

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Q1 FY23

NEWSLETTER

Highlighted Stories of Success



United Way
of Washington County, MD

Day of Caring September 15, 2022

Volunteers = 900+
Workplace Teams = 55
Total Projects = 96

Health Fair

325 Visitors

40+ Participating Organizations

124 Health Screenings

Senior Support

1,273 Seniors Served

673 Snacks

390 Pet Visits

Collections

5,000+ Baby Items

175 Personal Hygiene

Kits Packaged

Selfless Act, Big Impact

The Day of Caring is the single largest one-day community service effort in Washington County, MD. With the help from local sponsors and businesses, as well as the mobilization of hundreds of local volunteers, our community rallies together to create positive change.

United Way facilitates Day of Caring projects that are designed to serve our community's most vulnerable residents including the elderly, disabled, low-income, and military veterans at no cost to them. Many nonprofit organizations are also supported through this event which allows them to continue focusing on serving the needs of Washington County.

Day of Caring projects aim to improve the safety, mobility, access, organization, cleanliness, maintenance, and beautification of residential and nonprofit properties.

Thank you to all who participated, donated or otherwise helped to make this day a huge success!



BASIC NEEDS FOOD



Hope Food Boxes Testimonial



"Hauling for Hope really helps my family and I out especially since I don't have a driver's license or a car. I'm unable to get to food banks. Before this program, I would not have meals for us to eat and I would stress about how I was gonna be able to feed my children." ~ Heather

Micah's Backpack

Submitted by Kathy Powderly, HARC Executive Director

Last school year saw challenges getting students to take the bags at South High. We set out to improve communications this year and improve the process. After a few conversations with school personnel, the school changed their liaison to the same person who coordinates their in-school pantry, Pat Caniford.

Pat shared that last year it upset her to see the bags all delivered to the front office for the whole school to see, and students had to pick them up from there as well. Many times, students were too embarrassed to do so. Bags are now delivered to a portable classroom outside the building; some students pick them up on their way out from the portable classroom and others go directly to her office and she puts the bag in their school backpack. Additionally, she knows which kids really need the food, who aren't being served well by the in-school pantry.

Pat shared that she was personally homeless and hungry for a time as a child, and how food made for a connection point for her as well as alleviating her hunger. "I see food as a connector," she said. "To build relationships, learn of other needs of a child, and connect them to other resources."

Meals on Wheels - Commission on Aging

Submitted by Sandy Wood, Chief Operating Officer



One of our clients began receiving home-delivered meals after experiencing a fall and fracturing her arm at home. She had to be hospitalized and received rehabilitation in a long term care facility. Upon her discharge, she was sent home and able to start home-delivered meals because of the grant received from United Way. This client is especially appreciative of the meals she receives and writes letters frequently to express how thankful she is. She is now able to receive nutritious meals five days a week and she loves the healthy, nutritious food she receives. She also appreciates the socialization she gets from the volunteers who deliver her meals. United Way, through the gift of this grant, continues to ensure that our community is able to help care for the needs of vulnerable older adults in our community.



BASIC NEEDS SHELTER



Gatekeepers Testimonial



"I was released from state prison on a Friday morning in September. Thanks to Gatekeepers, I was provided with housing along with clothing, food, a cell phone, bed sheets, a towel and a backpack filled with hygiene items. A fresh start to my new life!" ~ Returning Citizen & Business of Living Participant

St. John's Family Shelter

Submitted by Carla Charles, President, Board of Directors

One day, our Shelter Caretaker came home from work and found a lady sitting in her car in front of the shelter. She and her young son had been living in their car when someone told them of St. John's Family Shelter. We happened to have a vacancy and expedited things to get the family a roof over their heads.

The mother spared no time getting in touch with the various agencies around town; this included meeting with one of the housing case workers at Reach. She continued to make follow up calls and search for places to live.

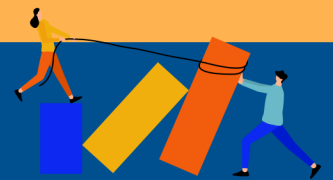
Through the Rapid Rehousing program at Reach, she was able to secure her own place after staying at the shelter for 112 days. She soon secured after-school day care for her son and had a job lined up to start as soon as he started school.

As a result of our collaboration with Reach and other community agencies, this mother left our program with so much more than she arrived with.

Reach of Washington County-Crisis Assistance

Submitted by Jeannie Asbury, Executive Director

We assisted a single mom avoid eviction. She is enrolled in a radiology program, participating in a 40 hour/week unpaid clinical experience, and fell behind paying for childcare and rent. She is working hard to improve her path in life and was overwhelmed at all she was facing. Her story serves as a reminder of the obstacles people can easily face when they lack family support and childcare assistance while living on an extremely limited income.





EDUCATION



BEACON House Testimonial

Our teachers at our school-aged program called STEAM Works are amazed at the enthusiasm of students coming in from recess each afternoon asking to be able to login to Imagine Learning Math and Language & Literacy.

"I cannot even finish my dinner before the students are shoving computers into my face and wanting to login."~ Mrs. Stacy Lewis

"Kids really like it in my class too. One student particularly is doing really well."~ Mrs. Leah Bennett

Out of School Time-Girls Inc.

Submitted by Maureen Grove, Executive Director

Last year, a young girl named Caro registered to participate in the Girls Inc program. Caro had never attended an after-school program. According to parents' feedback, she had a learning disability, spoke very little English, struggled to; understand expectations, how to communicate, how to utilize self-control, and was aggressive toward peers.

MacKenzie and Girls Inc staff worked together to create interventions to help Caro succeed in an unfamiliar environment. Each class created a structured routine, reviewed expectations and modeled what each intervention would look like.

Girls Inc staff and MacKenzie helped Caro maintain focus and learn to play with others appropriately by thoroughly communicating, continuing conversations, asking questions, and playing while inviting others to play in order to model how to play with others appropriately. MacKenzie and Girls Inc staff practiced with Caro how to utilize her coping skills when frustrated rather becoming physical with peers.

Caro is now one of our very successful students at Girls Inc. She has made multiple friends at Girls Inc and is eager to help anyone new feel comfortable, including introducing a new student to Girls Inc staff. Caro is one of MacKenzie's star students within her class. She is able to maintain focus and be a role model for others in her class.



Common Cents - Discovery Station

Submitted by Jordan Wygant, Interim Executive Director

Our families and partners are excited to get started with the kits. They cannot wait to see what activities are included in this year's kits. They are thankful to have the kits spread out this year, it feels less overwhelming to them and no one will forget the stack in the corner! From a volunteer perspective, this continues to be Discovery Station's largest volunteer project to-date in the organization's 26-year history. The development of the kit's lesson plans and the construction of the actual kits brought together many volunteers from Discovery Station alone. These volunteers included middle and high schoolers earning SSL hours and Girl Scout Troops, college students, board members, and even some of the volunteers and staff's young children.



HEALTH & FINANCIAL STABILITY



Financial Literacy Testimonial



"I just finished the Financial Literacy classes and I learned so much! I never used to trust banks and kept all my money at my house but then I got robbed. I was also spending a lot because the money was right here. After learning about banks and ways to save money, I have been able to open a bank account and my paychecks from my new job go right into it. I also learned to shop smarter and have been trying to go to the grocery store to get food and drinks instead of just going to the corner store where the prices are high. I'm glad I got to take this class". ~ Participant "A"

Medical Advocacy-CASA, Inc.

Submitted by Lisa Dougherty, Executive Director



A woman who received on-site advocacy at the emergency department due to intimate partner violence was then able to come to our shelter with their child. This woman lost her job due to being in the hospital due to the abuse and losing transportation that came from the abuser. The medical advocate was able to offer emergency shelter which provided a safe place for the woman and her child to live. The woman was able to work on goal planning with our resident advocates and procure a job locally so they can work towards independence away from abuse.

A secondary success seen from the expansion of the medical advocacy program is increased awareness of CASA's services in the community as well as continued growth in the partnership with the forensic nurses at Meritus. Not only was CASA able to get the forensic nurse team to assist in the trainings to provide the most accurate and thorough trainings possible to medical professionals, but for the month of October, CASA and the forensic nurses will begin a collaboration to bring community awareness during domestic violence awareness month. These connections were able to be made in thanks to the opportunity to expand medical advocacy.

Community-Based Mentoring - Big Brothers Big Sisters



Submitted by Tom Kline, Executive Director

"My daughter's Big Sister is helping her become the girl she wants to be and can be. Additionally, she has shown compassion and love for my daughter, as well as for me and my son. When she picks up my daughter for an outing, she spends some time visiting with me. She asks about how my family is doing and shows a genuine interest in our lives. I know she cares about me and my family and has prayed for us. This has especially meant a lot because most of my family and support network live outside the area. I become tearful when I think about how much joy my daughter's Big Sister has brought into all our lives."