

LIVE UNITED



United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois

SPRING 2019 Edition

# LIVING UNITED

201 W. Eldorado, Decatur, IL, 62522

CHANGING LIVES in Macon, DeWitt, Moultrie, Shelby and Piatt counties

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

"As we wrap up the campaign year, it's a good time to look back at all of the awesome things that happen year after year. We had a record amount of new companies join us this year. Just to name a few: DMCO, Vector Construction, DeWitt Savings Bank, Marvin Keller Trucking, and Graphic Packaging Int. In addition to new business, we had several campaigns that went above and beyond with significant campaign increases like Caterpillar, Ameren, Tate & Lyle, Exelon, McElroy Metals, and Hydro-Gear. We thank all the businesses, employees, and volunteers that help make our community better by investing their time and resources.

None of this matters if we aren't changing the face of our community. With the current investments, we are changing lives through Youth Education, Adult Education, Health, and Safety programs. For a list of program investment, visit [uwdecatur.org](http://uwdecatur.org), or request an Impact Tour to see your investments working.

United Way of Decatur & Mid-IL (UWDMI) is a local organization. When you invest in UWDMI, it stays here to help our very own community. A team of volunteers makes the program investment decisions so that when you give to UW, you can be assured that your investment will be used to create a positive, measurable impact in someone's life. Your investment in our Community Impact Fund is invested back into programs in our community that have documented, measurable outcomes that move people toward self-sufficiency and independent living. That's the value of United Way!

We are the hand raisers. The game changers. Change doesn't happen alone. Together, we must Live United."

- Debbie Bogle, President, United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### UW Trivia April 20

Join UW for trivia on Saturday, April 20 at Door 4 Brewing Co., 6 - 9pm! Trivia will be 100 questions and the night will include other small games as fundraisers for UW. Teams of up to 4 people may play and it is \$10 per person.

Mulligans will be available for purchase. **Check out our Facebook page or [uwdecatur.org/events](http://uwdecatur.org/events) for more details on trivia and all of our events.**

### UW Annual Meeting & Awards Dinner

Join us Wednesday, May 8, at the Decatur Club for our 2019 Annual Meeting. UW will honor individuals and businesses that helped us impact the community. Event runs 5:30-6:30pm.

### Ride United '19

Grab your bikes and **Ride United** with us on Sunday, June 2, at Fairview Park. Several route options available. Routes open at 6:30am and close at 1pm. Lunch & raffle entry included.

## UW COMMUNITY IMPACT SUCCESS STORY

This story from CASA's Executive Director Julia Livingston is another example of the impact United Way has on our partner agencies:

"Sarah is a 19 year old who has been a foster child for 5 years. She has been assigned the same CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) for the past 3.5 years in foster care. Sarah has lived in 10 different foster homes, bouncing between relative's homes, to residential homes, to traditional foster placements and now independent living. Due to her biological home trauma which included both abuse and neglect, Sarah has endured many traumas. Sarah's advocate has ensured that she received many child victim services including counseling and adequate support through a two-year criminal case as a victim. Like every child in foster care, Sarah dreamed of returning home and reuniting with her biological parents, however this dream couldn't become a reality.

Although Sarah has endured more than a lifetime of trauma in just 19 years, with the help of her consistent and caring advocate, she has been able to remarkably overcome these barriers and have many successes. Through five school changes as a teen, Sarah maintained honor roll. She worked two part-time jobs while attending high school. Sarah's advocate took her to a bank where she received lessons about financial literacy and together they opened Sarah's first checking and savings accounts. Within 9 months, Sarah was able to save up for her own car. As Sarah's high school career ended, her advocate helped her think about the future. The advocate then helped Sarah apply for college and for financial aid. Sarah's final foster placement was ending soon, so her advocate also helped her secure an apartment of her own. The advocate even reached out to family/friends to help Sarah furnish her apartment.

Sarah now attends the University of Illinois - Springfield. Sarah and her advocate continue to seek additional funding to help cover her cost of living expenses. They recently applied for a DCFS academic scholarship that, if awarded, would help Sarah with rent, gas, food and more.

Macon County CASA is fortunate to provide support and advocacy to currently over 260 local children who have been abused or neglected and removed from their biological homes. We do this with the help of our 138 currently active advocates. Many of these children, like Sarah, have endured the foster care system for too long. Their traumas can affect them their entire lives in very negative and detrimental ways. However, with the support of an advocate from CASA, the child is ensured a consistent friend, someone with whom they can re-build a sense of trust, and someone who is concerned only with that child's well-being and positive future. If you are interested in joining Macon County CASA's mission to advocate for our community's foster children, please call **217-428-8424**, or complete an online application at [www.maconcountycasa.org](http://www.maconcountycasa.org)."

# MEET OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS



## Iris Lewis-Beasley

Wealth Management Business Analyst,  
Accutech Systems - Implementations Team

"I first became involved with United Way close to ten years ago, volunteering on what was then called the Community Impact panel. My passion for United Way stems from my concern for our community. I grew up in Decatur, in poverty, and lost my 3-month

old child due to poor access to quality healthcare. Our community has come a long way since then but there is still so much more work to be done. After volunteering on the panel several times, I eventually became a board member and served for six years before my term expired. I am very excited to be joining the board again. And through my board service, I look forward to helping advance our community."



## Rachel Strode

Private Client Manager,  
Busey Bank - Wealth Management Dept.

"My husband and I have given to United Way for many years, and we both have volunteered through our employers as well! I think it is a great organization because of

the many positive ways they impact our community by truly trying to find the best way to make a difference for families in our Decatur community. I was interested in joining the board because of the impact it has on the Decatur community and because I thought I might be able to help with my financial background, along with my passion for the Decatur Community."

## 2019 COMMUNITY INVESTMENT - MOULTRIE & DEWITT COUNTY

"UWDMI will soon begin its Community Investment Process in DeWitt and Moultrie counties for 2019-2020. This will be the first year that UW will implement the Common Community Approach (CCA) in these counties. The CCA is a systematic approach to move members of our community who live in crisis on a path towards self-sufficiency. We want to move individuals out of crisis into stability, from stable to thriving, from thriving to self-sufficient and finally, we want to prevent them from moving from self-sufficiency back into crisis. This approach not only strengthens individuals, but also our community.

We will invest in programs along four Lines of Effort: Youth Education; Adult Education, Job Skills Development, & Income Resilience; Health; and Safety. Additionally, we will continue to ensure essential services are provided in our community. However, it is imperative that these services are also linking their clients to other programs that move them out of living a status-quo existence. Each Line of Effort investment recommendation will be made by a panel of community volunteers. These volunteers will rate each program based on its effectiveness, efficiency, and community integration. Most often, the highest-rated programs will receive the most investment.

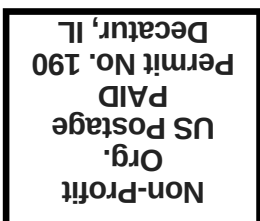
UWDMI is committed to ensuring that investment received by the DeWitt and Moultrie communities is re-invested only into the DeWitt and Moultrie communities. It's true when we say, 'what's raised here stays here.' We look forward to the investment process this spring!"

- James Keith, Director of Community Impact, UWDMI

United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois: 217.422.8537

uwdecaturn.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Thank you for your continued support.

United Way of Decatur & Mid-Illinois  
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