

UNITED WAY'S ALLOCATIONS PROCESS: What it is, How it works, Who's involved, and What it means

Greater Mankato Area United Way's mission is to unite the community to secure and invest resources. A key part of this mission is fulfilled through the Allocations Process. Here's a quick overview of what the Allocations Process is, how it works, who's involved, and what it means.

The Allocations Process: What it is

The Allocations Process determines the distribution ("allocation") of United Way funds. It is a rigorous and comprehensive process which enables United Way to analyze where funding will have the greatest impact and distribute the funds accordingly. This annual review happens every spring and is open to non-profits meeting Health & Human Service needs in the greater Mankato area. In short, this rigorous process means that United Way is serious about how it invests one of its key resources: your dollars.

The concept is simple: take the people who are doing the work day after day, and let them tell their story. Our goal is to find out what needs they see in our community, who they are serving, how they spend the money, and what impact they are having.

Allocations Process: How it works

Ensure accountability & collaboration: Every spring, local non-profit agencies submit applications to United Way to request funding for their programs. The application includes everything from detailed budgets, to how many clients they serve, to assessments of the impact the program has had and will have in our community, to details about the demographics of the people they serve.

Bring people together: Each year approximately 60 United Way volunteers will break into teams that will undergo an intense training, and then review the applications, interview the non-profit agencies in person (when possible, on location), and finally, debate the best allocation of United Way funds. These volunteers will dedicate a total of over 570 hours throughout this process, and will make a recommendation to the United Way Board of Directors on how United Way funds should be distributed in the following year.

Allocations Process: Who's involved

Connect people & organizations to resources: Each year, over 30 local non-profits submit funding requests to our United Way; from American Red Cross to the YWCA, Lutheran Social Service to Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare. These non-profits work hard every day in our community, from providing basic needs & emergency services, supporting individuals and families, nurturing our children & youth, enhancing the lives of people with disabilities, or promoting health & wellness. These non-profits directly touch the lives of so many members of our community, making our community a better place to live and work.

Create awareness: On the other side of the review table, a diverse group of community leaders, strategic partners, stakeholders and community members make up the teams of volunteers that review the funding applications. It's tough work because the needs are all so compelling, but with limited resources not all funding requests can be met.

Each spring, Greater Mankato Area United Way volunteers will spend over 600 hours reviewing funding applications for over 50 programs, and will make tough funding recommendations.

Allocations Process: What it means

Secure resources: When United Way kicks off its annual campaign each fall, we can communicate to you exactly what programs will receive United Way funding, and why it's so important that programs like these are available in the greater Mankato area. Our campaign goal is to raise funds to meet the needs of our partner programs.

Incubate initiatives: The allocation review process goes beyond a review of numbers, results and data; it provides an avenue where resounding messages of gaps and needs in the community can be heard. These reviews have often planted the seeds for new programs to start as United Way **initiatives** because as the community's needs become apparent, United Way is able to generate awareness and convene stakeholders and resources to address the issues.

Are you interested in becoming a Community Impact Volunteer? Or are you a local non-profit who would like to find out more about applying for United Way funding? Then email Katie Boone at katieb@mankatounitedway.org.