



UNITED WAY OF THE MIDLANDS CONTACT:

Rachel Cordwin (rcordwin@uwmidlands.org)
Office: 402.522.7933 | Mobile: 402.319.8266
Jill Samuelson (jsamuelson@uwmidlands.org)
Office: 402.522.7922 | Mobile: 402.319.8213

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The USDA Awards Grant to United Way of the Midlands for Community Food Project

The United States Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture has awarded United Way of the Midlands a Community Food Planning grant in the amount of \$34,001.

Funds will be used to develop a collaborative plan to ensure individuals and families have reliable access to affordable, nutritious food today, and for generations to come. Currently, 1 in 7 individuals in the metro area experiences food insecurity.

“The long-term impact of food insecurity and hunger is a cycle of instability, which makes it more difficult for adults and children to reach their full potential,” said Shawna Forsberg, United Way of the Midlands President and CEO. “Community Food Projects are designed to increase food security by bringing people and organizations together to assess strengths, enhance connections, and plan for long-term solutions to local food needs. Our collaborative approach and focus on basic needs aligns with this purpose.”

The plan created through the USDA grant will integrate existing endeavors, and strengthen them where possible. It may also identify new strategies and opportunities for collaboration. Additionally, the plan will leverage insights and expertise from thought leaders here, and across the country, to develop a comprehensive response to address local food insecurity.

“By bringing people and organizations together, this initiative reflects the belief that we all have a stake in keeping our community strong,” Forsberg said.

UWM is joined by the Douglas County Health Department, Food Bank of the Heartland and No More Empty Pots, who will all take an active leadership role in facilitating this community-wide effort. In total, UWM and other nonprofit organizations have pledged more than \$50,000 in matching in-kind support ranging from consultation to facility use. The project is now underway, with the plan slated for completion in Summer 2018.

Furthermore, local planning efforts extend an asset mapping project UWM conducted with support from the Iowa West Foundation, and continue momentum from the Spring 2017 Community Symposium on food insecurity. Click here to read a summary from our Spring Symposium on food insecurity.

Table with 3 columns: Strategic Working Group Members, Douglas County Health Department, City of Omaha/Heartland 2050. Rows include United Way of the Midlands, Food Bank for the Heartland, Whispering Roots, Hunger Free Heartland, Gretchen Swanson, Iowa West Foundation, Alliance for a Better Omaha, Lift Up Sarpy County, and No More Empty Pots.

Save the Date – Thursday November 30: Food Mapping Report and Community Food Planning Information Session
9:00 – 11:00 AM at Food Bank for the Heartland

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.

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