

June 12, 2017

Iowa West Foundation Awards Grant to United Way of the Midlands To Strengthen the Community & Address Local Poverty

United Way of the Midlands (UWM) is proud to announce it has received a \$275,000 grant from the Iowa West Foundation to support and further enhance a network of local human service programs that specifically serve Iowa residents living in or at risk of poverty. According to the U.S. Census' American Community Survey (2015), 16.3 percent of Council Bluffs residents live in poverty.

Poverty is complex, multigenerational and it has increased over time. UWM will leverage foundation funds to respond to the growing challenges associated with poverty with thoughtful investments that support both immediate intervention and activities that promote long-term success.

With Iowa West Foundation support, UWM will maintain multi-year funding for programs that specifically help southwest Iowa residents address their basic needs, increase their education and work toward financial stability. Several of these services are based in Iowa; others are located within the metro area, and are available to Iowa residents.

To support positive and measurable outcomes in people's lives and community conditions, the Iowa West Foundation carefully considers the short and long-term results that requesting programs seek to achieve on behalf of those who use the services. Programs receiving UWM investment complete a robust process that ensures dollars are invested wisely and expected results are achieved.

United Way's community impact goals demonstrate this focus, as organizations in Iowa and across the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro area work collaboratively to:

- Deliver over two million basic needs services to those living in or at risk of poverty
- Make sure 85% of area 9th graders are on track to succeed in school and life
- Provide services in the Council Bluffs and Omaha metro area that help 65% of residents achieve financial stability

Funding from area grants and individual donors also supports the 2-1-1 human service help-line that serves Southwest Iowa and the entire state of Nebraska. In both states, the top three needs reported by callers are for housing, utilities and food.

As a vehicle for local investment, United Way of the Midlands mobilizes the resources of organizations like the Iowa West Foundation to help individuals, families and neighborhoods grow stronger in pursuit of an even stronger community.

About the United Way of the Midlands

Thanks to donors, volunteers and community partners, United Way of the Midlands is not only focused on addressing our community's human needs today; it is focused on what can be, and what should be. It is building on today's strong partnerships to create even more comprehensive human service efforts tomorrow, so our community can solve some of the root causes of poverty. United Way is community-based, community-focused. Thanks to those who share their strength, United Way is COMMUNITY STRONG. We invite you to visit www.UnitedWayMidlands.org for more information.

¹"Food Insecure People" (March 6, 2017). Retrieved from <http://map.feedingamerica.org/>.

² Food Insecurity." Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition, 2015. (Web)