From: United Way of Missoula County
To: Grp. City Council and City Web Site
Subject: Falling for Missoula: How your gifts to United Way change lives here
Date: Saturday, October 30, 2021 7:45:39 AM

Fall Update
2021

90th ANNIVERSARY • 1931-2021

United Way of Missoula County

YOU make good things happen in our community!

It's been a busy 90th year at United Way, as we move forward with effort, determination and effectiveness, even while continuing to navigate the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since your continued support makes our work possible, we wanted to make sure you know how much good is happening in our community because of you!

EDUCATION

Our **Dolly Parton's Imagination Library** continues to send books monthly to about 3,000 local children, ages 0-5. **This month, we distributed our 350,000th book!** More than 4,000 five-year-old graduates of our Imagination Library have headed off to Kindergarten with up to 60 books of their own.

About 3,000 active child members

More than 4,069 child graduates

Distributed our 353,989th book

What else helps kids begin Kindergarten ready to learn? That's what **Zero to Five Missoula's Kindergarten Entry Assessment** explores. The KEA, the first of its kind in Montana, is examining data from 55 participating classrooms, involving 900 children and their families. The KEA identifies the services, supports and factors that help a child show up at Kindergarten ready to learn and thrive. See what we learned from the first two years of this important study here: www.zerotofive.org/kea

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Launched this fall, the **Parent Leadership Training Institute** (PLTI) enables parents to become leading advocates for children. Parents are motivated and eager to change their children's lives, but too often their opinions and experiences are unheard. The 20-week PLTI program teaches parents how to become practiced change agents for the next generation, improving the lifelong health, safety and learning of their children. www.missoulaunitedway.org/parent-leadership-training-institute

HEALTH

Helping families get and stay active is especially challenging during a pandemic. **5-2-1-0 Let's Move!** Missoula continues to help families lead healthier lives, under the direction of a new coordinator and with an engaging new website. Stay tuned for more from this exciting program working to improve community health. www.5210letsmovemissoula.org

Project Tomorrow Montana continues to spread a message of hope and help to those suffering from depression, including through Suicide Prevention Week in September. We continue to offer regular trainings so more people can learn to recognize the signs of depression and suicidal thoughts in their family members, friends and colleagues – and know how to help. Increasing awareness and resources is critically important during the pandemic, when social isolation increases. www.projecttomorrowmt.org

Missoula Substance Use Disorder Connect ("SUDC") is completing its first year poised for future success, with a Leadership Roundtable and Working Group in place, and both a comprehensive needs assessment and a fall strategic-planning retreat completed. We're excited to share more with you as this work unfolds and priorities and projects are solidified. www.missoulaunitedway.org/missoula-substance-abuse-connect

FINANCIAL STABILITY

Reaching Home: Missoula's 10-Year-Plan to End Homelessness continues to focus on innovative solutions to homelessness in our community. Housing has been increasingly difficult to find in the past year, especially for our poorest and most vulnerable neighbors. Historically low rental vacancy rates, combined with economic challenges, plus increased needs and reduced capacity on the part of the nonprofit sector, have helped create a perfect storm for our unhoused neighbors.

TSOS can house approximately
40 people
at a time; occupancy averages about 22 people

75 residents
since December 2020

In response, Reaching Home successfully implemented a **Temporary Safe Outdoor Space:** a safe, healthy, secure, staffed (24/7) environment, on private land, that serves people experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic who were not accessing existing services or resources. The TSOS can house approximately 40 people at a time; occupancy averages about 22 people. Seventy-five residents have utilized the facility since it opened in December of 2020. Since then, 17 residents have entered long-term housing. All current residents are connected to case management, addressing issues that have contributed to their homelessness. Fifteen residents who lacked proof of identity have secured official IDs, which are critical to accessing jobs and services. Three residents are receiving treatment for substance use disorder.

These successes illustrate that homelessness is a complex issue with no easy answers or "one size fits all solution." Here's the story of one resident of the TSOS. Linda's Story: www.missoulaunitedway.org/a-real-life-perspective-from-the-temporary-safe-outdoor-space-lindas-story-2

United Way remains a key player in current discussions as Missoula County and City leadership work to identify longer-term options to offer our unhoused neighbors the opportunity for a safe home. Also, many communities around the state and country are setting up, or considering setting up, similar sanctioned encampments. We have shared our mutual experiences and are learning from each other about best practices in addressing homelessness.

MISSOULA NONPROFIT CENTER

With nearly 120 members, our **Missoula Nonprofit Center** connects those helping across our community by sharing information, trainings and even affinity discussion groups. Plans are underway for Philanthropy Day 2021 in November, a virtual celebration of giving, during which local philanthropic heroes will be honored. While 2020 and 2021 (to date) programming has been virtual, we're looking forward to more in-person opportunities in the future.

WILDFIRE READY MISSOULA

Our **Wildfire Ready Missoula** program has continued to increase wildfire preparedness by connecting more than 75 property owners with tools and resources to make their homes and property more wildfire-resistant. We partner with Missoula County's Office of Emergency Management to provide a cost-share program that reimburses property owners 50% of the expense of creating safer homes. We're proud to help lead this innovative, community-benefitting work, improving our community resilience for generations to come.

Connecting more than
75 property owners
with tools and resources.

90 YEARS OLD AND NEW BUILDING NAME

This year our United Way celebrates 90 years of service to our community. We celebrated with a barbecue at Allegiance Field Ogren Park this fall, and at a ceremony earlier this summer we named our building after our founders, Bill & Rosemary Gallagher. All of our community-strengthening programs now operate out of the Bill & Rosemary Gallagher Center at 412 W. Alder St.

We are proud of Missoula's support for the past 90 years, which has made possible United Way's work to improve lives and help our most vulnerable neighbors. Thank you for joining us as we step hopefully into our next 90 years.

READY TO KEEP CHANGING LIVES WITH US? **GIVE NOW**.

United Way of Missoula County

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