

# UNITED IS THE WAY™



2024 Ambassadors of the Year *Tori Howard and Morgan McDowell of DATCU* with Campaign Chair *Jessica DeRoche (L)* and United Way of Denton County President & CEO *Gary Henderson*

## CAMPAIGN AMBASSADOR GUIDE



**UNITED WAY**  
Denton County





# WORDS FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

## DEAR 2025 CAMPAIGN AMBASSADOR,

As the driving force behind your organization's United Way Employee Giving Campaign, your leadership and dedication are not only deeply appreciated—they are essential to building a stronger, more resilient Denton County for everyone.

Successful United Way Campaigns are at the heart of our mission to mobilize communities to action to improve lives in Denton County. Your efforts help expand access to youth opportunity, financial security, community resiliency, and healthy community.

We understand the added responsibilities you take on as an Ambassador and thank you for stepping into this important role. Your commitment inspires others and drives meaningful impact.

This guide is designed to equip you with the strategies, tools, and resources to lead a campaign that achieves new heights in 2025. Whether you're a seasoned advocate or a first-time Ambassador, we're here to support you every step of the way.

With your leadership and the generosity of your colleagues, we will continue to create opportunities and drive positive change. No gift is too small. Together, our contributions ripple outward, creating real and lasting transformation.

Thank you for your unwavering support and for understanding that **United is The Way** we can make our community better...for you, for us, for EVERYONE!



**Mike Martinez**

DFW Area Director  
CTDI



**Micah Tannery**

CTE Strategic Partnership Liaison  
Denton ISD

**CAMPAIGN CO-CHAIRS**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>04</b>	About United Way of Denton County	<b>11</b>	Best Practices
<b>06</b>	Our Dual Strategy	<b>12</b>	Pledge Process
<b>08</b>	Your Role & Resources	<b>13</b>	Employee Gifts in Action
<b>10</b>	Campaign Checklist	<b>14</b>	FAQs

# ABOUT UNITED WAY OF DENTON COUNTY

We improve lives by mobilizing Denton County communities to action so all can thrive.

## UNITED IS THE WAY TO:



#GiveToOneImpactMany

## DENTON COUNTY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The first step to improving lives in Denton County is understanding our community's needs. United Way of Denton County researches and collates both primary and secondary data from many sources, including our Partner Agencies, community focus groups, client surveys, subject matter experts at the local, state and national levels, the Texas Education Agency, and the United States Census Bureau. We publish full reports regularly highlighting Denton County's highest-priority needs. Annual updates assess changing trends.

[UnitedWayDenton.org/Needs](https://UnitedWayDenton.org/Needs)



## GLOBALLY RECOGNIZED, LOCALLY FOCUSED

United Way is both the world's largest nonprofit network and the world's most valuable nonprofit brand, widely recognized for the efficiency and effectiveness of each local United Way organization. Thus, donors are sure to see a return on investment of time, talent, and treasure with United Way of Denton County.

United Way Voted #4  
in 2024





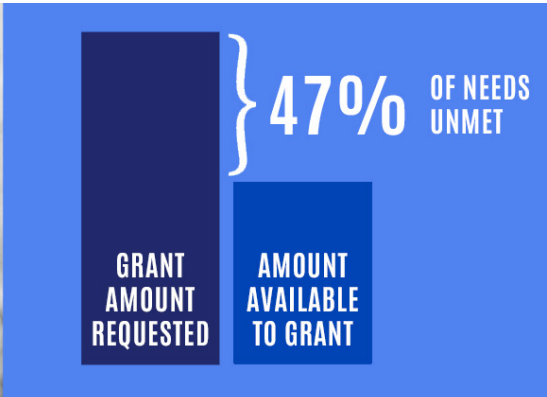
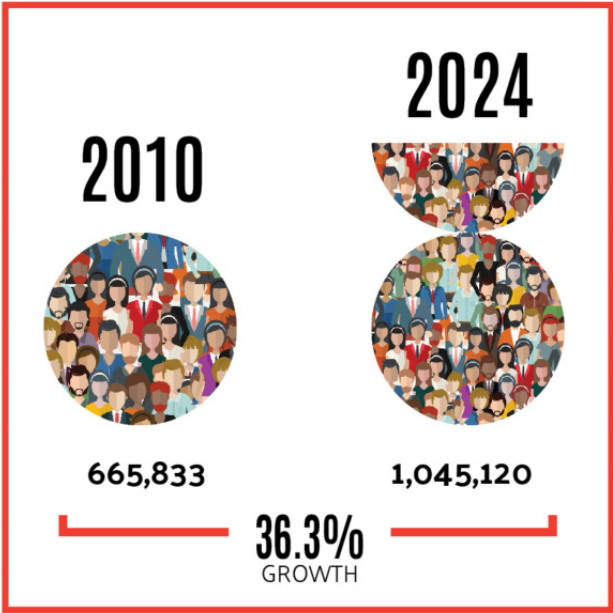
# A GROWING COUNTY

If you live in Denton County, then you live in one of the fastest growing communities in the nation. Our population growth averages 3.29% per year.

Since 2010, Denton County’s population has almost doubled!

With such exciting growth comes not only great opportunity, but great challenges as the needs of our community continue to grow as well.

Available resources to United Way of Denton County to fund local nonprofit agencies met just 53% of the total funds requested to meet the needs of our growing region. And we know the agencies only requested a fraction of what they truly need!



# YOU MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

Donations strengthen our dual strategy of supporting United Way-funded Partner Agencies and leading Collective Impact Initiatives to serve the most vulnerable populations in Denton County.

By building strong, inclusive relationships between Denton County businesses, governments, and nonprofits, our Collaborative Initiatives and Programs aim to tackle complex socioeconomic problems in Denton County like poverty, homelessness, and mental illness.

We leverage connections and credibility to do the difficult task of making county-wide impact.

SEE OUR IMPACT



# OUR DUAL STRATEGY TO IMPROVE & TRANSFORM LIVES

## DONATIONS TO UNITED WAY OF DENTON COUNTY FUND A DUAL STRATEGY THAT:

**#1** Supports local nonprofits that provide critical safety-net services to meet immediate needs.

GIVE TO ONE.  
IMPACT MANY.



## THE POWER OF MANY

The donations of employees at United Way Employee Giving Campaigns across the County combine to make an impact for positive change across our community, building a stronger, more resilient, Denton County for everyone.

**UNITED, a little goes a long way!**

If every employee at every workplace campaign gave a minimum...



to their United Way Employee Giving Campaign



**\$1.8M** would be invested in Denton County to create lasting change.

**UNITED, A LITTLE GOES A LONG WAY.**



# #2

Works collaboratively with local community leaders to build a stronger Denton County where everyone can thrive.

## INTERCONNECTIVITY OF LEADERSHIP TEAMS

We leverage donations with local, state, and federal grants to identify gaps that ineffectively serve our community. We bring together Denton County leaders from education, government, corporate, and nonprofit sectors as part of three Leadership Teams.



The Denton County Workforce Success Leadership Team works to bridge the gap between financially-fragile households and employers by providing resources and overcoming obstacles.

When a family is under-employed and living paycheck to paycheck, they struggle to pay bills which leads to housing and food insecurity. The stress often results in mental health struggles for parents and children.

Upskilling to expand capabilities and increase household income is the path to stability and self-sufficiency.



Mental and behavioral health struggles should not culminate in the justice system. Yet, Denton County's largest provider of in-patient mental health services continues to be the County jail.

The Denton County Behavioral Health Leadership Team strives for adequate mental and behavioral health care for everyone.

One in five Denton County residents experience a mental health crisis each year. As a part of a person's overall well-being, mental health is critical to success at work and in school.

### WORKFORCE

Providing every individual and family the opportunity to increase earning potential, succeed, and thrive.

### HOUSING

Implementing a coordinated system of prevention and intervention to make homelessness rare, brief and nonrecurring.

### MENTAL HEALTH

Advocating for a collaborative person-centered system to repair and restore lives.



Thanks to a system built by the work of the Denton County Housing & Homelessness Leadership Team, Denton County prevented a catastrophic influx of pandemic-related evictions since 2020.

Lack of affordable housing, housing instability, and homelessness undermines mental wellness and employability. Yet, one in three of people who are experiencing homelessness are employed.

# YOUR ROLE



Ambassadors engage coworkers in building a stronger community by planning, organizing, and coordinating a successful United Way Employee Giving Campaign. Essentially, you advocate for us within your company, helping your colleagues understand the value of United Way across Denton County.

In this role, you serve as a lifeline between your company and the thousands of individuals and families benefiting from United Way supported programs.

## WHAT DO AMBASSADORS DO?

- Attend United Way Ambassador Training
- Recruit a team of coworkers to help you build support for the campaign
- Create a fun and engaging campaign strategy
- Set goals to increase giving and volunteering
- Hold a campaign kickoff and other special events within your organization
- Distribute United Way materials and pledge forms, and then collect and submit forms to your United Way liaison
- Encourage and educate employees on the benefits of leadership giving
- Thank your donors and volunteers

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS TO AMBASSADORS?

- Create positive impact in your community
- Develop career-building skills
- Network across your company and community
- Showcase your leadership and project management skills at work

## ANNUAL CAMPAIGN AWARDS

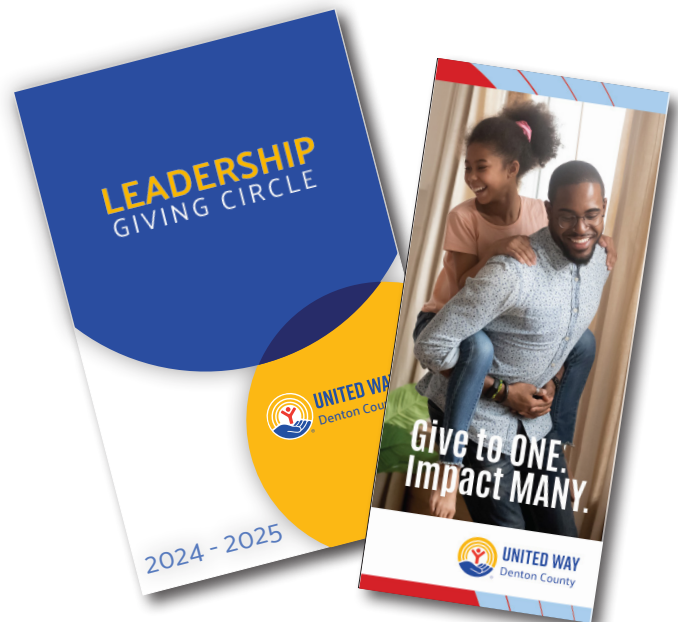
Companies & Organizations with exceptional Campaigns are recognized at our Annual [UNITED Tribute Gala](#). [Learn More about award criteria and eligibility >](#) [UnitedWayDenton.org/CampaignToolkit](https://UnitedWayDenton.org/CampaignToolkit)



# YOUR RESOURCES

It takes the right tools to build an effective campaign, and you can easily access the United Way Campaign Toolkit online. The Toolkit offers videos, templates, graphics, and other resources to assist you at every stage of the campaign. Make sure to utilize this valuable resource.

[UnitedWayDenton.org/CampaignToolkit](http://UnitedWayDenton.org/CampaignToolkit)



## DEVELOPMENT TEAM

United Way of Denton County staff members who assist Ambassadors with campaign efforts, including year-round activities. [UnitedWayDenton.org/Staff](http://UnitedWayDenton.org/Staff)

# CAMPAIGN CHECKLIST

## PLAN YOUR CAMPAIGN

✓ TO DO	TARGET DATE
Attend United Way Ambassador Roundtable Training.	
Review the previous campaign's performance to determine opportunities and challenges.	
Meet with your leadership to set participation and monetary goals and incentives for giving, and get his/her personal endorsement.	
Recruit a Co-Ambassador or Planning Committee (if needed).	
Meet with your United Way liaison to discuss campaign strategies and themes, and develop a calendar of events.	
Request materials, speakers, and agency tours (in-person or virtual) through your United Way liaison.	
Send a "Campaign Kickoff" invitation from your leadership endorsing and announcing the upcoming campaign. Invite retirees to your Kickoff event.	
Promote your campaign and distribute your calendar of events.	
Consider incorporating a volunteer opportunity into your campaign.	
Visit the online Campaign Toolkit any time for campaign materials and ideas.	

## EXECUTE YOUR CAMPAIGN

Host a Kickoff Event with the United Way liaison and a speaker. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make it easy with Sample Campaign Meeting Agenda (available in the online Toolkit).</li> <li>• Show at least one of the United Way Videos.</li> <li>• Share your story. Why do you give?</li> </ul>	
Acknowledge your Loyal Contributors (i.e. 10+ year donors).	
Hold a Leadership Giving, Retiree, and/or Loyal Contributor event.	
Conduct special events, an agency tour or fair, and other activities. Share photos from your events on your company's social media and tag United Way of Denton County.	
Make sure every employee has the opportunity to give (receives a pledge form or can log into ePledge).	
Publicize community facts and interim campaign results on your company's social media.	

## FINALIZE YOUR CAMPAIGN

Collect pledge forms, calculate results, and submit Campaign Report Form and white copies of pledge forms to your United Way liaison. Submit yellow copies to your payroll department. Donors keep pink copies.	
Review campaign results with your leadership, committee members, and United Way liaison.	
Announce results to all employees.	



# BEST PRACTICES

When you partner with United Way of Denton County, you benefit from over 70 years of experience raising funds and awareness in the community. Use these tips to maximize the impact of your Employee Giving Campaign. For more information and ideas, visit the [Campaign Toolkit](#) or ask your United Way liaison.

## INCENTIVES, THEMES, & SPECIAL EVENTS

Investing in your community should be a positive and uplifting experience. Effective campaigns incorporate incentives, themes, and special events to engage employees and keep things fun. Your company's unique culture is the best place to look for inspiration.

## TOP-LEVEL SUPPORT

No matter the size of your company, input and endorsement from leadership is key to a successful campaign. Your leaders have partnered with United Way because they care about improving and transforming lives in Denton County. Look for opportunities to showcase their support and keep them updated on the progress of the campaign.

## GOAL SETTING

Is your company reaching its full potential to improve lives in Denton County? Set a challenging, yet attainable campaign goal to motivate your team and build momentum.

### LAST YEAR'S TOTALS

SPECIAL EVENTS = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
CORPORATE GIFT = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
LEADERSHIP GIVERS = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
% PARTICIPATION = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ %

### THIS YEAR'S TOTALS

SPECIAL EVENTS = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
CORPORATE MATCH/GIFT = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
NEW LEADERS X \$1,000 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
NEW DONORS X \$ \_\_\_\_\_ AVERAGE GIFT = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
TOTAL = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## INVITE A SPEAKER

Wondering how to communicate the mission and impact of United Way to your team? We have knowledgeable and passionate staff and volunteers to do just that. United Way data shows that organizations who feature a speaker at their campaign kickoff average a 114% increase in annual giving, and those featuring a speaker for the first time average a 127% increase.

## PARTNER AGENCY TOURS & FAIRS

United Way of Denton County awards 2-year grants to local nonprofits through our Community Impact program. These Partner Agencies are held to high standards of performance and accountability as they address critical needs in Denton County. We encourage Ambassadors to plan an agency tour, in-house fair, or lunch and learn (either in-person or virtually) to show employees how United Way funds are invested in the community.

# THE PLEDGE PROCESS

## CONDUCTING A HYBRID CAMPAIGN

1

At least 4 weeks prior to your scheduled campaign, complete and submit the ePledge spreadsheet provided by United Way.

2

Consult with your company's leadership to set a fundraising goal.

3

Consider holding a hybrid kickoff event to share the mission of United Way and explain the ePledge process to employees.

4

**Communication is key!**  
Reach out on an ongoing basis to encourage employees to participate.

5

Remind employees of the submission deadline and encourage them to make their pledge.

6

Track the status of the campaign through your ePledge Administrator page.

7

Review campaign results with your leadership.

8

Announce results to all employees and  
**THANK DONORS.**

Questions about the ePledge aspect of hybrid campaigns? [Watch the tutorial](#) in our online Toolkit! For ideas on hybrid fundraising, click [here!](#)

## CONDUCTING A PAPER CAMPAIGN

1

Request the appropriate number of pledge forms and other campaign materials from your United Way liaison.

2

Consult with your company's leadership to set a fundraising goal.

3

Hold a kickoff event to share the mission of United Way and distribute forms to employees.

4

**Communication is key!**  
Reach out on an ongoing basis to encourage employees to participate.

5

Collect forms and any cash or checks in the designated campaign envelope.

6

Schedule a time with your liaison to count the funds together and submit the envelope.

7

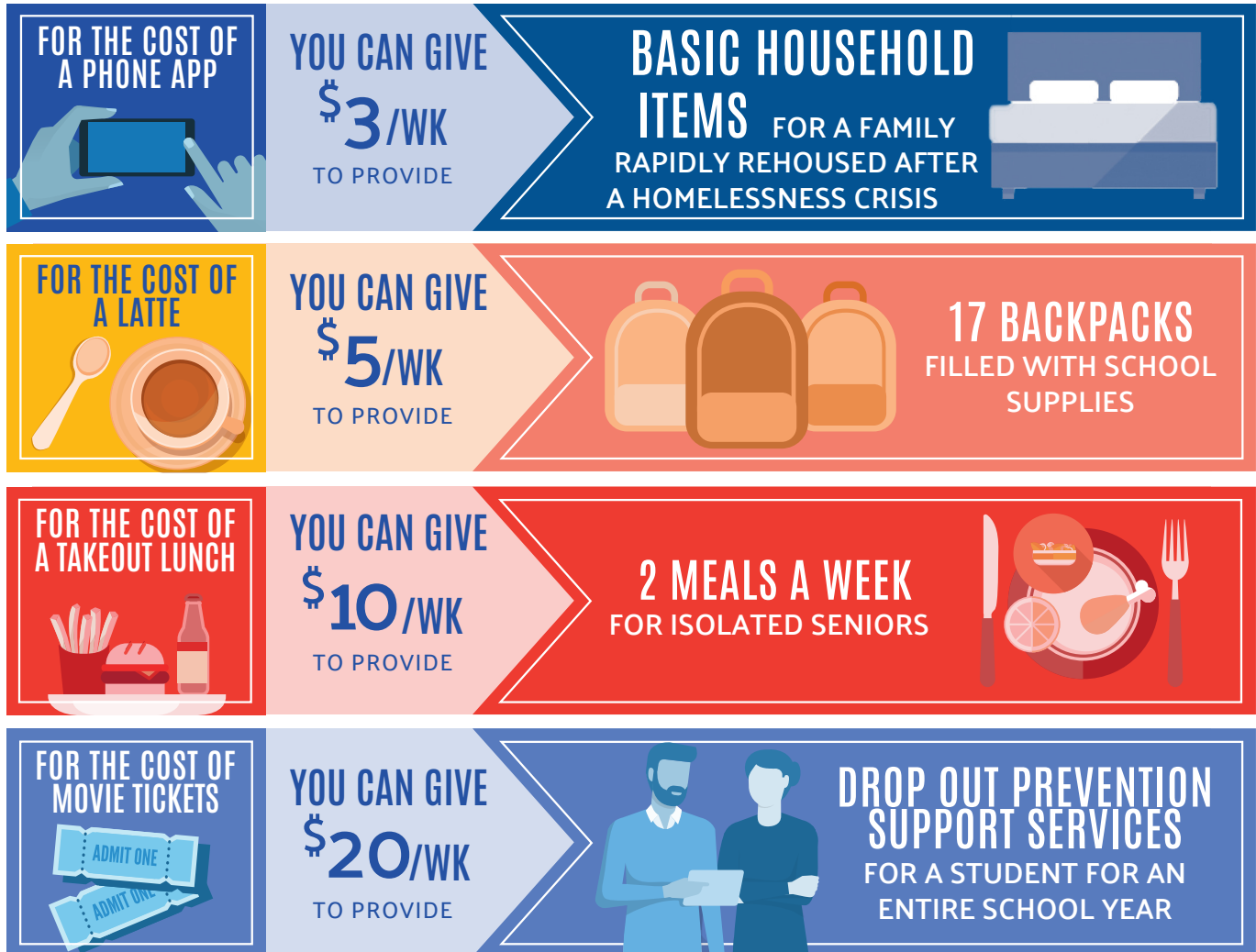
Review campaign results with your leadership.

8

Announce results to all employees and  
**THANK DONORS.**



# EMPLOYEE GIFTS IN ACTION



Download full poster from our online Toolkit.

## LEADERSHIP GIVING

Leadership Givers serve as a collective voice of community members who invest in United Way of Denton County to help the community thrive. Established to recognize individuals and couples who donate \$1,000 or more, the [Leadership Giving Circle](#) plays a significant role in the success of the United Way Campaign which, in turn, creates change for neighbors in need across Denton County.

It's easy to encourage employees to add their names to this collective voice:

- A pledge of \$20/week is all it takes to become a Leadership Giver.
- Visit with your company's leadership about the importance of Leadership Givers. Celebrate your company's Leadership Givers with a special meeting or public recognition to say thank you.
- Remind employees to share their spouse's name and employer. If a couple's combined giving totals \$1,000 or more, they will be recognized as Leadership Givers.
- Your employees can engage with other like-minded donors through affinity groups such as [Women UNITED](#) and [Tocqueville Society](#).

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## AS AN AMBASSADOR, WHAT IF I GET A QUESTION I DON'T KNOW HOW TO ANSWER?

Don't be afraid to say you don't know. Get the person's name and phone number and contact your United Way liaison who will follow up with the person. Our website, [UnitedWayDentonCounty.org](https://UnitedWayDentonCounty.org), also offers extensive information.

## WHERE DOES MY CONTRIBUTION GO?

All campaign funds go into the Community Fund unless a donor designates a specific agency or other United Way. Each year, United Way of Denton County volunteers evaluate the needs of our community. Money is then allocated based on these evaluations and the recommendation of the volunteer committee. The Community Fund is the best way to help the most people and meet the greatest needs in our community.

## WHO DECIDES HOW MY GIFT IS SPENT?

In January and February, trained community volunteers evaluate the services provided by United Way Partner Agencies. This review assures all gifts are used to best meet the needs of our community. These volunteers make funding recommendations to the United Way of Denton County Board of Directors for final approval.

## WHAT ABOUT THE PRESSURE TO GIVE?

United Way of Denton County has specific policies against pressuring anyone to give. The decision to give is a personal one; no one should be pressured or coerced into giving.

## HOW MUCH OF MY DONATION STAYS IN DENTON COUNTY?

The money raised in Denton County stays in Denton County. Our organization sends less than 2% of the total amount raised to United Way Worldwide as our membership fee. This fee provides us with national fundraising opportunities, marketing, and staff training support.

## HOW MUCH OF MY CONTRIBUTION GOES TO HELP PEOPLE?

United Way of Denton County's current percentage for fundraising and administration expenses is 14.8%, far below the 35% recommended by the Better Business Bureau's Standards of Charity Accountability. Outside these expenses, every dollar given goes toward helping people in the Denton County area.

## UNDER THE CURRENT TAX LAW, IS MY GIFT STILL TAX DEDUCTIBLE?

Yes. United Way of Denton County is recognized as an exempt 501(c)(3) organization by the Internal Revenue Service. As such, donors may deduct contributions to United Way of Denton County.

## CAN I GIVE MY GIFT TO A SPECIFIC AGENCY?

Yes, the designated contribution section at the bottom of the pledge form allows donors to pick a specific agency to receive their gift. Donors may give to any health and human service 501(c)(3) organization that adheres to the Patriot Act. There is a minimum of \$100 to designate.

## IS PLANNED PARENTHOOD A UNITED WAY OF DENTON PARTNER AGENCY?

Planned Parenthood is not a partner agency of United Way of Denton County. Donors' investments to United Way of Denton County support a network of nonprofits, initiatives, and programs that align with UWDC's strategic focus areas.

# STAY INVOLVED

## SPECIAL EVENTS



**June 16, 2025**

[UnitedWayDenton.org/Golf](https://UnitedWayDenton.org/Golf)



**September 11, 2025**

[UnitedWayDenton.org/Kickoff](https://UnitedWayDenton.org/Kickoff)



**January 17, 2026**

[UnitedWayDenton.org/UNITED-Tribute](https://UnitedWayDenton.org/UNITED-Tribute)

## INITIATIVES & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### BACK-TO-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

We support the collection and distribution of school supplies for economically disadvantaged children. [UnitedWayDenton.org/backtoschool](https://UnitedWayDenton.org/backtoschool)

### BOARD BUILD

Learn the skills needed to shape and govern a successful nonprofit organization. Next session targeted for fall 2025. [UnitedWayDenton.org/BoardBuild](https://UnitedWayDenton.org/BoardBuild)

### COMMUNITY GRANTS

We amplify the efforts of highly efficient and effective nonprofits by investing resources to address the most critical needs of Denton County. You can volunteer to be on the committee to make these important decisions. To learn more email [Leah@UnitedWayDenton.org](mailto:Leah@UnitedWayDenton.org).

### CREDIBLEMIND MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

A digital platform that provides self-care mental health resources reviewed by professionals to help navigate things like anxiety, depression, and life's basic stresses. [UnitedWayDenton.CredibleMind.com](https://UnitedWayDenton.CredibleMind.com)

### HOMELESSNESS CENSUS

Volunteer for the annual one-day homeless population census, to better understand the nature of homelessness. [UnitedWayDenton.org/point-time-count](https://UnitedWayDenton.org/point-time-count)

### VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE (VITA)

Volunteer to provide free tax preparation to low and moderately-low income families. [UnitedWayDenton.org/Volunteer-VITA](https://UnitedWayDenton.org/Volunteer-VITA)

### WOMEN UNITED

Our Women UNITED network makes a lasting impact through collaboration, volunteerism, innovation, and leadership philanthropy. [UnitedWayDenton.org/WomenUnited](https://UnitedWayDenton.org/WomenUnited)

### STAY INFORMED! JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST

[UnitedWayDenton.org/email](https://UnitedWayDenton.org/email)





# THANK YOU

for joining our United Way Team as we continue to  
**PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY IN DENTON COUNTY  
FOR ALL TO THRIVE.**



**UNITED WAY**  
Denton County



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