



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
December 12, 2022

**CONTACT:** Kris Pate  
(219) 210-3435

### **United Way of La Porte County 2023 Funding Awards**

La Porte County, IN – The United Way of La Porte County board and staff are pleased to announce the annual funding allocations to several not-for-profit partners for the 2023 calendar year. Awards totaling \$232,400 will be distributed among fifteen partner agencies whose missions address the local impact goals for supporting children, youth, and struggling families.

Although United Way supports many other local organizations throughout the year with sponsorships and other one-time gifts, these annual awards are distributed among partners who are willing to work collectively on the common priority areas and goals set by our community. Recipients for 2023 include: CHILDCARE – Imagination Station and the La Porte County YMCA; YOUTH SUPPORTS – Dunebrook, Family Advocates, Michigan City Area Schools’ afterschool programs, Open Door Adolescent Health Center, and Youth Service Bureau; FINANCIAL STABILITY and BASIC NEEDS – Stepping Stone Shelter, READ La Porte County, Citizens Concerned for the Homeless, Catholic Charities, North Central Community Action Agency, Salvation Army of Michigan City, Salvation Army of La Porte, and La Porte County Meals on Wheels.

Performance measures used to determine the outcomes and impact of United Way funded agencies’ services include: CHILDREN and YOUTH - children enter school prepared and ready to learn; improved healthy family functioning; increased healthy lifestyles for youth; increased youth well-being through supportive resources; increased child/youth well-being through mentoring; and increased youth career/life preparedness. For FINANCIAL STABILITY and BASIC NEEDS, the measures include: individuals achieve stable housing; individuals increase their income; individuals improve their financial resource management; and individuals increase in well-being. A total of 107 data points are collected annually.

“Our local United Way is engaged in many other ways to support our local community,” said Pate. “In addition to the focus areas listed above, we are actively engaged in promoting mental health and access to services through our System of Care program, our donations to the Youth Wellness Court, and our support of the Bridge to Manhood program. We actively serve alongside other organizations to support the work of JDAI (Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative) to reduce juvenile incarceration, increase understanding of implicit/unconscious bias, and promote equitable processes and procedures through the Race, Diversity, and Equity subcommittee of JDAI,” she added. Other initiatives supported include the annual Juvenile Symposium, scouting, county-wide mentoring, not-for-profit staff development, and training.

Additionally, United Way offers the VITA (Voluntary Income Tax Assistance) program each year so that local residents can file their state and federal taxes at no cost either on-line or with assistance at sites in La Porte and Michigan City. In 2022, 996 people filed their taxes through United Way’s VITA program and received a total of \$1,217,130 in State and Federal refunds. The saving in tax preparer expenses alone totaled \$198,450. First Source Bank financially supports this program each year as a part of their commitment to support local families.

Four-week long Kindergarten Countdown Camps are offered each summer to help prepare pre-k children who haven't had a preschool experience get ready to be on-par with their peers on the first day of school. Generous grants from the Healthcare Foundation of La Porte, NIPSCO, UPS and others make these camps possible each summer.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, our local United Way has supported 22 food giveaway events that distributed 209,210 pounds of free, healthy food to 7,546 families (22,801 individuals). Generous funding donations from the Morgan Family Foundation and along with partnerships with Citizens Concerned for the Homeless and the Food Bank of Northern Indiana made this all possible. "Making a real difference in our community can only happen through strong partnership," said Pate." I'm so thankful to be a part of a community of caring people and service-minded organizations who stand arm in arm with us."

United Way of La Porte County holds an annual fundraising campaign each fall to raise the resources needed to support its mission. It strives to serve as a catalyst for collaboration and innovation in La Porte County to achieve equity, financial stability, educational advancement, and personal well-being for our youth, families, and neighbors.

According to Kris Pate, President and CEO at United Way, "Our vision is for United Way of La Porte County to be a community leader that promotes equitable access to the supports and opportunities people need to achieve their full potential. Our local donors are what make this possible. Currently only a little over 800 individuals in La Porte County support the annual campaign. With a population of around 110,000, there is much room for growth."

Although a global network through United Way Worldwide exists and operates to support local United Ways with marketing, training, insights, and other resources, local United Way organizations around the world are each governed by a board of directors from own communities and are each a separate and local 501 c 3s. Donors can rest assured that their donations to their local United Way stay right at home to support their friends, neighbors, and family members in times of need.

During this campaign season, United Way of La Porte County has secured a dollar for dollar match for donations. Please consider a gift to United Way of La Porte County to continue this vital work. Checks can be sent to: United Way of La Porte County, 422 Franklin Street, Suite D, Michigan City, IN 46360. One-time and ongoing/reoccurring gifts can be scheduled online at: <https://www.unitedwaylpc.org/give-now>.

###