



what matters.™

# 2009 Annual Report To The Community

Serving Shiawassee County For Over 67 Years

## Shiawassee United Way

**"Neighbors Helping Neighbors"**

### Message from the CEO, Retta Parsons



Recently, Arizona bee scholar Stephen Buchmann recreated an experiment done by Canadian Scientist Brian Hocking. The question: How far could a bee travel on a gallon of honey? It turns out that a bee can go approximately 4,704,280 miles on a gallon of honey. This would make a bee very, very fuel efficient.

Hence, the saying, "busy as a bee" has some real meaning.

This same kind of efficiency and hard work ethic can be applied to many non-profit organizations, especially those in Shiawassee County. While we all comprehend that there is real, large-scale need in our communities, we also expect that our donated dollars are being used in the most efficient manner possible so that more services can get to those people in need.

Your Shiawassee United Way has been busy as bees during 2009. While many other granting organizations throughout the nation were unable to provide funds to others in 2009, Shiawassee United Way financially supported 10 programs at 8 other non-profit agencies throughout our county. In addition, we assumed the responsibility of administering the Shiawassee Hunger Network, an alliance of 16 pantries located throughout the county. In 2009, Hunger Network pantries distributed food to approximately 39,000 persons. Also provided to those in need were approximately 64,000 personal care products. Shiawassee United Way expanded its own "business hours" food pantry allowing more families to be fed when they were already in Owosso, saving trips and, consequently, gasoline.

Emergency homelessness became even more of a challenge in 2009. Shiawassee United Way successfully secured \$5,100 in grants to help fund the efforts of the Church and Community Emergency Homelessness Coalition. This made it possible for 106 homeless persons, including children, in our community to receive up to three nights in a hotel where they could experience shelter, warmth, a hot shower, and dignity.

While Shiawassee United Way was busy tending to the needs of the most vulnerable, we were also strengthening the safety net for each and every person in the community. We worked diligently to bring the United Way 211 Social Service and Disaster Information line to Shiawassee County. This is a huge task as there are many requirements that must be met for Michigan Alliance of Information & Referral Systems and Michigan Public Service Commission approval. The final implementation of this service is estimated to take us well into 2010 or early 2011. We distributed over 15,000 FamilyWize Prescription Discount Cards, free of charge, to any community member who needed one. This resulted in approximately \$63,000 of total savings to a county of 70,880 persons. For more information about your United Way, go online to [www.shiawasseeunitedway.org](http://www.shiawasseeunitedway.org) or join our Facebook and Twitter Communities.

As you read the following pages, it becomes clear that, like the bee, Shiawassee United Way has used your dollars efficiently and effectively to get as many "miles per gallon" as possible. Please also allow yourself to feel the pride that you should—for this is your United Way and, as such, you have provided many solutions to addressing the root causes of poverty right here in your community. You are a vital part of the safety net to all who live and work in Shiawassee County.

### Shiawassee United Way 2009 Board of Directors

#### Officers

Kim Lazar, President  
 Mark Erickson, Vice President  
 Paul Cook, Past President  
 Michelle Schwab, Treasurer  
 Ed Brush, Secretary  
 Charles Dahl, Campaign Chairperson  
 Pete Karsten, Campaign Co-Chairperson  
 Retta Parsons, Chief Executive Officer

#### Members at Large

Sharon Bowen  
 Deana Doan  
 Frank Fear  
 Ann Gambae Hall  
 David Hood  
 Junior Love  
 Patricia Post  
 Marli Schnepf  
 Joy Welty



### Shiawassee United Way Mission: To unite people and other resources to improve and strengthen the quality of life for all people in Shiawassee County.

- Give, advocate, volunteer. This is how you can be a member of the Shiawassee United Way team. When you volunteer for or donate to the Shiawassee United Way, you are an agent of change. The Shiawassee United Way is about hope, opportunity, and change. This year, we are funding 10 programs at 8 agencies throughout the county. You can be a part of this exciting movement. Become a volunteer or financial partner of the Shiawassee United Way by contacting us through our website, [www.shiawasseeunitedway.org](http://www.shiawasseeunitedway.org) or by phoning 989-723-4987. Together, we can all make a difference.
- Shiawassee United Way wishes to thank the 2009 Pacesetter organizations and their employees. They lead the way as devoted community members interested in addressing the root causes of poverty in Shiawassee County. The 2009 pacesetter organizations were Baker College, Chemical Bank & Trust, Memorial Healthcare, Shiawassee RESD, Shiawassee Family YMCA, Meijer, Toledo Commutator, and Wolverine Sign Works. Because of their leadership, Shiawassee United Way is able to serve many community members in need.

### Please Attend the Upcoming 2010 Shiawassee United Way Events:

- Poker Nights, Thursday-Sunday, March 18-21, 6 p.m., at Owosso Poker Room
- Annual Meeting, Thursday, March 25, 6 p.m., at Gi-Gi's in Corunna, RSVP at 989-723-4987
- Postal Carriers' Food Drive, Saturday, May 8, put non-perishable food items in your mailbox
- Owosso Speedway Race Day, August 28, 7 p.m., at Owosso Speedway
- Shiawassee United Way Campaign, Friday, Oct 1-Tuesday, Nov 30, give online at [www.shiawasseeunitedway.org](http://www.shiawasseeunitedway.org)

You may donate at any time of the year to the Shiawassee United Way to help support the community services they provide. Send your donation to Shiawassee United Way, P.O. Box 664, Owosso, or give online at [www.shiawasseeunitedway.org](http://www.shiawasseeunitedway.org). Thank you.

The Board of Directors of the Shiawassee United Way would like to invite all of the residents of Shiawassee County to the annual meeting on Thursday, March 25, 6 p.m. at Gi-Gi's. Please reserve your spot and purchase your tickets. Call 989-723-4987. We look forward to seeing you at this exciting event!

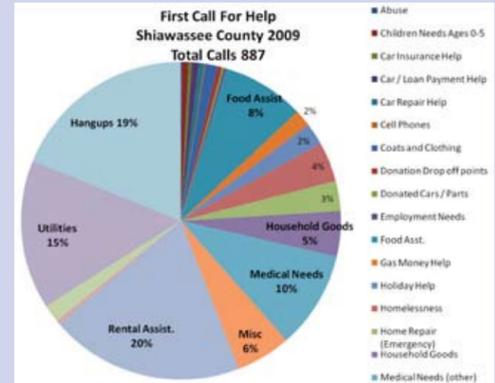
### First Call for Help

The First Call for Help service is brought to you by a partnership with the Shiawassee United Way, Verizon Foundation, and Young Chevrolet Cadillac. Any person living in Shiawassee County can call the toll-free number (888-866-4566) to get information regarding services to help them with their basic human needs. This year, First Call for Help assisted 887 persons by helping them to know where to turn for such needs as homelessness, utility shutoff, food acquisition, mental health services, etc.

Similar, relative, cost savings can be expected to occur in Shiawassee County.

Your Shiawassee United Way is proud to have been a part of addressing the needs of thousands of community members through this service. However, it is now time to take this opportunity to the next level. Presently, 80 percent of all Michigan residents and 80 percent of the nation's total population are experiencing the benefits of the United Way 211 social service and disaster information lines in their communities. Shiawassee United Way hopes to soon bring United Way 211 to Shiawassee County residents. Information regarding the availability of community services tailored to the specific needs of the caller are just one its advantages. Suicide counselors are just a quick call transfer away. In addition, should there be a community emergency, county safety personnel would be able to get information to the community through United Way 211 in a quick, efficient manner. For more information, go on line to [www.uwmich.org](http://www.uwmich.org) and click on the 211 tab.

At present, Shiawassee United Way and the Shiawassee 211 Advisory Council have secured all requested letters of agreement from specified agencies. We are working closely with Resource Genesee as a results-oriented database is built. Once that is in place, the Mid-Michigan 211 Call Center will be applying on our behalf to the Michigan Alliance of Information & Referral Systems for approval and referral to the Michigan Public Service Commission for their consideration. It is envisioned that final implementation may occur sometime in late 2010 or early 2011.



A University of Nebraska study cited \$7.6 - 16.5 Million annual cost savings for the state of Nebraska resulting from such factors as: one call for multiple referrals, reduced overlapping helpline costs and improved community planning through caller statistical data.

**TAKE ONE AND SAVE**  
 for immediate savings on prescription drugs

**LLEVE GRATIS**  
 ahorros inmediatos para medicamentos de venta con receta

ALSO, FOR STATE CHILDREN'S HEALTH COVERAGE (MHC), CALL 877-888-4630  
El medicamento requerido • No se aplica a los medicamentos controlados • No se aplica a los medicamentos controlados

**familywize** PRESCRIPTION DRUG DISCOUNT CARD

Distributed free of charge nationwide by the FamilyWize Partnership with participating United Way agencies, America's Pension Alliance, Partners, charities, community organizations, doctors, businesses, and some pharmacies. Discounts are provided by and available only at the participating pharmacies.

Member ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Group ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
 PIN: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: 877-461-3717  
 Member: 888-618-2723

THIS IS NOT INSURANCE - DISCOUNTS ONLY Expires: 11/31/2010

### FamilyWize Prescription Discount Cards

Shiawassee United Way brings FamilyWize Prescription Discount Cards to any resident in Shiawassee County. This discount card has brought \$63,044 of savings to families and individuals from Jan 2007-February 2010. Total savings on prescription drugs for Shiawassee County residents in 2009 was \$16,258. Pharmacies all over the United States have offered discounts to Shiawassee County residents who have presented their card. It is only available in this area from your Shiawassee United Way. To get a card, please contact Shiawassee United Way through their website, [www.shiawasseeunitedway.org](http://www.shiawasseeunitedway.org) or by calling 989-723-4987.

**Message from the President,  
Kim Lazar**



For over 65 years, the staff and volunteers of the Shiawassee United Way have worked hard to address the root causes of poverty in income, health, and education in Shiawassee County. This past year has been filled with many triumphs for Shiawassee County residents thanks to the hard work and dedication of an exceptional staff and a dedicated team of volunteers.

I want to personally thank the staff and volunteers that helped feed thousands of people, provided shelter for dozens of families and distributed thousands of prescription discount cards to individuals in need. Thank you, for taking the time to care enough to help make a difference in thousands of people's lives in our communities.

With a dedicated staff, committed board of directors and an eager campaign team, be assured that your local United Way is working harder than ever to assist those in need in your communities. The Shiawassee United Way will continue to identify and introduce new resources to help improve the quality of life in Shiawassee County. Thank you for supporting us and helping to serve your community. Give. Advocate. Volunteer. Be a part of the change. LIVE UNITED.

**Message from the  
Campaign Chairperson,  
Charles Dahl**



I am proud of how our community responded to the challenges of 2009 and the United Way Campaign. The money raised during the campaign is imperative to addressing the root causes of poverty in Shiawassee County. This year's campaign was divided into three parts. The Pacesetter Campaign was an opportunity for businesses to show leadership and support for helping our Shiawassee County neighbors in need. The Shiawassee United Way would like to thank this year's Pacesetter Organizations: Baker College, Chemical Bank & Trust, Meijer, Memorial Healthcare, Shiawassee RESD, Shiawassee Family YMCA, Toledo Commutator, and Wolverine Sign Works. We added events including restaurant nights, bake sales, a change drive, and poker nights to the campaign in 2009. A big thank you those who supported those endeavors. The final portion of the campaign was contacting as many businesses and individuals as possible to secure as many contributions as possible to help our neighbors in need. This required countless volunteer hours and staff time, but we did it! The staff, Board of Directors, and volunteers at Shiawassee United Way have worked tirelessly to address the root causes of poverty in Shiawassee County.

**Shiawassee United Way Funded Agencies  
and Programs-2009**

Funded Agency	Program Delivered to Community
Catholic Charities .....	Counseling Services
Corunna Ministerial, Corunna United Methodist Church .....	Corunna Ministerial Food Bank
Girls Scouts Heart of Michigan Council .....	Girl Scout Leadership Experiences
Looking Glass Community Services....	Youth Asset Development Program
Relief After Violent Encounter .....	RAVE Emergency Shelter
Respite Volunteers .....	Education & Support
Shiawassee Family YMCA.....	Strengthening Our Seniors Moon Lake & Shaftsbury Outreach Owosso After School Recreation
Shiawassee Great Start Collaborative .....	Six Week Facilitated Playgroups

SUW wishes to extend a special "Thank You" to Charles Dahl, Pete Karsten, and Cathy Stevenson for working so hard on this year's campaign. We also wish to thank Kim Lazar for serving as Board President this year. Their "can do" attitudes were inspiring and their leadership helped to move our neighbors in need from poverty to a more stable, positive existence. Thank you!

**This Ad Sponsored By:**

- Baker College
- Big John Steak & Onion
- Edward Jones-Peter Keay
- Gilberts True Value
- Maurer Heating & Cooling
- Memorial Healthcare Center
- Shaw's Pharmacy
- The Argus-Press
- Waugh's Culligan
- Wells Fargo Advisors

**Thank You For Your Generosity**

**Shiawassee Hunger Network**

This year, Shiawassee United Way assumed the administration of the Shiawassee Hunger Network. This is an alliance of 16 independently run pantries located throughout Shiawassee County. These pantries realize additional donations, distributions, and economies of scale because of their collaborative efforts.

Shiawassee United Way provides fundraising, marketing, grant writing, secretarial, management, and product donation seeking services as administrator of this alliance. The alliance pantries realize reductions in administrative costs because of the efforts of Shiawassee United Way. This frees their resources so that they can focus on the neighbors in need that they serve.



In 2009, Hunger Network pantries distributed over 351,000 meals to approx. 39,000 persons. This is a 17.8 percent increase over 2008. Also provided to those in need were approximately 64,000 personal care products.

There have been many caring businesses and individuals that have been exceptionally generous this year. Region 1C of the UAW donated a semi-truck filled with non-perishable foods (approx. 17,000 lbs.) and meat (approx. 5,000 lbs.) to the Shiawassee Hunger Network. Meijer donated both money and product to address the overwhelming need in our county. The employees of the Owosso and Corunna post offices collected over 9,000 pounds of food that was distributed to Hunger Network pantries. Chemical Bank held a county-wide hat, scarf, and mitten drive to be distributed to Shiawassee Hunger Network pantries located throughout the county. We wish to thank all those devoted to helping their hungry neighbors in need.

If addressing hunger in Shiawassee County is your passion, you may donate to the Shiawassee Hunger Network. Simply write a check to Shiawassee United Way and indicate "Shiawassee Hunger Network" in the notes section. The funds will be used to feed your neighbors in need in Shiawassee County.

**Hunger Network Member Pantries**

- Baby Pantry • Catholic Charities Pantry • Clinton/Shiawassee County Food Pantry
- Corunna Ministerial/Corunna United Methodist Church • Durand Area Loaves & Fishes
- First Church of God-Loving Hands Pantry • Gains Community Council-St. Joseph
- Lennon Community Food Pantry • New Lothrop Methodist Food Pantry
- Christ Episcopal Outreach Center • Salvation Army • Shiawassee Council on Aging
- Shiawassee Harvest Ministries • Shiawassee United Way
- St. John's United Church of Christ • Vernon Lighthouse

**Shiawassee United Way Food Pantry**

This past July, it became apparent that more needed to be done to address the needs of hunger and shortages of nutritious meals for many of our community members. To address both needs at once, Shiawassee United Way extended the hours of their food pantry so that when those in need were already in Owosso on other business, they could stop by and receive food assistance. In just six short months, your United Way distributed food to 353 people (70 families) approximately 3,000 complete meals and 841 personal care products.

One part of the economic crisis is that many families are no longer financially able to keep their pets. A partnership was formed this year with the Humane Society to address this community challenge. As a result, Shiawassee United Way and Shiawassee Hunger Network pantries have distributed several hundred pounds of food in just a few months helping both pets and the families that love them.

Shiawassee United Way wishes to especially thank private citizens and Michigan Department of Human Service employees who donated food and personal care products on a regular basis so that the pantry would remain stocked and ready to serve the community.

**Shiawassee United Way  
A Community Leader in Addressing Homelessness**

This year, Shiawassee United Way was awarded grants totaling \$5,100 to provide up to three days of emergency housing in a hotel for those who were homeless. This was done as a partnership with the Owosso Ministerial Society and the Church and Community Emergency Housing workgroup.

From March—December of 2009, only 9 months, this program housed 106 persons, including 22 families with children, for a total of 139 hotel nights. As a result of this program, 16 families with children (59 people in total) and 4 single adults were able to find permanent housing with the assistance of a Capital Area Community Services case worker.

Through the Emergency Homelessness Program, Shiawassee United Way and Capital Area Community Services were able to assist a gentleman who was living in a tool shed. He needed to go somewhere where he could get a shower so that he would be prepared for a job interview the following day. When he came to the Shiawassee United Way office, not only was he given food, but he also left with a bag of personal care items so that he had the opportunity to look his best despite the circumstances. It is these sorts of solutions that address the root causes of poverty and move people to a more positive life.

**Looking Glass Community Services**

Your Shiawassee United Way funded summer programs for children and youth at Looking Glass Community Services in Laingsburg. Younger children attended a day camp that had a structured curriculum and activities. Adolescent youth became involved with community services projects while also attending classes at Baker College to develop job skills. These teenagers, who are members of families at the poverty level, earned a wage for their community work. Your United Way donations and pledges served 196 children and youth this last summer at Looking Glass Community Services. These programs have inspired those living in poverty to go back to school and to realize their self-worth within the community.

**Catholic Charities**

Another story of success comes from Catholic Charities and their counseling services. Eighty five percent of the clients they serve live in poverty and are uninsured or underinsured. Catholic Charities' counseling program gives support and addresses the specific need of those seeking therapy. This targeted approach lifts individuals from poverty. Funds from your United Way assisted in bringing counseling services to 729 persons experiencing such challenges as substance abuse, loss of income, homelessness, divorce, and more.

**RAVE**

Relief After Violent Encounter (RAVE) used Shiawassee United Way dollars to assist with the funding of a safe house for those who experienced domestic violence. Domestic and sexual violence are a root causes of poverty. Having to leave one's home and belongings often forces those who are already victimized to realize an immediate drop or loss of income. RAVE provided 237 adults and 202 children with 3,860 safe nights to begin life anew with hope for a better tomorrow. Of the adults who stayed at the safe house, 185 (78%) obtained more stable housing when they left. That is a phenomenal success rate that your United Way donations and pledges helped bring to our community!

**Respite Volunteers of Shiawassee**

During 2009, Shiawassee United Way was pleased to fund education and support for Respite Volunteers of Shiawassee. This year, 54 new volunteers were trained. Respite volunteers contributed a total of 12,210 hours to 179 members of the Shiawassee County community.

When you donate to the Shiawassee United Way, you are helping address root causes of poverty by assisting caregivers to maintain employment or by keeping our most vulnerable in care situations that are affordable. Those served with your United Way funds have told Respite Volunteers that:

- Respite made it possible for their mom to stay with them as her health declined and care needs increased.
- Respite allowed them to continue working when their mother needed help with getting to and from cancer treatments and lab appointments.
- They experienced less stress in knowing another person could help with their loved one and give them some much needed time off.

