I am elated to report that this has been a record-breaking year for your United Way. We raised more money in this year’s campaign than ever before by engaging the highest number of donors in our organization’s history. In turn, we were able to grant funds to more agencies while increasing our overall impact. We are excited to continue this momentum as our community recovers.

It is my honor and privilege to serve as President & CEO of United Way of Gratiot & Isabella Counties. Many challenges lie ahead, but I am confident with continued support from all of you, we will continue to assist those most in need and create an even more vibrant community.

Looking forward to another rewarding year ahead,

Annie Sanders
President/CEO

TO OUR FRIENDS & NEIGHBORS,

Over the course of the past year, United Way of Gratiot & Isabella Counties made bold strides in the face of many uncertainties, while remaining true to our mission. We worked hard to provide leadership and resources to improve the quality of life in our community. We did that by generating revenue, creating awareness, and garnering support for the programs and services of our agency partners. There is no doubt that the COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted our local nonprofits. As the need increased, we found creative ways to support these agencies.

For many households in our community, funds from United Way meant food on the table, formula for babies, ability to pay rent/utilities and so much more. We would not be able to provide this critical safety net to our community’s most vulnerable households without the generous support of our individual and corporate supporters.

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YEAR IN REVIEW

We accomplished a lot in 2020-21, and you made it all possible. Here’s a look at some highlights during our fiscal year.

July 1, 2020

- Hosted our annual Golf United event in support of Stuff the Bus.
- Announced a partnership with other local and regional funders in the Great Lakes Bay Region to bring Catchafire, (a virtual support platform) to local nonprofits.

Our annual Stuff the Bus campaign kicked off! $36,207 was raised to sponsor every elementary school classroom in both counties.

- Distributed “Distance Learning Kits” to every first grader in both counties.

- Sold Holiday Raffle tickets to fundraise for our COVID-19 Community Response Fund.

- Partnered with My 1043 for the annual “Fill-A-Mayflower” event, raising over $9,700 & collecting 9,178 food & personal care items.

June 30, 2021

- Hosted our 6th annual PITCH-ER THIS! Youth Venture Competition in a virtual format and invested a total of $15,477 in each of the four student teams!

- Hosted our Live United Awards virtually.

- Announced we raised $1,220,965 during the 2020-21 Community Campaign!

- Hosted two “Days of Service” events.

- Joined a statewide initiative called “Summer Stock Up” to help stock the shelves of local food pantries during the summer.

- Announced a partnership with other local and regional funders in the Great Lakes Bay Region to bring Catchafire, (a virtual support platform) to local nonprofits.

Alma College’s Arts United event raised over $62,476 for United Way!

Gifted Child Advocacy of Gratiot County 1.36 acres valued at $25,822 so they could construct their new building.

Hosted our first 10-Day Equity Challenge. It was a powerful opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of how inequity and racism affect our lives and communities.

Launched a new initiative called “Read United” for National Reading Month. For all 31 days of March, volunteers recorded a video of themselves reading a children’s book and we made them easily assessable to teachers, schools, parents/students at home.

Welcomed three CERA Specialists to our United Way team.
CAMPAIGN RECAP

Our Community Campaign officially closed on March 31, 2021.

5,560 donors throughout both counties
11.29% growth over last year’s campaign total

TOTAL RAISED:
$1,220,965

EMPLOYEE WORKPLACE CAMPAIGNS

Aircraft Precision Products, Inc.
Alma College
Alma Heritage Dentistry
Alma Products
Alma Public Schools
Alpha Gamma Eta Sigma, Inc.
American Mitsubishi
A.Y.
Annual Partners
Boswell Industries
Barbour Law
Black City Public Schools
Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Great Lakes Bay Region
Brookside Community Schools
Central Michigan District Health Department
Central Michigan University
Child Advocacy-Gratiot County
Chippewa River District Library

Isabella Citizens for Health, Inc.
Isabella Community Credit Union
Isabella County
KSG Cultivations
Listening Ear Crisis Center, Inc.
Masonic Pathways
McLaren Central Michigan
Migrant
Mokoma First Credit Union
Morrin Bank of Michigan
Muskegon College
Mid Michigan Community College
Mid Michigan District Health Department
MidMichigan Health
Morbark
National Physical Therapy
West Michigan Family Center
Wolverine Pipeline

= CAMPAIGN EXCELLENCE AWARD (Top 5 Campaigns)
= EXCELLENCE IN CAMPAIGN GROWTH AWARD

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

FY 20/21

Revenue

- Campaigns $1,291,999
- Events $87,163
- Rental $63,291
- Grants $69,208
- Other Income $24,053

Expenses

- Operating $138,412
- Programs $337,194
- Building $133,912
- Community Investment $761,642
United Way’s Community Investment Committee is made up of community members, board members and volunteers. Each year, they allocate grant allocations to support community-based programs and services offered through affiliate agency partners at Gratiot & Isabella Counties.

COVID-19 Community Response Fund

During the coronavirus outbreak, we were committed to ensuring that our communities most vulnerable individuals and families had the support they needed to weather the short and long-term impacts. This fund allowed us to rapidly deploy resources to community-based organizations that were offering emergency relief to families and individuals in need.

The fund was used for a multitude of efforts to help with recovery. It provided non-profits with critical operating resources to respond to community needs. It also provided support for programs that addressed things such as utility assistance, food vulnerability, housing assistance, healthcare, etc.

COVID-19 RELIEF GRANTS

The Salvation Army Service Center: $2,000
Community Compassion Network: $4,000
Life Choices of Central Michigan: $1,500
The Care Store: $7,500
Isabella Community Soup Kitchen: $5,000
Clothing Inc.: $2,500
Gratiot Emergency Housing Corporation: $5,000
Child Advocacy - Gratiot County: $2,500
American Legion Post 110: $1,000
Humane Animal Treatment Society (HATS): $5,500
Mt. Pleasant Discovery Museum: $2,500
Mid-Michigan Industries Inc./NMI: $2,500
Pace Central Michigan: $2,500
Hopewell Ranch: $2,500
Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Great Lakes Bay Region: $2,500
Isabella County Child Advocacy Center: $2,500
Rise Advocacy: $1,500
Community Cafe (Alma First Presbyterian Church): $4,500

EIGHT CAP, INC.
Phase 37 ESFP Funding: $9,037
Phase 38 ESFP Funding: $17,172
Phase CARES ESFP Funding: $10,000

PEAK
Phase 37 ESFP Funding: $9,037
Phase CARES ESFP Funding: $8,000

PREGNANCY SERVICES OF GRATIOT COUNTY
Matching Grant: $10,000

CERA PROGRAM

MSHDA has federal funds available to help tenants facing pandemic-related hardships avoid eviction while also ensuring landlords can recoup owed rent through the COVID Emergency Rental Assistance (CERA) program. MSHDA administers CERA through its statewide network of local nonprofit agencies. United Way of Gratiot & Isabella Counties (UWGIC), in partnership with EightCap, is processing applications for Gratiot & Isabella counties.

We are proud to partner in this important work. The COVID-19 pandemic has put financial stress on many renters in our community. Funds administered through the CERA Program will allow individuals and families that were adversely affected over the past twelve months to overcome their financial hardships in the areas of past due rent and utility bills. Through the partnership, UWGIC was able to hire three new employees to serve as CERA Specialists (pictured on the right). To date our CERA specialists have worked with nearly 400 local households to access and acquire these crucial benefits.
We couldn’t do the work we do without these organizations that step beyond the boundaries of traditional giving and invest in support of United Way events, programs and initiatives.

**NEW INITIATIVES IN 2020-21**

2-1-1 is a United Way funded, one-stop service that saves time and frustration by connecting people in need with hundreds of health and human service organizations. **Above are the referrals broken out by needs met in Gratiot & Isabella Counties (7/1/20 - 6/30/21).**

**PLATINUM LEVEL ($15,000)**
- Alma Optics
- Consumers Energy Foundation
- Garr Tool
- Highland Plastics

**GOLD LEVEL ($10,000)**
- Isabella Bank
- Mercantile Bank

**SILVER LEVEL ($5,000)**
- Invenergy
- Member’s First Credit Union
- Michigan Masonic Home

**BRONZE LEVEL ($2,500)**
- Commercial Bank
- Isabella Community Credit Union
- McLaren Central Michigan
- Medilodge of Mt. Pleasant
- MidMichigan Health
- Mt. Pleasant Agency - Central Insurance
- Mt. Pleasant Jaycees
- Powell Fabrication & Manufacturing LLC

**READ UNITED**

March is National Reading Month. Throughout the month of March, we celebrated through a new initiative called Read United! We created a virtual calendar with 31 local volunteers reading a book to our communities’ youth each day. The calendar was used in classrooms and homes. We were also able to provide a book for every student in kindergarten through 2nd grade in Gratiot & Isabella counties—over 3,000 books! Through virtual analytics we know that the initiative had over 12,000 touchpoints in our communities. We are proud to continue our focus on improving literacy and early childhood education!

**THE GOOD PRIZE**

Founded by professor, philanthropist and author Dr. Vincent Mumford, The Mumford Prize for Good (known as “The Good Prize”) is an annual prize that honors everyday individuals, who do good things in service of others and whose deeds of good serve to inspire others and uplift communities. In the fall of 2020, Dr. Mumford partnered with us to launch the inaugural GOOD PRIZE. The Good Prize will award a minimum $1,000 annually to the “Goodest Person in the World!” In its first year, the winner of The Good Prize (determined by a committee of community members) was Damon Brown, Founder & Executive Director of the Angel Wings Fund.

**DAYS OF SERVICE**

This year we were excited to be able to bring back “Days of Service”—a multi-project initiative bringing together a large number of volunteers to impact our communities in a big way. In May, volunteers completed numerous simultaneous service projects, hosted by local non-profit organizations, that occurred across Gratiot & Isabella counties. Partners that participated included Art Reach of Mid Michigan, HATS, R.I.S.E. Advocacy, Child Advocacy-Gratiot County, Life Choices of Central Michigan, among others. We are excited to be able to continue to provide volunteer experiences for individuals and groups in our communities!