

United Way



LIVE UNITED™



Thank You To The Community For Achieving 97% of Campaign Goal!

2011 Annual Report To The Community



Serving Shiawassee County For Over 69 Years

Shiawassee United Way

"Neighbors Helping Neighbors"



Message from the CEO, Retta Parsons

Many times, I'm asked just what it is that your local Shiawassee United Way does. Why should people donate a portion of their hard-earned income to such a cause? The direct answer is because your local United Way looks at the broad picture of needs in our communities and analyzes which of those needs is not being met. Further, your local United Way then works diligently to inspire our communities to work together to meet

those needs. Your investment in the work of Shiawassee United Way means that you are taking a broad approach to creating positive and lasting change. This type of visioning touches more people in ways that can permanently change their lives and help them to succeed.

We are planting seeds for the future. Just as a garden grows, it takes time to realize the fruits of our labors. 2-1-1 service was made available to every person in Shiawassee County in early 2011. Your local Shiawassee United Way worked for two years to bring this service to you and those you love. Community members can simply dial 2-1-1 on their landline or cell phone and receive free information regarding your human service safety net. In addition, in times of community disaster, 2-1-1 can be used to provide the public with information regarding shelter locations, evacuation routes, food and water sites, and more. Again, there is no cost to the caller even though operators sometimes spend upwards of 20 minutes with a person to ensure that they are meeting all of their basic needs.

Your local United Way has been working hard to meet the nutritional needs of the working poor and those in poverty. We are doing this by providing the administrative and clerical work necessary to support the Shiawassee Hunger Network, a 14 member food pantry alliance. This includes food ordering, soliciting funds, securing monthly food trucks, grant writing, clerical duties, etc. By providing these services to Shiawassee County member pantries, volunteers can focus on the people and their needs. This provides comprehensive service at a local, personal level. Studies show that people whose nutritional needs are met are able to more successfully handle tasks at work, school, and home.

In 2011, your local United Way Board spent time reviewing its strategic approach to making a positive difference in our communities. You are challenged to review your United Way's strategic plan, find an issue that stirs your passion, and join us in this important community work. There are several ways to be a part of the team. You can volunteer your time at your local United Way office. We frequently need people to assist our community members or to help in other ways. You can advocate for others and provide a consistent message of the need to think of others as well as ourselves. Finally, you can donate any time of the year and provide the necessary financial backing to make lasting change in the lives of people throughout Shiawassee County.

Throughout this report, you will see that your donations have been put to good use through work on community challenges such as homelessness, employment, benefits access, high school graduation, and others. There is a donation envelope included with this community report. While other non-profit organizations continue to make multi-county mergers (some as large as 55 counties!), your local United Way continues to focus on the needs of the people right here in Shiawassee County. As always, your donations to your local Shiawassee United Way stay in Shiawassee County to serve the people of Shiawassee County. Thank you for being a part of the team that is planting seeds for not only our future but also those of our children's and our grandchildren's right here in Shiawassee County.

Shiawassee United Way 2011 Board of Directors

Officers

Marli Schnepf, President
Peter Karsten, Vice President
Mark Erickson, Past President
Tom Bridges, Treasurer
Ed Brush, Secretary
Eric Davis, Campaign Chairperson
Peter Karsten, Pacesetters Campaign Chairperson
Retta Parsons, Chief Executive Officer

Members at Large

Sharon Bowen, Career Alliance Corp./Michigan Works!
George Braidwood, Shiawassee County Sheriff
Jim Carney, Chemical Bank
Ray Chapman, Shiawassee Hunger Network
Wes Coffey, Owosso Wesleyan Church
Kim Danhausen, Terex
Deana Doan, Community Citizen
Frank Fear, Memorial Healthcare
Ann Gamboe Hall, Attorney
Jeffery Gulick, Local Eyes Networks, Inc.
Jillian Niles, Slingerland Chrysler Dodge
Pat Post, Retired Community Citizen
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NCG Cinemas
Shaw's Pharmacy
The Argus-Press
Waugh's Culligan

Thank You For Your Generosity

Mission

To unite people and other resources to improve and strengthen the quality of life for all people in Shiawassee County

Vision

To address the root causes of poverty in Shiawassee County in the areas of Basic Needs, Income, Health, and Education

Guiding Principle

Shiawassee United Way will provide to the Shiawassee County Community a strong, viable, vibrant, and relevant organization.

Over the next several years, the Board of Directors and staff of Shiawassee United Way will endeavor to implement the organization's mission, vision, and guiding principle with community level work as follows in the areas of Basic Needs, Income, Health, and Education.

Basic Needs

1. Serve as the lead agency to provide 2-1-1 services to all people in Shiawassee County
2. Work diligently with the greater community to reduce hunger in Shiawassee County
3. Provide community leadership in addressing housing stability and homelessness conditions

Income

1. Be a leader in addressing barriers to employment through collaborative community efforts
2. Form strategic partnerships to make financial literacy classes available to the Shiawassee County community

Health

1. Work with other community partners to expand access to health and dental care
2. Assist in reducing rates of obesity in Shiawassee County

Education

1. Engage in activities that increase high school graduation rates
2. Provide opportunities for students to reduce barriers to their success

Shiawassee United Way Strategic Plan 2012

Remember To Look For Your Donation Envelope In Today's Paper

You may donate at any time of the year to the Shiawassee United Way to help support their work throughout Shiawassee County. All donations stay in Shiawassee County to address the root causes of poverty in income, health, education, or basic needs.

You may give online at www.shiawasseeunitedway.org

or send your donation to Shiawassee United Way, P. O. Box 664, Owosso. Thank You.

The Board of Directors of Shiawassee United Way would like to invite you to their annual meeting on Thursday, March 22, 7:30 a.m. at the Baker College Welcome Center. RSVP by calling 989-723-4987. The cost is \$10 per person.

Shiawassee United Way 2011-2012 Funded Programs and Agencies

Safe Center

Providing shelter, food, and counseling to women and children who are victims of domestic violence

The Arc Shiawassee County
Connections Summer Day Camp

Memorial Healthcare
Community Health Needs Assessment

Shiawassee Area Transportation Agency-Transportation Solutions
Volunteer Driver/Escort Program

Great Start-Shiawassee

Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan
Scholarships for girls living in Shiawassee County

Shiawassee Family YMCA
After-school recreation programming at Bryant & Emerson Elementary Schools

Shiawassee Family YMCA
Partnership with Durand Public Schools to offer after-school recreation programming

Shiawassee Family YMCA
Social norm instruction program for at-risk teens at Durand Public Schools

Shiawassee Family YMCA
Byron Afterschool & Summer Program

Funding 10 programs at 7 Shiawassee County agencies that make lasting, positive changes in the lives of people in Shiawassee County

SUW wishes to extend a special "Thank You" to Pete Karsten and Eric Davis for working so hard on this year's campaign. We also wish to thank Marli Schnepf for serving as Board President this year. The "can do" attitude of these fine community citizens was inspiring and their leadership helped to move our neighbors in need from poverty to a more stable, positive existence. Thank you!

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. 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 or by phoning 989-723-4987. Keep up to date on human service information and issues by becoming our "friend" on Facebook. Together, we can all make a difference.

Shiawassee United Way wishes to thank the 2011 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 2011 pacesetter organizations were Baker College, Chemical Bank & Trust, Covenant Eyes, Machine Tool & Gear, Meijer, Memorial Healthcare, Midwest Bus, Owosso Graphic Arts, Shiawassee RESD, Shiawassee Family YMCA, and Wolverine Sign Works. Because of their leadership, Shiawassee United Way is able to serve many community members in need.

www.shiawasseeunitedway.org

Find us on Facebook

Message from the Board President, Marli Schnepf

Your Shiawassee United Way Board of Directors worked very hard this year to update their strategic plan to better reflect the specific needs of Shiawassee County. You can review our new strategic plan in this report. We are committed as a Board to ensuring that people are given a "hand up" and that barriers are addressed so that the families of Shiawassee County can be as successful and self-sufficient as possible.

This year, families in our communities were offered the opportunity to enroll in MICHild and Health Kids insurances, by appointment, at their local United Way office. We also assisted families by encouraging a relationship with their local Shiawassee Hunger Network pantry. This significantly and positively impacts our adults with lower wage jobs, as it encourages them to stay employed, by providing the peace of mind that their children have access to health care and proper nutrition.

Your local Shiawassee United Way will soon have an AmeriCorp Volunteer who will be touring all of Shiawassee County to assist our senior citizens, veterans, and those in need with the computerized enrollment process for public assistance. This will bring more of our federal tax dollars home, putting more money into our communities, and care for our most vulnerable citizens.

Another initiative where we have had active participation is with the Emergency Homelessness Workgroup. This is a collaborative effort between non-profit agencies, government, for-profit organizations, and concerned community citizens. There were two homelessness counts conducted by the Shiawassee Homeless Coalition in 2011. The results surfaced that at any given time, there are over 600 people, including families with children, who do not have a place to call home. Your local United Way is working hard to ensure that partnerships are formed and that solutions will be put into motion.

On behalf of the Shiawassee United Way Board, I again want to offer our thanks to each and every person who played a part in making 2011 a year of significant impact for our organization. We trust that 2012 will be even better as we dedicate ourselves to serving the many needs around us with sensitivity and excellence. Throughout our history and certainly as we look to the future, we know that it takes many caring hearts, a firm commitment and a generous collective spirit to effectively improve lives in Shiawassee County and to "Live United."

Message from the Campaign Chairperson, Eric Davis



What a great year to be involved with the Shiawassee United Way campaign! I wish to extend my sincere thanks to our vast and hard-working local United Way volunteers and organizations for a very successful campaign. We were able to exceed last year's campaign total by 1 percent! In addition, we are very thankful to have seen that there were many new community donors who have joined our local United Way movement that makes lasting, positive changes in the areas of Income, Health, Education, and Basic Needs.

This has been a year of recovery and economic rebirth in our Shiawassee County communities. Please do not forget that there are many people who continue to struggle to recover as rules and laws shift. We have seen many people who were formerly of the middle class now making minimum wage. As these families shift their budgets to accommodate this new reality, qualifications for such items as food assistance have changed. For example, if someone works full-time at minimum wage, they no longer qualify for food assistance. A portion of Shiawassee United Way's work is to address this disincentive to remain employed. We are rising to this challenge with our food pantry for the working poor, interventions in our public schools to address the needs of children in these families, and staff certified to enroll children in these families for MI-Child health insurance.

I wish to thank everyone who has donated to our local United Way. In addition, I'd like to thank Pete Karsten, our Pacesetter Chair; our campaign volunteers who delivered envelopes; our website coordinators; our 12 Pacesetter organizations; our supportive business community; and Justin Horvath and Brent Jones for their hard work. Once again, our team was vast and varied. Thank you, too, to our great office staff and SUW Board for doing the "legwork" to make our annual campaign a success.

Please continue to think of those in need with your support of the Shiawassee United Way. Lend your support to the team as we move aggressively into 2012 and make lasting positive change in the areas of Income, Health, Education, and Basic Needs.

Remember To Look For Your DONATION ENVELOPE In Today's Paper

Additional Thanks

The Board of Directors and staff of the Shiawassee United Way want to thank all of the businesses who sponsored the printing of this Annual Report to the Community. In addition, we wish to thank the Argus Press for their continuing support of the work of your Shiawassee United Way. These organizations, comprised of caring community-minded individuals, are truly addressing the root causes of poverty in Shiawassee County.

2-1-1

This past year, our Shiawassee County communities were strengthened with the implementation of 2-1-1. This toll-free number connects callers with a wealth of information about human services available. Each call is answered by a federally certified operator who has a bachelor's degree in a human service field. In addition, in times of community disaster, the 2-1-1 phone number is used to get information to the public regarding such things as evacuation routes, shelter locations, clean water locations, etc. Your local Shiawassee United Way provides this toll-free service to each and every person in Shiawassee County through campaign donations and grant dollars.



This service is valuable to our businesses, schools, non-profit organizations, health care facilities, etc. as it provides access to quick, accurate information for the people that they serve. Public and human service entities realize cost savings because calls for assistance are screened and referred appropriately. Finally, each and every person associated with Shiawassee County will be able to get information regarding human service program qualifications, funding availability, and contact information so that their families can be as strong as possible.

Take a look at how 2-1-1 has provided lasting change to actual people in our communities in Shiawassee County.

1.) Gerald, 78, had recently survived a stroke. While his speech was largely unaffected, his motor coordination had suffered and he feared that he would become injured at home without a way to call for help. His wife had passed away and the only phone in the house was a landline. After reviewing some of his information, Gerald's call specialist told him that he would likely be eligible for a free cell phone program. Happy that he had an option that would not further cut into his fixed income, Gerald thanked the call specialist and went on his way.

One hour later, Gerald called back sounding frustrated. He said that when he called to apply for the program, the automated phone prompt asked him to enter information more quickly than was possible for him. His fingers just didn't move fast enough after the stroke. Not wanting such a simple problem to keep Gerald away from his goal, the call specialist dialed the program on a conference call and entered the required information for him. Once the process was completed and they were transferred to a customer service agent, the 2-1-1 call specialist let the agent know what was happening and let Gerald continue the process on his own.

2.) Shirley began collecting disability benefits three months ago. After working for decades in a professional environment, her new fixed income was not sufficient to cover her monthly expenses. She called 2-1-1 looking for help with an eviction notice. Her call specialist analyzed her monthly budget and instead redirected her to seek assistance with relocation to a more affordable rental property. The specialist utilized MSHDA's housing locator website to find properties that fit Shirley's needs, which included wheelchair accessibility, and then assisted Shirley in applying for rental deposit assistance through available resources. Shirley was able to move into her new apartment before her eviction grace period expired, thereby saving her from having to utilize shelter services.

Your Shiawassee United Way has taken the lead in bringing this vital community service to every person and business in Shiawassee County. This type of comprehensive service comes with a price. It is estimated that 2-1-1 will cost Shiawassee United Way approximately \$22,000 per year. However, the benefits to each and every person in Shiawassee County are worth the cost. If strengthening your community through 2-1-1 service is a passion of yours, please consider helping by donating to Shiawassee United Way. Write "2-1-1" in the notes section of your check and your funds will be designated to 2-1-1.

Did you Know??

1. In 2011, Hunger Network pantries and community kitchens distributed food to 35,296 persons. These community members in total received 215,617 complete meals. Also provided to those in need were approximately 23,822 personal care products and several days of food for 767 pets.
2. Your local Shiawassee United Way fed 2,577 people in 2011. Of these, 1,156 were either senior citizens or children.

Shiawassee Hunger Network

The Shiawassee Hunger Network is an alliance of 14 independently run pantries located throughout Shiawassee County. These pantries realize additional donations, distributions, and economies of scale because of their collaborative efforts.



As administrator of this alliance, Shiawassee United Way continues to provide fundraising, marketing, grant writing, secretarial, management, and product donation seeking services. The alliance pantries realize reductions

in administrative costs because of the efforts of your Shiawassee United Way. This frees their resources so that they can focus on the neighbors in need that they serve.

There have been many caring businesses and individuals that had been exceptionally generous in 2011. Region 1C of the UAW donated two semi-trucks filled with non-perishable foods and meat to the Shiawassee Hunger Network. Meijer donated both money and product to address the overwhelming needs in our county. The employees of the Owosso and Corunna post offices collected over 10,000 pounds of food that was distributed to Hunger Network pantries. Chemical Bank held a county-wide hat, scarf, and mitten drive to be distributed through Shiawassee Hunger Network pantries. Michael DeMond, an Owosso High School Freshman, raised \$350 dollars for the Shiawassee Hunger Network to make a purchase of meat; this resulted in 65 cases of meat for the 13 member food pantries. The volunteers involved with the Hunger Network wish to thank everyone in the community who has donated food, funds, and time to help feed their hungry neighbors in need.



Take a look at how this collaborative pantry alliance has provided lasting change to actual people in our communities in Shiawassee County.

1. "I cannot afford to buy food because I live on \$700 per month. I am very thankful for the food I have received from my local Hunger Network pantry."
2. "I have stage four cancer and my husband cannot work because he is disabled. We appreciate the gift of food from our local Hunger Network pantry. We are blessed by the people who give of their time and resources for us. Thank you."

If addressing hunger in Shiawassee County is your passion, you may help by donating 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.

Generous Community Members Donate Livestock Purchases to Shiawassee Hunger Network

Several community members purchased livestock at the 2011 Shiawassee County Fair and donated the meat to Shiawassee Hunger Network pantries. This kind gesture helps not only the hungry but also encourages the many 4H youth of the county to continue to raise livestock for the fair. Stories abound of college educations being funded with proceeds earned from the sale of cows, pigs, sheep, and small animals. In addition, lessons in responsibility, animal husbandry, and business management are learned.

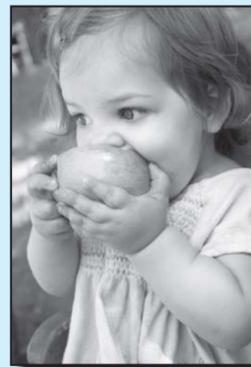
In total, generous donors gave 3,805 pounds of pork, 520 pounds of small animals, and 388 pounds of poultry. Many, many thanks are offered to every donor from the 14 Hunger Network pantries that were able to distribute the freshest of meat to their neighbors in need.

Our friends in 4-H Clubs and FFA decided to have a friendly challenge to see which group could raise the most food donations during the fair. There were collection sites throughout the grounds and fair goers were encouraged to use canned goods to "vote" for their favorite youth organization. This friendly competition brought to the Hunger Network Pantries approx. 800 pounds of food and personal care items to feed our neighbors in need. This youth led initiative was inspiring as we realized the strength of the giving nature of our future community leaders as well as fair visitors.

You, too, can be a part of this far reaching community partnership. Just visit the Hunger Network table this year at the Shiawassee County Fair Animal Auctions and donate all or part of an animal purchased to the Hunger Network. Please also consider bringing non-perishable, non-glass food items to the fair to donate to the youth group of your choice.

Shiawassee United Way Food Pantry

Many families saw cuts in their public benefits this year. This has left many people in Shiawassee County without a way to feed or house their children. In addition, cuts have left the working poor with very little help. Did you know that a person working full-time at minimum wage earns \$15,392 per year? A family of four with two adults working at minimum wage has earnings at approximately 140% of the poverty level. With food assistance qualifications stopping at 130% percent, there can be a disincentive to work.



Addressing crisis needs brings about positive change in a community. People who are fed are more able to work and learn more effectively. When a family's food needs are met, they are able to use funds that would have been used for groceries to pay their mortgage, utility bills, rent, or other basic needs.

Shiawassee United Way wishes to thank private citizens, businesses, and community groups who donated funds, food and personal care products so that the pantry would remain stocked and ready to serve the families in our communities.

Shiawassee United Way Assists in Mobilizing Resources for the Common Good

A successful community partnership is with your local Shiawassee United Way and Safe Center. This organization assists women and children who are in abusive relationships and wish to leave. Safe Center provides shelter, food, clothing, counseling, and on and on. Your United Way is pleased to report to you one of several measurable achievements. From July 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011, (only 6 short months!) of the 100 women and children from Shiawassee County who received emergency shelter, 85 percent stated they had obtained more stable housing.

This true story best illustrates the profound effect of the partnership between your local United Way and Safe Center. A woman came to the shelter from a physically and emotionally abusive relationship. While living in the safe environment of the shelter, she was able to pursue a divorce from her abuser. After she went to live with family members, Safe Center continued to provide non-residential services to her. She eventually was able to find a long term housing arrangement and is safe. She continues to meet with Safe Center's sexual assault therapist to help mitigate the damage from the sexual violence that she experienced.



Another exciting program funded by your Shiawassee United Way is being delivered by staff from Shiawassee Family YMCA to students in the Byron School District. Here is an example of the lasting change that can happen in such a simple way. "In Byron, just like any of our after-school programs, we always provide a snack and talk about whether our snack for the day is an 'everyday' food or a 'sometimes' food in relation to its being a healthy or unhealthy option. One of the boys in our group is quite overweight for his age and frequently complained about the healthy options offered. After a few weeks, he started to try the healthy snacks. One day, he was overheard asking his mom to buy some of these 'everyday' foods, and, of course, she joyfully agreed! As simple as this seems, providing healthy options and information to the kids of these programs has an everlasting effect on their lives."

Shiawassee United Way Reducing Barriers for Other Non-Profits

In 2011, your local United Way provided free office space to Girl Scouts, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and Boy Scouts. These were a just a few of the many non-profit organizations that have chosen to merge and take on multi-county areas. This sometimes makes services to people at the local level difficult at best.

The Shiawassee County families served by Girl Scouts, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and Boy Scouts were offered a convenient, private location to meet with agency representatives. The organizations were able to bring additional services to these families in a cost effective manner. This illustrates the importance of having a local United Way. Your Shiawassee United Way worked hard to identify local needs and addressed those needs in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

