

# Your Dollars at Work

## United Way Programs and Collaborations Funded in 2016 2015 Accomplishments

### Pre-Kindergarten Partnership

The Findlay-Hancock County Community Foundation and United Way of Hancock County are joining forces to ensure that more children have access to pre-kindergarten in Hancock County. In November 2014, United Way board members approved a grant to be awarded in January of 2015 to serve children from low-income families in the Findlay City Schools. The funding allowed for two additional pre-kindergarten classes of 16 children. In May 2015, the Findlay-Hancock County Community Foundation awarded the Hancock County Educational Service Center and Findlay City Schools a one-year grant each to further expand the pre-kindergarten pilot project for children from low-income families. United Way of Hancock County matched the funding for the expansion.

The Hancock County Educational Service Center created a new pre-kindergarten classroom at Riverdale (serving up to 16 students) and offers 20 pre-kindergarten scholarships to students throughout the rest of the county. The intent was to provide equal opportunities to all families for their children to participate in a quality preschool program. These scholarships allow low-income families to send their children to preschool without any cost to the family.

Findlay City Schools created another pre-kindergarten classroom (one morning class and one afternoon class) serving up to 28 students at Washington Preschool. This was in addition to the pre-kindergarten classroom started through United Way funding in January 2015. The grants cover tuition, transportation and lunch to the pre-kindergarten students.

The Findlay-Hancock County Community Foundation provided grants totaling \$179,000 that were awarded as follows: \$35,016 to the Hancock County Educational Service Center; and \$143,984 to the Findlay City Schools.

United Way of Hancock County provided grants totaling \$159,000 that were awarded as follows: \$35,016 to the Hancock County Educational Service Center; and \$123,984 to Findlay City Schools.

In a few short months, the United Way funded program was showing results. Pre-kindergarten teachers were already seeing improvements in kindergarten readiness skills including dramatic increases in language skills, math skills and socialization. The pilot pre-kindergarten class began in January, 2015 with five students only naming 0-5 pictures in one minute. By April, seventeen students could name 21+ pictures. The typical peer class (not economically disadvantaged) began with zero children naming 0-5 pictures and four students in the 11-20 picture range. Twenty-eight out of thirty students named 21+ pictures in April. The data clearly indicates that students that are not economically disadvantaged enter school with a more extensive vocabulary. However, students in the pilot class showed significant growth in less than a four month time frame. The pilot class also showed impressive gains in their math concepts. Eleven of twenty-one students mastered 16-20 items on the math assessment in April, which is an improvement from four students in January. Similar to the language assessment, the typical peer group entered pre-kindergarten with a greater knowledge of math concepts.

### Collective Impact Summit

A number of local organizations, including United Way of Hancock County, coordinated a Collective Impact Summit on Wednesday, August 26, 2015 at Winebrenner Seminary. The event was a facilitated interactive dialogue about the Findlay/Hancock County journey to becoming a community that addresses root causes of our most pressing issues through collective and collaborative processes. This event was open to the public. The keynote speaker was Jack Hess, Executive Director for the Institute for Coalition Building out of Columbus, Indiana.

(More on back)

LIVE UNITED



United Way of Hancock County

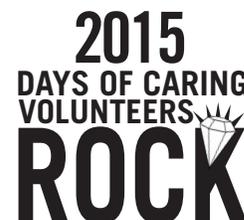


### Special Needs Day

In 2015, with the cooperation of the Boy Scouts, Black Swamp Council and United Way of Hancock County, more than 274 special needs children from area schools participated in this fun and educational interactive event. An average of 25 volunteers per year from local businesses take the day to support and assist with camping activities like fishing, canoeing, archery and more.

### Days of Caring 2015

United Way of Hancock County coordinated the annual Days of Caring event from April 27 to May 1, 2015. Each year, United Way recruits teams of volunteers from local businesses and companies to contribute four hours a day helping local nonprofit organizations with projects they may not otherwise be able to complete. The 2015 Days of Caring resulted in 1,075 volunteers completing 375 projects for 30 local organizations. The volunteers worked a total of 4,300 hours, providing nonprofit organizations in Hancock County with labor worth \$92,278. The dollar figure is based on the most recent Ohio volunteer hourly dollar value of \$21.46 per hour. The dollar amount is provided by Independent Sector, the leadership network for nonprofits, foundations, and corporations committed to advancing the common good.



### Ohio Benefit Bank and VITA

United Way welcomed The Ohio Benefit Bank (OBB) to Findlay eight years ago. The OBB connects citizens to programs and resources that can stabilize a household, and benefit our community as a whole. The tax assistance program included The OBB free tax clinics as well as our joint venture with the VITA (volunteers in tax assistance/IRS) and the use of 2-1-1 as the scheduling agent. The funds received by the tax clinic participants go right back into our local economy. This program also saves low-to middle-income families thousands of dollars by not having to pay for their income tax preparation.



During the 2015-16 tax season, 2,991 federal tax returns were filed through the free tax preparation program. The total amount of federal refunds processed through the program was \$ 2,113,247. Of that amount, \$695,228 was returned to families in Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC) and child credit. With an average tax preparation fee of \$250, the free tax preparation clinics in Hancock County saved tax filers approximately \$747,750 in preparation fees. Free tax preparation services were for individuals who made up to \$65,000 and families who made up to \$96,000 in 2015. Again this year, appointments were scheduled through United Way of Hancock County's 2-1-1 resource and referral call center.

### FamilyWise Prescription Cards

FamilyWise essentially acts like a huge consumer group buying service for the uninsured and underinsured. The discounts and savings on medications are provided voluntarily by the more than 61,000 participating pharmacies nationwide. In 2015, these cards saved Hancock County residents \$36,201. The cards are available in many ways. Pick one up at the United Way office as well as many social service organizations in the county. The card is available by texting the word "family" to 700700. It can also be downloaded on a smartphone as an app from iTunes or Google Play.



### Dial 2-1-1

2-1-1 continues to be a valuable resource in the community. Our partnership continues with United Way of Greater Toledo to provide the 2-1-1 service by phone, email and on the web at <http://www.referweb.net/211toledo/>. The following categories are the top reasons citizens in Hancock County are calling: tax preparation assistance, food pantries, electric service payment assistance, homeless shelter, gas service payment assistance and rent payment assistance.

