

WORDS TO LIVE BY:

LEAVE YOUR WORLD BETTER THAN YOU FOUND IT. WALK THE TALK. FIGHT FOR WHAT'S RIGHT. DO YOUR PART. LEAVE YOUR MARK. RAISE MONEY. RAISE HOPE. RAISE THE BAR. FOLLOW YOUR PASSION. LAUGH. MAKE SOMEONE LAUGH. DRY SOMEONE'S TEARS. LIFT SOMEONE'S SPIRITS.

BECAUSE ANY DAY, EVERY DAY, IS A NEW OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE UNITED.

## 2010 Campaign Spotlight:

### Thank You, Greater Mankato Area!

Nearly everyone has wrapped up their campaign rallies, local results are in, and now we're just waiting on some final reports. As of today our community has raised a total of **\$1,723,449**, a number that several months ago may have seemed daunting. The thermometer is still climbing and as of today is just over **92%**.

In thanks for everything our volunteers and donors do for the community through United Way, our annual

### Volunteer Thank You Event Soup & Salad Luncheon

will be held  
Friday, February 19th  
from 12-1pm  
at South Central College's Heritage Hall

We will be recognizing the top companies for their 2010 campaign results, and giving special award recognition to a special volunteer and donor.

Be sure to RSVP for the event at [lauras@mankatounitedway.org](mailto:lauras@mankatounitedway.org) or 345-4551. We hope to see you there!

The Volunteer Thank You Event is sponsored by:



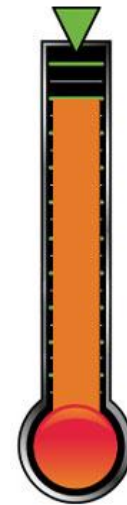
## Your gift in action -

### The Backpack Initiative

When a child is hungry, it affects their ability to focus and succeed in school. Did you know that **11.5%** of children in Blue Earth County live at or below the poverty guidelines? Or that **1 in 3** Mankato public school children are enrolled in the Free & Reduced Lunch program, and that at one of our Mankato schools almost **47%** of the students are enrolled?

## 2010 Campaign Goal:

**\$1,870,000**



Today: **92%**  
**THANK YOU!**

## Corporate gift spotlight

Thank you to these businesses who have turned in their corporate pledges since our last eNewsletter. [Click Here](#) to see the complete list of these corporate leaders in our community.

Johnson Outdoors  
Xcel Energy  
Scheels All Sports  
River Bend Business Products  
The Free Press  
Midwest Electric  
The Thro Company

The Greater Mankato Area United Way is teaming up with *Feeding Our Communities Partners* on an innovative initiative to help feed kids and ultimately, help them succeed in school. United Way has provided a \$5,000 grant towards the FOCP's 2010 BackPack Food Program pilot.



The goal for this pilot is to ensure that children living in households where food and regular meals are not necessarily a "given", receive child-friendly, nutritious food, nutrition education and outreach information which will be discreetly placed in their backpacks before breaking for weekend and holiday breaks.

A teacher from a community who has implemented the BackPack program tells this story, "Come Friday morning I am ALWAYS stopped by Cheyenne who says with the biggest smile on her face, "Today is the day we get the food, right Mrs. Kerns?" I respond with something like, "You're right kiddo" and then before she walks away she will usually turn back and say, "Don't forget, o.k.?"

Your United Way will continue to work to bring community partners together to meet the hunger needs in our area so that we don't forget about the kids in our midst who would go to bed hungry. Be watching in March for more information on how you can get involved with this pilot program.

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## What's new with United Way's Partner Agencies?

**VINE Faith in Action** will again be providing FREE tax preparation at the Summit Center for seniors and lower-to-middle income taxpayers. Certified tax preparers will be available **by appointment** from Feb 4 - Apr 15 to do federal and state income tax returns, MN property tax and rent rebates. Call the Summit Center at 345-5262 to make an appointment.

**Open Door Health Center** has added a new physician, Dr. Kim Wernsing, who is eager to begin serving patients. She sees children and adults and provides care for urgent care needs, physicals, and chronic disease management. Open Door accepts Medical Assistance, other forms of insurance, and has a sliding fee scale to help make care affordable for the uninsured. Help spread the word if you know of someone who would be best served in a community clinic environment.

**Lutheran Social Services** currently has openings in the On My Own Program, which is a program that teaches independent living skills for youth ages 16 to 20. The group meets once a week and covers topics like job interviews, renting an apartment, tips for buying a car, healthy living, banking, and budgeting. The group also prepares a meal together every week and shares peer support group time. For more info, contact Amber at 625-7660 ext. 256.

**The Arc of Minnesota Southwest** is hosting a Legislative Town Hall Forum on Disability Issues this Saturday, Jan 16th at

Exclusively Diamonds  
J. C. Penney  
Maschka Riedy & Ries Law  
M & M Signs  
United Parcel Service (UPS)  
All American Towing Company  
Crown Beverage Packaging  
Lagers of Mankato, Inc.  
Target  
Valley News Co.  
Corporate Graphics Commercial  
Dr Pepper Snapple Group  
Tav On The Ave / Dino's /  
The Neighbors / Number 4  
Hiniker Homes  
Travel Center, Inc.  
Lor Ray Drive Dental Group  
The Buckle  
Herberger`s  
Matt J. Graif  
ProGrowth Bank  
Wenzel Auto Electric Co.  
Indulge Salon & Tanning  
Wayne`s Auto Body  
Milbrett, Dauk & Co, Ltd  
Mutch Ace Northside Hardware  
Express Employment  
Professionals  
G & K Rental

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## Be watching for it

If you are expecting a new Heart Club plaque or sticker update, it should be arriving via your company's campaign volunteer in early February. Display your plaque with pride; it's an easy way to show your commitment to United Way and advocate for others to join you!



If we haven't got your Heart Club recognition preferences just right, please don't hesitate to contact our office so we can make any corrections. Call 345-4551 or [email here](#).

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10:30 am at the Blue Earth County Library large conference room. Senator Kathy Sheran and Rep Kathy Brynaert will be in attendance to answer questions or address concerns related to disability issues and the upcoming legislative session. The event is free of charge and open to anyone. Call ARC with any questions at 345-4223.

**READY! for Kindergarten's** February classes still have some openings for families with children age birth to 5. Classes are free, and each family attending the classes will be given a free set of materials to make learning at home fun. Pre-registration is required and the registration deadline is Jan 25. [Click here](#) for class schedules, registration information, and all the details.

**LEEP** announces that out of 219 Special Olympic Teams across the state of Minnesota, LEEP has THE largest team with 248 different athletes competing in 15 different sporting opportunities throughout the year. To find out more about LEEP's programs, [click here](#).



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There's so much going on every day at each of our Partner Agencies. Lives are impacted, futures changed, hope is sustained, relief is felt. On behalf of our Partners and the individuals they impact every day, **THANK YOU** for your support of Greater Mankato Area United Way.

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