



TOP MYTHS ABOUT UNITED WAY

■ **MYTH: My donation doesn't stay here in my community.**

FACT: Every dollar invested in United Way goes directly toward supporting your local community. We believe in taking care of our own and we want to build a thriving community where we all live, work, and raise our families.

■ **Myth: I don't have a lot to give so I can't make much impact.**

FACT: Your investment in United Way makes a huge difference for our community. Thousands of our neighbors don't know where their next meal is coming from and don't have a safe place to sleep. Domestic violence and child protective calls continue to grow. That's why your donations to our United Way 2023 Campaign are so vital—they provide essential and sustaining support our nonprofit partners can depend on—supporting thousands of people in need to help change their lives for the better.

■ **Myth: Most of my donation is going to overhead and operating expenses so I should just give to agencies directly.**

FACT: 92 cents of every donated dollar goes back into the community to support critical programs and services. Charity Navigator awards the highest score for fundraising costs if they are 10% or less and the BBB Wise Giving Alliance indicates that a charity should spend no more than 35% of related contributions on fundraising. United Way of Greater Rochester and the Finger Lakes operates below both of these guidelines. With that 8% fee, United Way:

- Integrates our community's systems so that nonprofits, healthcare, and social services can better align to help those in need.
- Convenes and participates in many community coalitions, initiatives, and collaborates to address challenges facing the Greater Rochester and Finger Lakes region and build a stronger community.
- United Way support allows nonprofits to multiply their public and private donations. We collect, process, and transfer donations on behalf of hundreds of health and human services agencies in the region (many indicate that participating in the United Way campaign is an effective, efficient way for them to fundraise)

■ **Myth: United Way programs just provide handouts and are a band-aid solution to our community's problems.**

FACT: The only band-aids we hand out are to kids getting in their health and fitness requirements in our after-school and summer learning programs. United Way is an innovative change-maker, implicitly focused on equity and inclusion. We are uniquely positioned to understand community needs, identify disparities, and improve lives through direct service, collaborations, volunteerism, and advocacy. We are dedicated to identifying the greatest needs in the community and investing Community Impact Fund dollars in evidence-based and preventative programs. All United Way partner programs and initiatives are monitored, measured, and evaluated regularly.

■ **Myth: United Way only helps people in the city of Rochester.**

FACT: We invest in a network of partner programs that help people all across our entire 6-county region. Whether it's a multipurpose aging resource center, summer enrichment programs for kids, Lifeline, or domestic violence hotlines, our programs connect resources all across the region to help people in need.

■ **Myth: I'm never going to need these services so I have no reason to donate.**

FACT: When our community thrives, we all thrive.

- One more local kid in after-school means one more high school graduate ready to take on the world.
- One more local family with stable housing means one less zombie house causing property values to decline.
- One more local elder with safe transportation means one less emergency hospital visit driving up healthcare costs.

■ **Myth: At XYZ company we're forced to give to United Way.**

FACT: For starters, we're sorry you feel that way. We would never want anyone to feel forced to support something they don't believe in. United Way does not encourage companies to coerce employees to give. We work with companies to help them offer United Way as a simple, convenient way for their employees to invest in our community.

■ **Myth: United Way doesn't provide any volunteer opportunities.**

FACT: Our Volunteer United platform supports nonprofits and mobilizes volunteers to assist with urgent community needs. We currently have 11,000 volunteers matched with meaningful opportunities to help local nonprofits. The portal is continually updated and offers virtual and in-person volunteer opportunities that match volunteers' time and talents. Visit unitedwayrocflx.org/volunteer for more information.

■ **Myth: Nobody gives through their workplace anymore. The United Way model doesn't work.**

FACT: In Monroe County, we're 800 companies and more than 1,000 employee campaign champions strong! We are fortunate to have the support of so many companies and employees in our 6-county region and feel honored they connect with us for their philanthropic giving. From the largest companies in Rochester to the smallest startups in Perry – thank you to everyone who has been a part of our story, and our workplace campaign, for the past 100 years!

■ **Myth: Younger people don't give and neither do retirees.**

FACT: Both groups prove themselves to be powerhouse supporters year after year after year. United Way's Emerging Leaders Society is a group of more than 600 local people under the age of 40 giving \$500 or more each year, and hundreds more donate to United Way and volunteer through our Day of Caring. And our retirees (and others that aren't connected to a workplace) give nearly \$1 million annually. Thank you to the Emerging Leaders and retirees (and everyone in between!) for supporting United Way.



**United Way
of Greater Rochester
and the Finger Lakes**