lot of the things I believe in. Between the resilience of the people who live in Detroit and United Way's heart for service, I was really inspired."

The end result was a two-minute and 43-second tribute to the community. To watch it, visit [UnitedWaySEM.org/OnOurWay](https://UnitedWaySEM.org/OnOurWay).





In 2017, we teamed up with the city of Detroit and Mayor Mike Duggan to help more Detroit families recoup the Earned Income Tax Credit. As a result, an additional 18,150 Detroit households received, on average, an extra \$4,000 in tax refunds.

## » FINDING THEIR FUTURE

Helping families keep more of what they earn is a big part of our work at United Way, but we're also focused on making sure the next generation is prepared to earn those dollars. As Detroit schools continued to make national headlines, we continued our long-term commitment to students through our partnership with the Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD).

We're working to transform the student experience and make sure they graduate prepared to successfully navigate life post-graduation in both a college and a career field. Today, we're in 16 DPSCD schools with 8,500 students, giving them hands-on experience in fields like firefighting, science and medicine, information technology, and media, coupled with rigorous academics to prepare them for college.

The goal is that by graduation, all students will have received some college credit and/or an industry-valued job certification with the 21st century skills necessary for success.

We play a unique role in this effort, working with our corporate partners to coordinate work-based learning opportunities throughout the year where students can see their coursework come to life. This past year, students learned about emerging professions through a series of career fairs we launched in May 2017, as busloads of high school juniors and seniors visited Cobo Hall for the Career Connections fair.

For the event, we partnered with the city of Detroit and its Grow Detroit's Young Talent program to help students get a paid summer internship. In most cases, it was their first real job and helped them learn about professional careers. A total of 350 students participated in internships in a professional career setting in 2017.

"With the return of local control to the Detroit Board of Education, we have found tremendous champions inside the district who are helping to strengthen alignment between United Way and DPSCD," said Tammie Jones, vice president, education and economic prosperity for United Way.

"We were honored to host a welcoming reception for the new superintendent, Dr. Nikolai Vitti, in partnership with members of the Detroit Board of Education. We will continue to provide targeted support within schools and to the district's central office to ensure students are on track to graduate prepared for college and career success."

With donor support, we can expand our efforts to 20 schools by 2019, giving 10,000 students access to these opportunities.



Attendees of our Career Connections fair celebrated being hired for summer internships (top). They also were able to network with representatives from dozens of local corporations (bottom).

## » PARTNERING FOR PROSPERITY

It was a big year for collaborative partnerships, including continued alignment with the city of Detroit.

During tax time, Detroit families have left money on the table – serious money. It's estimated that \$80 million in Earned Income Tax Credit refunds were not claimed by 26,000 eligible Detroit families in their 2015 taxes. This credit is only available for working individuals and is touted as an effective anti-poverty measure to help families with low to moderate incomes.

In 2017, we teamed with the city and our funded partner, Accounting Aid Society, to put more of this money in the pockets of eligible families. We provided funding for free tax prep services, made appointment referrals via our 2-1-1 call center, recruited volunteers and marketed the program to the community.

The result? An additional 18,150 Detroit households filed Earned Income Tax Credit returns for their 2016 tax year, recouping \$74 million of the \$80 million. On average, that's an extra \$4,000 in combined state and federal returns per family. That money was used to help with bills, car payments and education costs.

"This money belongs to families in our region, but too many of them were failing to claim it, because taxes are complicated and most people don't know all of the credits they qualify for," said Nick Piper, financial stability manager at United Way.

"With our help, thousands of families were able to add a bit more money to their budgets this year," Nick said. "This work is a prime example of the impact made when organizations work toward a common goal. That's the value United Way brings to solving problems in our community."

Our efforts didn't stop in Detroit. With our partners at Accounting Aid Society, we helped 16,142 people in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties file their taxes for free.

In addition to helping residents keep more of what they earned, we also offered courses to help them advance their careers.

In the coming year, we'll continue this work to help people acquire the skills necessary for jobs that pay family-sustaining wages. We're also exploring how we can best assist our workforce development partners through capacity building, trainings and more.



## >> FUELING THEIR SUCCESS

Of course, students can't reach their full potential if they're hungry. That's why we continued our Meet Up and Eat Up work to ensure kids 18 and younger have access to free, nutritious meals. In summer 2017, we increased meals served to 1.5 million, up from 1.2 million in 2016. Yet there are far too many kids we haven't reached.

Our team of experts is working with community partners one-by-one to make sure every child can access a healthy meal through Meet Up and Eat Up site expansion and outreach efforts. Continued donor support is vital to expanding our reach.

In addition to our summer Meet Up and Eat Up work, we're renewing a focus on school breakfast because we know that students who start the school day on an empty stomach struggle to learn.

"By offering flexibility to students and making it simple for them to eat as their day begins, their minds are sharper and their attention span is longer," said Sara Gold, director of Healthy Kids at United Way. "When they can focus in the classroom, they learn more and set themselves up for long-term success. By eating breakfast each day, they're also creating healthy habits that can last a lifetime."

In 2016-17, we launched alternative breakfast models in 16 schools. One such model is a grab-and-go food cart, which has more than tripled student participation at Hazel Park High School. Three months in, an average of 354 students were getting a quick, healthy breakfast for free each school day. With your help, we hope to connect 125,000 kids with school breakfast each day this year.

In addition to expanding access to high-quality, nutritious foods, we want to ensure that parents and caregivers support healthy eating behaviors. That's why we've piloted two new nutrition education programs this year that teach parents how to help their kids become healthy, happy eaters.

"We want parents and caregivers to be healthy role models," said Lily Doherty, United Way's registered dietitian, who leads nutrition workshops. "We also want them to feel like they have a space to ask questions and share ideas. United Way is about building communities of support."







*Fit Kids supported me. I brag about Fit Kids no matter where I go because of the positive impact that it's had in my life."*

— Christine Walls  
Parent of three girls, Detroit resident

## TOP FIVE BIGGEST COMMUNITY NEEDS:

- 1 ELECTRIC
- 2 GAS
- 3 WATER
- 4 RENT PAYMENT ASSISTANCE
- 5 COMMUNITY SHELTERS

## » WHEN YOU'RE IN NEED, DIAL 2-1-1

Food scarcity is just one of many issues families face. But our 2-1-1 team is always there to answer the call, every minute of every single day. More than 234,000 people reached out to 2-1-1 for assistance for utilities, food, shelter and more last year.

Whether it was via phone call, email or online chat, we connected those people to the help they needed. One of many success stories involves the Children's Healthcare Access Program (CHAP), which connects parents with routine and preventative medical care options for their children, reduces emergency room visits, and increases overall health and well-being. We screened more than 6,000 families to determine if they were eligible for health care assistance and connected 1,627 to CHAP as a result of those screenings. When kids get the preventative health care they need, they don't miss as many school days and their parents don't miss out on paychecks to care for them.

2-1-1 also connects families to health programs like Fit Kids, which mom Christine Walls credits with turning her family's health around.

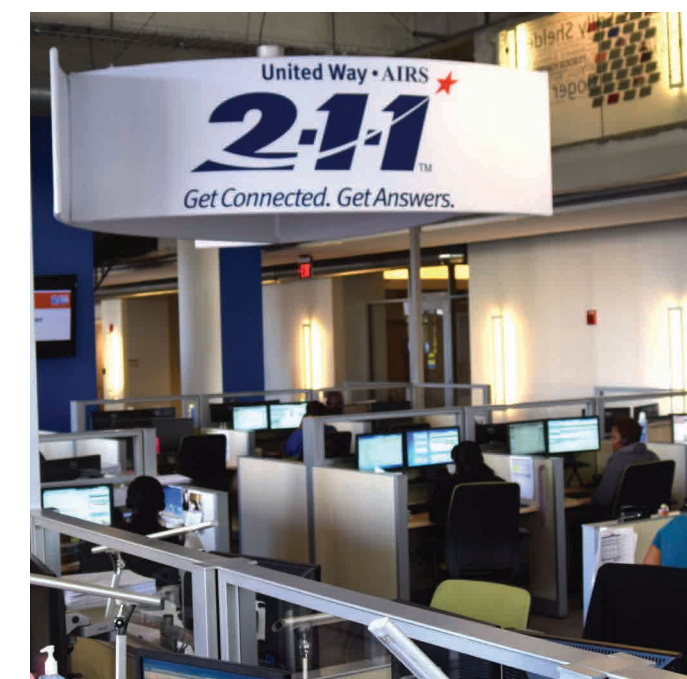
The family has dropped pounds and kept them off, and they've improved their overall fitness. Exercise no longer feels like a chore.

"I was at a rough point in my life," Christine said. "I didn't know what I was going to do. I didn't know how to do it and I didn't know if I was going to be judged because, looking at how much weight my kids had gained, I didn't want to go anywhere. Fit Kids supported me. I brag about Fit Kids no matter where I go because of the positive impact that it's had in my life."

Our 2-1-1 team also enrolled 29,848 families into the DTE Energy Low Income Self-Sufficiency Plan (LSP), which

helps qualifying families find support for utility costs. LSP has a 92 percent success rate in helping residents maintain utility service, and participants learn to reduce energy consumption and monitor energy usage more closely as they take steps to improve their financial situation.

But the need is still great. A recent report conducted by the Michigan Association of United Ways found that 40 percent of Michigan households struggle to pay basic bills — many despite having some form of income. Our 2-1-1 center reported that 17,760 callers were not able to access resources. In some cases, callers couldn't meet eligibility requirements. But in most cases, resources were simply tapped out. And as public assistance funding continues to experience cuts, many working families are just one job loss or illness away from crisis. That's why donor dollars are crucial to this work.



Our 2-1-1 team is there to answer the call, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Theresa Trowell answers 2-1-1 calls (top).



## PREPARING THE FUTURE

We know when parents have their needs met, they're better able to support their families. By working with parents and caregivers, our Bib to Backpack team is making sure young children get the best care possible during the most important time in their development.

It's all grounded within our network of Early Learning Communities (ELCs), which serve more than 12,000 people each year. ELCs are operated by funded partners and offer classes in child care and development, along with other supports such as lending libraries, networking opportunities, and play and learn groups.

Our ELC partners serve all the adults who care for children while we work directly with child care providers in their centers and homes as part of two state programs: Great Start to Quality and Race to the Top. We have been the state's chosen partner for this work in Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties since both programs were established (in 2009 and 2015, respectively). Through Great Start to Quality, we train providers in specialized topics, such as caring for kids with special needs. Through Race to the Top, we offer cohort-based trainings and provide important safety items, such as car seats and carbon monoxide detectors, to hundreds of child care providers.

The federal government has taken notice of our impact. For the second time, we were awarded a \$6 million Social Innovation Fund grant, this time to design and test ways to assist families in setting and meeting goals that help support their children's well-being. We're trusted stewards of this money, and work funded by our first SIF grant helped more than 25,000 children improve their literacy, learn about the importance of nutrition and more.



"If families are supported in focusing on their goals, their children will be supported developmentally," said Jeff Miles, Social Innovation Fund manager at United Way. "Then those kids – our community's most precious resource – will enter kindergarten ready to learn and to flourish."

One way we support children is through the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ). Because of our investment, this tool is available for free throughout the tri-county area, helping parents and caregivers recognize developmental delays in children from birth to age 5. Our network of funded partners offers support and resources to help parents get their kids back on track.

With 37,000 ASQ screenings completed last year, we can learn how many children we're helping and how many need additional resources to catch up to their peers. By analyzing this information, we can continue to close the developmental readiness gap.



Macomb Family Services host one of many play and learn groups funded through our 2011 SIF grant. There, parents and children participate in educational activities that they can replicate at home to continue the learning process. Activities include using glue sticks (top) and learning about colors and textures (left). At the end of each class, attendees are able to choose a book to take home (above).





**UNITED WAY**  
**ADVOCATES SENT**  
**1,409** LETTERS  
 TO LAWMAKERS

Visit [UnitedWaySEM.org/AdvocacyAlerts](https://UnitedWaySEM.org/AdvocacyAlerts)  
 to sign up for advocacy alerts.

## **ADVOCATING FOR SMART POLICIES**

Children and families were top of mind for our advocacy team last year, as we spoke out on a range of pressing policy issues that impact households across the region.

Advocates from across our community took action in support of the causes they are passionate about, sending 1,409 letters to lawmakers for two health care campaigns alone — one to maintain health care services provided by the Affordable Care Act and another to preserve funding for the Children’s Health Insurance Program.

“This year, our advocates stood up in a big way for quality affordable health care, strong child nutrition policy and the voting rights of every citizen,” said Kyle DuBuc, director of public policy. “With every action we take, our

goal is to make life better for Southeastern Michigan families.”

In addition to direct advocacy campaigns, we hosted several events and training sessions for elected officials, partner agencies and community members. Newly elected lawmakers joined us to learn about our work, partner agencies participated in quarterly advocacy training seminars, and legislators and stakeholder agencies met to discuss economic pressures on working families.

We also brought our partners together under one roof to share ideas and brainstorm ways to improve our region. We hosted local nonprofit leaders for three sessions

United Way shares a statewide report on the issues most impacting families during a legislative summit (above). Ghida Dagher of United Way speaks at a forum featuring policy partners (right).

of Thought Leaders United, convened educators for regular networking sessions and gathered our funded partners on a regular basis for brainstorming sessions that featured presentations on various topics.

Ryan Hertz, president and CEO of South Oakland Shelter, said his organization has found regular United Way funded partner meetings useful.

“We learn more about other people in the community who are doing good work, and we share best practices, network and gain awareness of who does what,” Ryan said.







With the launch of our new digital portal, we nearly tripled our number of volunteers in 2016-17. They boxed up food for seniors at Focus: HOPE (left), packed literacy kits for children (top) and much more. We held an all-staff volunteer day in August where United Way employees gave back at several locations throughout our region, including HAVEN (above).

## LITERACY KIT ASSEMBLY

TOTAL #  
OF KITS  
PACKED AND  
DISTRIBUTED:

4,959

### PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS:

Thrive  
Allegis  
EY  
PwC  
Women United  
Staples  
Plante Moran  
Clarke Hill  
DTE  
Marketing Associates  
United Way



## DO-GOODING GOES DIGITAL

Our volunteers also displayed their passion for our work, and thanks to our new digital volunteer portal, they were able to easily find meaningful opportunities to get involved.

We launched the portal during National Volunteer Week in April. This powerful tool matches a volunteer's skills with their interests and sends personalized recommendations, helping each volunteer find the perfect opportunity every time, whether it's with a United Way program or donating time to one of our nonprofit partners.

The response has been phenomenal. We saw 6,115 volunteer sign-ups in the first six months the portal was in use. That's nearly three times more volunteers than during the same time period in 2016, and we expect the growth to continue.

"This portal has been a great addition to our toolbox," said Angela Beckman, volunteer engagement director at United Way. "We're able to offer a better experience to our partners and our volunteers, all in one place. It makes it easier for us to offer quality opportunities to our volunteers, and it's simple for them to find the perfect project that matches their interests."

The ease with which our nonprofit partners can find volunteers through our portal allows them to focus on what they do best and leave the volunteer recruitment to us.

"The portal has been the perfect avenue to streamline everything," said Katie Lamb, volunteer and intern manager at HAVEN.

HAVEN's volunteer and intern programs are run by just two

employees, but the organization has a variety of volunteer needs, from staffing its crisis line to mentoring children to assisting with its annual gift giveaway. An influx of new volunteers from the portal has been a huge boost to these programs.

"We have a variety of different opportunities for volunteers, either for a one-time event or ongoing needs. We always need individuals and groups to volunteer," Katie said. "We're getting traction from folks who may not necessarily have heard of HAVEN."

It's a theme we've heard time and again from our partners since launching: The portal has not only made it easier to recruit and manage volunteers, it's actually driving awareness about their missions. The ability to offer this type of technical support to partners is just one of the ways we're making a widespread impact, all thanks to the generous contributors who continue to fund our work.





*Our runners knocked it out of the park this year. We're so grateful for the support and enthusiasm all of our partners bring to our Run United effort.*

— Sarah Grutza  
United Way Corporate Relations Director

Our Run United team raised nearly \$90,000 for United Way during the Detroit Free Press / Chemical Bank Marathon.

## AFFINITY GROUPS GIVE BACK



Lisa and Bill Ford led the way for our Alexis de Tocqueville Society Initiative, which helped bring our AdT Society into the top 10 nationwide in membership.

It's those generous contributors who also make our affinity groups a success. These groups offer vital funding support toward our community impact initiatives.

This year we're celebrating our Alexis de Tocqueville Society Initiative's success. The initiative, led by Lisa and Bill Ford and a stellar group of volunteers, was launched five years ago to increase membership. Members give a minimum \$10,000 each year to support our programs. The results: We moved from 206 members — which ranked 34th in the country — to 520, which ranks ninth. In 2017, those members contributed a collective \$6.2 million for United Way for Southeastern Michigan.

"The support of our Alexis de Tocqueville members ensures individuals and families get the resources they need to live healthy, productive lives," Lisa Ford said. "We are grateful to be creating real change in Southeastern Michigan."

One way we increased the society's membership was through our Emerging Philanthropists group, which launched in 2013 to engage young professionals. A total of 216 members contributed more than \$245,000 in donations to United Way in 2017.

We also grew the society's membership through an increase in planned gifts. Our Legacy Society members generously give \$200,000 or more through wills, IRA contributions, insurance plans and more to ensure that United Way can continue to make a strong impact in the future.

In March, Women United hosted an International Women's Day event in coordination with Crain's Detroit Business, sponsored by DTE Energy. Then-U.S. Attorney Barbara McQuade and Impact 100 Founder Wendy Steele offered inspirational messages to the attendees. Attendees raised more than \$70,000 that day to support Bib to Backpack's early childhood development work.

Meanwhile, our Run United team's sore legs and sweat equity paid off once again. Training and fundraising began in early 2017 for our second year participating in the Detroit Free Press / Chemical Bank Marathon. A total of 180 runners and 70 volunteers were part of Run United, teaming up to raise \$89,583 for United Way.

Plans are already in the works for the 2018 marathon. To learn how you can get involved, visit [UnitedWaySEM.org/RunUnited](http://UnitedWaySEM.org/RunUnited).



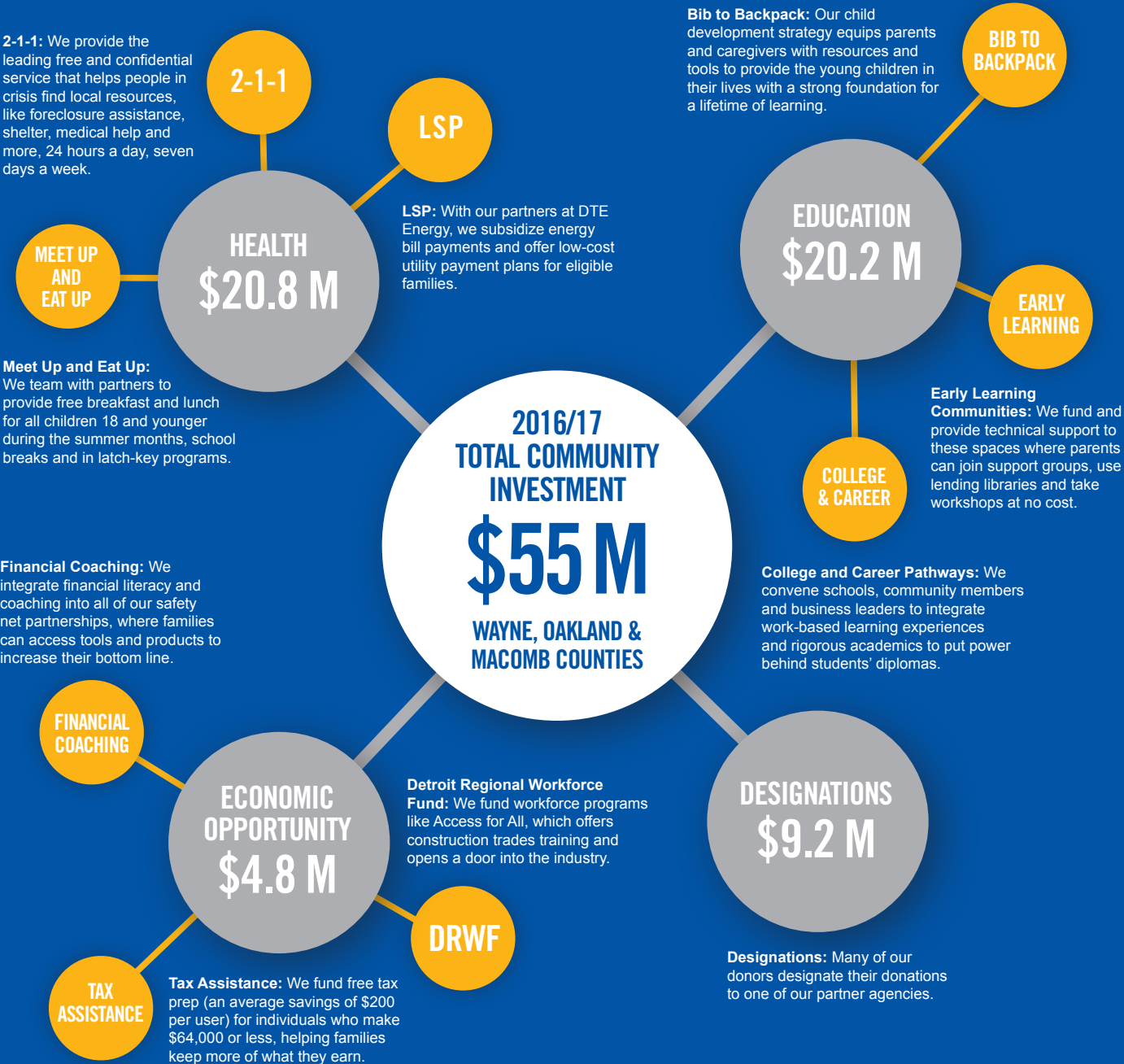
**ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE**  
**SOCIETY RANKING MOVED**  
**UP FROM 34<sup>TH</sup> TO**  
**9<sup>TH</sup>**  
**NATIONWIDE**



# >> A CENTURY IN THE BOOKS

Whether you've been a donor, an advocate, a volunteer or someone who's been helped by United Way, you've been part of a century of impact. You're creating a brighter future for everyone. Because of you, children enter the kindergarten classroom ready for success. Kids have a place to turn for a free, nutritious meal all year long. And high school students have a clear vision of success after graduation.

Thank you for supporting United Way. You are part of a legacy that has helped Southeastern Michigan families for 100 years. And we will continued to work for universal success and prosperity throughout our region. With your continued support, we'll craft more solutions and reach more families.  
**Here's to the next century.**



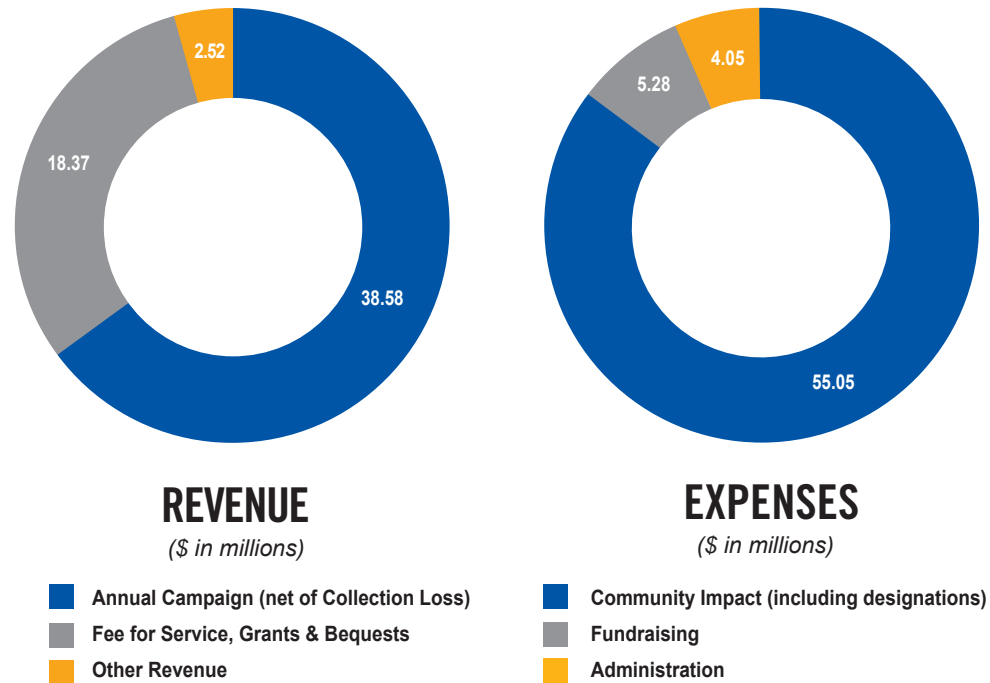
## FINANCIAL RESULTS (Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2017)

<b>REVENUE:</b>	
Annual Campaign (net of Collection Loss)	\$38,587,117.00
Fee for Service, Grants, Bequests	\$18,372,110.00
Other Revenue	\$2,523,016.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$59,482,243.00</b>
<b>EXPENSES:</b>	
Administration	\$4,053,024.00
Fundraising	\$5,287,839.00
Community Impact (including Designations)	\$55,053,790.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$64,394,653.00*</b>

## COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

Education	\$20,221,017.27
Economic Prosperity	\$4,786,176.32
Health	\$20,791,267.41
Designations	\$9,255,329.00
<b>Total Community Investment</b>	<b>\$55,053,790.00</b>

\*United Way updated its funded partner allocation process during the 2016-2017 year, (this affected FYE 2017 only) by extending 12-month contracts to 18-month contracts. Partners were paid monthly and quarterly, with some payments distributed into the next fiscal year, but credited to the 2016-2017 FYE.



## 2016-2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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