

WORKPLACE CAMPAIGN CHECKLIST

✓ BEFORE THE CAMPAIGN

- Attend United Way ECC training.
- Secure CEO/senior management support.
- Consider forming a committee to share the responsibilities.
- Review the previous campaign’s performance, opportunities, and challenges.
- Determine your participation goal, fundraising goal, and incentives.
- Meet with your Relationship Manager to discuss campaign strategies and calendar of events.
- Schedule your kickoff with a United Way Rock River Valley speaker and any special events.
- Promote the campaign and distribute your calendar of events.
- Send a campaign kickoff letter from your CEO/senior management endorsing the campaign.

✓ DURING THE CAMPAIGN

- Hold a kickoff event with a United Way Rock River Valley staff speaker.
- Ensure all employees have access to campaign materials and giving platforms. *(See donation methods)*
- Keep the campaign alive by sharing success stories, community facts, and photos via your intranet.
- Conduct special events, a volunteer project, and other activities. *(See list of ideas and incentives)*
- Monitor your progress toward your goals.
- Remind individuals who have not pledged to consider making a gift.
- Send reminders about campaign events, incentives, and deadlines.

✓ AFTER THE CAMPAIGN

- Calculate the results, review results with your committee members.
- Follow up on any corporate contribution or employee match.
- Prepare your final report envelope for your United Way Rock River Valley Relationship Manager.
- Contact your Relationship Manager to coordinate envelope pick up.
- Announce results to all employees.
- Thank all donors with a celebration event, letter, or email from your CEO.
- Post campaign photos on your organization’s social media networks and tag @unitedwayrrv.
- Evaluate the challenges and successes of your campaign. Keep the notes handy for next year.
- Talk to your Relationship Manager about how United Way can continue to improve its service.



CAMPAIGN COORDINATOR GUIDE

Running a Workplace Campaign



WHO	You (the Employee Campaign Coordinator – ECC) and your team members lead your organizations United Way campaign, and join over a hundred local companies in supporting our community.
WHAT	A United Way campaign is a time for employees to come together, have fun, and do good. Campaigns are usually 2-3 weeks long and can be virtual, in-person, or both. Employees can easily donate to United Way and participate in engaging activities.
WHERE	Your United Way campaign takes place at your workplace. The goal is to bring coworkers together to raise money for our community. All donations stay local.
WHEN	United Way Rock River Valley partners with organizations year-round to engage their employees in supporting the local community. Most workplaces run their campaigns between September and December. Our team is here to support you with tools and ideas.
WHY	Your donations directly supports the work of United Way Rock River Valley. Funds help us address key needs: low reading skills, limited access to resources, financial insecurity, and opportunities for volunteerism.
HOW	Our United Way team is here to help you get started when the timing is right for you! We have lots of resources available to make it easy and fun.

YOUR CAMPAIGN SUPPORTS YOUR LOCAL UNITED WAY

At a well-child visit, Crusader Community Health provider Jen Benters, APN, hands a child a new book to take home through Reach Out & Read, a program funded by United Way Rock River Valley.

DONATIONS IN ACTION

On a spring morning in a quiet exam room at Crusader Community Health, a toddler in a Puma hoodie sits in his mom's lap, eyes locked on a new book. Nurse practitioner Jen Benters stands beside them, sharing why reading is important before handing the book over for him to keep. It's a small moment, the kind that happens dozens of times a day in pediatric offices across Rock River Valley. But it's also the product of a deliberate investment: Reach Out & Read, a program that puts new books directly into the hands of kids at well-child visits, building early literacy skills before they enter a classroom.

That book didn't materialize on its own. It's one piece in a much larger network of programs, partnerships, and people that your United Way campaign dollars help bring together across the region.

RAISING READERS IN WINNEBAGO COUNTY

Reading by 3rd grade is a turning point. Research shows that children who aren't reading proficiently by the end of 3rd grade are four times more likely to drop out of school before graduating. Right now in Winnebago County, 2 in 3 kids aren't reading at grade level. United Way Rock River Valley is working to change that.

Your support makes all of these programs possible. Together, we're building a county where every child completes 3rd grade reading proficiently.

United Way Rock River Valley's early literacy work reaches families through coordinated programs, spanning birth through age five.

- **TINY TURNERS** – 1,100 families/month through home visits
- **PAGE TURNERS** – 4,100 children 3-5 years old across every early childhood center
- **REACH OUT & READ** – 10,000+ well-child visits
- **WINNEBAGO COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, WIC PARTNERSHIP** – 12,000+ books to 5,000 families since Sept. 2024
- **COMMUNITY EVENTS** – 8,000+ families reached
- **DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY** – Over 5,500 children ages 0-5 enrolled with over 5,092 graduates (as of June 30, 2026)

**THE COMMON THREAD:
WHEREVER A FAMILY
ALREADY GOES, WE'RE
THERE WITH A BOOK.**



United Way Rock River Valley funds the 211 information line for Winnebago County. When people dial 2-1-1 or visit il211.org they are able to get helpful information about resources in our local community.

It's free and confidential. 211 connects people to local resources for food, housing, utility assistance, healthcare, mental health support, and more.

3,833+ CALLS AND TEXTS TO 211 (JULY 2025-JUNE 2026)

WHAT CALLERS NEED MOST

Every 211 call is logged helping us identify the top needs of our community. This data is now driving where we invest next.

5,821 NEEDS IDENTIFIED BETWEEN 07/01/2025-06/30/2026

TOP 4 NEEDS IDENTIFIED	NUMBER OF NEEDS	% OF TOTAL
Housing & Shelter	2,679	46%
Utilities	714	12%
Food & Meals	306	5%
Transportation	304	5%

Data from 211 Impact Dashboard for Winnebago County: 07/01/2025 - 06/30/2026

OBSERVING THE 211 DATA RAISED A FEW QUESTIONS WE COULDN'T IGNORE.

Do children struggle with reading because their families are struggling to meet basic needs?

Can alleviating stresses of parents free up even a little more time and mental energy for reading together at home?

Unmet basic needs aren't separate from literacy. They're barriers to it. If our goal is third-grade reading proficiency, we have to understand and reduce the conditions that make learning harder in the first place.

THIS IS WHERE OUR NEXT INVESTMENT BEGINS. MEET ALICE.



NEW PILOT PROGRAM FOR 2026-27

STABLE FAMILIES HELP CHILDREN THRIVE

Meeting basic needs helps children show up ready to learn and succeed.

ALICE STANDS FOR:

ASSET LIMITED

Little to no savings to fall back on when something goes wrong.

INCOME CONSTRAINED

Earning above the Federal Poverty Level, but below the true cost of living.

EMPLOYED

Working, and often in the jobs that keep our community running.

Across Winnebago County, 41% of households fall below the ALICE threshold and struggle to afford the basics. When parents are forced to choose between paying the electric bill, repairing a vehicle, or buying groceries, that pressure doesn't stay contained. It shows up at home, in school attendance, and in the quiet moments when families could otherwise be reading together.

BASIC NEEDS AND LITERACY AREN'T TWO PROBLEMS. THEY'RE TWO SYMPTOMS OF THE SAME INSTABILITY.

That's why, with a founding investment from Nicor, United Way is launching a new ALICE pilot: a program to help working families meet the basic needs gaps our 211 data uncovered.

Our goal hasn't changed. We remain committed to raising third-grade reading proficiency. This pilot complements and clears a path for that work. When a family can keep the lights on and the car running, reading practice at home has a chance to happen.

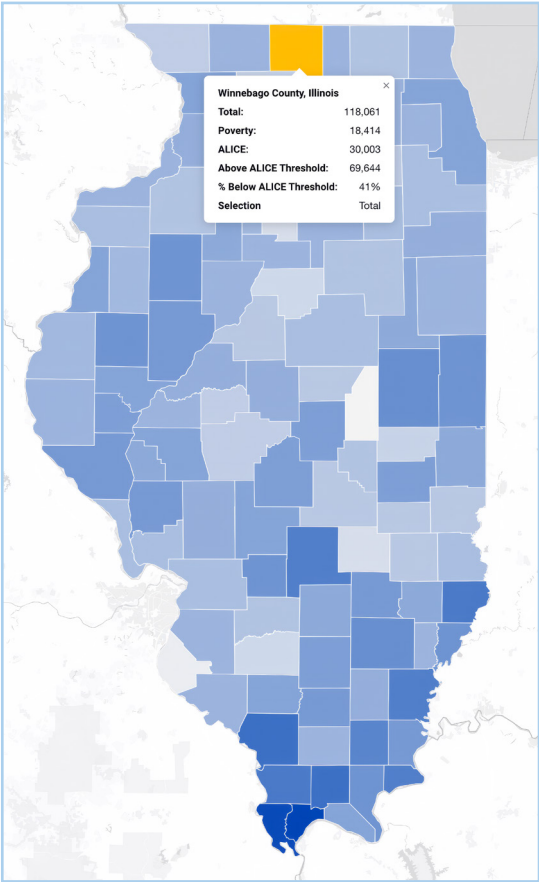
The ALICE pilot aims to remove the barriers that can keep children from reaching their full potential. When families are more stable, children are better positioned to learn.

When children learn to read, our community grows stronger.

UNITED FOR LITERACY, 211, AND ALICE ALL WORK TOGETHER.

When a family calls 211, we learn what help they need. The ALICE program helps families meet basic needs so children can come to school ready to learn. Our literacy work gives kids the reading skills they need to succeed in school and build a more stable future.

When you give to United Way, your gift supports all of this. One donation helps families today while creating brighter futures for tomorrow.



Sources: ALICE Threshold, 2024; American Community Survey, 2024

41% OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY HOUSEHOLDS CAN'T AFFORD THE BASICS

Total Households	118,061
Households in Poverty	18,414 (15.6%)
ALICE Households	30,003 (25.4%)
Households above the ALICE Threshold	69,644 (59%)



SAMPLE WORKPLACE CAMPAIGN SCHEDULE

This is an example to help inspire you.

CAMPAIGN KICKOFF

Host an all-company kickoff to share the importance of United Way. Speakers can include company leadership, a United Way Rock River Valley team member, and/or a nonprofit partner ambassador.

TIP | Incentivize employees by providing food and/or raffling off a prize.

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY

Encourage employees with a kit packing activity, collection drive, or by heading out to a nonprofit partner to volunteer. The United Way Rock River Valley team can help plan this volunteer activity.

TIP | Volunteering can take place outside of the formal campaign window.

CAMPAIGN SPECIAL EVENT

Consider hosting a special campaign event. Use the time of year to your advantage! Popular fall/winter activities include a pumpkin carving competition, chili cook-off, Halloween costume contest, cookie baking contest, or wreath making.

TIP | Get creative and have fun!

CLOSING CELEBRATION

Celebrate a successful campaign, and encourage last minute donations by bringing your team together for a final day of fun. This can include a potluck lunch, awarding raffle prizes, and sharing the impact of your donations.

TIP | Incentivize employees by offering a company perk if you meet your fundraising goal like a pizza party or early dismissal.

GET LEADERSHIP INVOLVED

Employees will feel more motivated to give when they see leadership actively involved in the campaign and sharing why they support United Way. Ask leaders to attend campaign events, speak at kickoffs and be involved as much as possible.

CAMPAIGN IDEAS & INCENTIVES

Examples from real local companies

- Decades (80s, 90s)
- Carnival
- Fall & Halloween
- Dress Up Contest
- Premiere parking
- Time off
- Food, coffee, treats
- Company swag
- Jeans day
- Early dismissal

CELEBRATE AND THANK DONORS

Be proud of the work you've done and share the impact with your team. Remember to thank your donors so everyone feels appreciated.

START PLANNING

Head to unitedwayrrv.org/workplace-campaigns for:

- campaign activities and prizes
- success stories and videos
- email templates and marketing materials



WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER THAN WE COULD EVER BE ALONE.

DONATION METHODS

TWO QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT FIRST:

1 Do all employees have access to email and computers? If so, there are three options to consider.



ePledge (Traditional)

This is an online tool that allows you to raise money efficiently and safely without paper forms.

We create a branded landing page and customized emails for your organization.

Emails are sent directly to your employees using the secure tool, and you can automatically track pledges by running real-time reports.

This option is ideal for workplaces where a large percentage of your employees have access to email.

Representatives from the following departments
MUST approve the tool: HR, Payroll, Privacy Officers,
Senior Management, Communications/Marketing

NOTE: With this option, you must provide a data file to United Way four weeks before your campaign to our Pledge Processing Manager for set-up.

ePledge (Employee Registration)

With this option, each employee is responsible for creating their own profile in our database. ECCs can track real time results and reporting.

This option is ideal for workplaces where:

- Company does not release employee list
- Some employees have work email addresses
- Company doesn't allow outside emails

Existing donors can register with known email to see giving history and update contact info.

United Way Rock River Valley Web Portal

This option is essentially a digital version of the paper form shown on the right hand side.

ECC does not have access to real time results. Your Relationship Manager will provide reports.

You will be provided with a link to send out to employees.

2 Do employees prefer to use paper pledge forms? If so, is there somewhere these forms can be readily available in your workplace?



Paper Form

This option is best for workplaces where employees don't have access to email or a computer.

Reach out to your Relationship Manager for paper pledge forms.

I WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY!

YES! I pledge to invest in my community.

We use contact information to process gifts and occasionally tell you about community impact, we will not share it.

1 ABOUT ME

PREFERRED FIRST NAME LAST NAME

EMPLOYER

EMAIL WORK PERSONAL PHONE WORK PERSONAL

STREET ADDRESS CITY STATE ZIP

I WISH TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS. PLEASE DO NOT USE MY/OUR NAMES FOR RECOGNITION PURPOSES.

2 MY INVESTMENT

EASY PAYROLL DEDUCTION

Investment per paycheck:
 ☐ \$1
 ☐ \$50
 ☐ \$100
 ☐ OTHER

Your employer's pay periods per year:
 ☐ 12 (MONTHLY)
 ☐ 24 (BI-MONTHLY)
 ☐ OTHER
 ☐ 52 (WEEKLY)
 ☐ 26 (BI-WEEKLY)

Total Annual Payroll Deduction (investment x pay periods) = \$

CASH, CHECK, OR CREDIT CARD

Giving Frequency
 ☐ 12 (MONTHLY)
 ☐ 4 (QUARTERLY)
 ☐ ONE-TIME

Gift Amount: Start Date:
 ☐ CASH
 ☐ CHECK
 ☐ CREDIT CARD

Total Annual Payment Frequency x \$
 ☐ DATE
 ☐ CREDIT CARD

Total Annual Payment (frequency x \$) = \$

ONLINE DONATION



Prefer to give online?
 Scan the QR code to complete your workplace pledge online.
 unitedwaymy.org/digital-pledge-form

3 MAKE IT OFFICIAL:

SIGN HERE DATE

THANK YOU!

THIS SECTION IS OPTIONAL AND NOT REQUIRED

Leave this section blank if you would like your gift to support United Way Rock River Valley. Your donation will be invested where it is needed most to meet our community's greatest needs.

I PLEDGE THIS DONATION TO ANOTHER UNITED WAY OR WINNEBAGO COUNTY SOCIETY*

NAME OF ORGANIZATION

*Designations must be minimum of \$500, and a 5% fee will be applied.

If the designated organization is not a registered 501(c)(3), does not exist, or is not identifiable, we will invest your donation where it is needed most.

CREDIT CARD NUMBER EXPIRATION SECURITY CODE

I WANT TO MAKE THIS A PERPETUAL INVESTMENT. Check here to make your credit card gift ongoing, until you request otherwise.

UNITED WAY COPY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHO IS UNITED WAY ROCK RIVER VALLEY, AND WHO DO YOU SERVE?

We are a local, independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, part of the United Way Worldwide network, and we serve the residents of Winnebago County. Our programs and money stay local. We are your local United Way.

WHERE DOES MY DONATION GO?

Contributions to United Way Rock River Valley directly support initiatives such as United for Literacy, the 211 Information Line, and our ALICE pilot program.

WHAT IS UNITED WAY ROCK RIVER VALLY'S ROLE WITH OTHER NONPROFITS AND AGENCIES?

United Way Rock River Valley supports local agencies through collaborative and financial efforts. United Way Rock River Valley does research and creates an action plan to tackle local issues, then assembles a team of agencies that want to work with us on addressing them.

We provide funding for those organizations to use towards our collective goals, and hold them accountable for doing their part by measuring and tracking our impact. By bringing diverse organizations and experts to the table, we can solve many more problems together than we could if all acted independently.

DOES UNITED WAY ROCK RIVER VALLEY ALLOW DESIGNATIONS?

Yes, we do allow for designations of over \$100 to be made to a different United Way or another Winnebago County human services 501(c)(3) organization.

HOW CAN I RECEIVE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RECEIPT OF MY CONTRIBUTION?

We always strive to show our generous donors how much we appreciate them. Please be sure to provide your full name and address upon making your donation. This allows us to follow up with a thank you letter that will also list your total contribution and can serve as a receipt.

We respect your privacy, and your information will be utilized to provide you with an acknowledgement and receipt of your contributions, and keep you informed on how your investment continues to help our community thrive. Please note that several employers may be unable to release your contact information due to privacy laws, which will prevent us from sending acknowledgement, receipt, or additional correspondence to you.

HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

We're here to help every step of the way.

If you have questions or are looking for ideas, contact our Corporate Engagement Manager, Cherice Ullrich, at cherice@unitedwayrrv.org or call (815) 968-5400.

ANNUAL EVENTS



EARTH DAY CLEANUP

This community-wide day of service, launched in 2026, was met with incredible enthusiasm. Teams took to the streets on Earth Day (April 22) to clean up our community. We are excited to bring this event back in 2027. Save the date!

COMMUNITY BOOK FAIR

Each spring we host a city-wide collection of new and gently used kids books to for our FREE Community Book Fair. In 2026 we collected a staggering 10,000 books, and during the five-hour event 6,297 books and 740 magazines found new homes.



DAY OF CARING

Every September, we host our largest corporate volunteer event of the year. Local companies form teams and spend the day volunteering at nonprofits across Winnebago County, tackling projects that these organizations often don't have the time or staff to complete on their own, like painting, landscaping, and organizing. It's a chance for businesses to give back together, build team culture outside the office, and make a visible difference in the community in a single day.

YEAR-ROUND ENGAGEMENT

On a warm morning last fall, local FIELD employee Amber sat on a stretch of pavement, paintbrush in hand, turning a plain sidewalk into something kids would stop and smile at. It was Day of Caring, United Way Rock River Valley's annual event that sends hundreds of volunteers into schools, parks, and nonprofits across the region for one focused day of hands-on work.

For FIELD, it was one day. But it's part of a bigger pattern: companies showing up for their community in ways that go beyond writing a check during campaign season.

A workplace campaign is a great start. Here's how local businesses are taking it further.

HANDS-ON VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

KIT BUILDING • \$8-12 per kit

Literacy Kits • Help kids develop a love of reading by creating fun, interactive activity kits designed to engage them with age-appropriate books.

Snack Kits • Assemble nutritious snack packs for distribution at our impact partner sites, after school programs and more.

Teacher Kits • Assemble needed classroom supplies and teacher care packages to support our county's teachers.

Hygiene Kits • Assemble basic needs kits to help put hygiene items in the hands of Winnebago County residents facing hardships.

If your team has an idea that's not on this list, we're happy to work with you and customize a kit building project!

SCHOOL READING PROGRAMS

Volunteer as a Reading Buddy. Engage in our goal to raise the literacy rate by developing a meaningful relationship with a child and help foster a love of reading.



FIELD employee, Amber, paints a sidewalk outside Parker Center during Day of Caring.

VOLUNTEER
AND ENGAGE
WITH YOUR
COMMUNITY