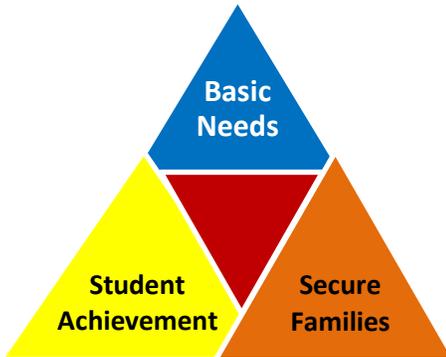


Common Questions & Answers

1. What does Capital Area United Way do?

Capital Area United Way fights for the “common good” in the tri-county region, meaning we work to improve the lives of every individual, thereby improving the entire community. As an organization of donors, we unite people with resources related to the following three services:



BASIC NEEDS – Providing vital basic services like food, shelter and short-term medical help

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT – Readyng young children to start school and improving the high school graduation rate

SECURE FAMILIES – Building financial stability for families through budgeting & savings education

2. How does a small investment make a difference in our community?

Because a single gift is combined with 10,000+ other donor gifts every year, small donations add up to make a very large impact. For example:

For \$1.00 a week (\$52/year) you can buy a soda, or:

- ✓ Provide medical care and prescription assistance to 9 people without health insurance
- ✓ Helps 2 parents learn skills necessary to support their children in the classroom
- ✓ Provide fresh fruit and vegetables for 3 families
- ✓ Provide much needed respite care for a family with young children
- ✓ Helps 1 high school student stay on target for graduation

For \$5.00 a week (\$260/year) you can rent a movie, or:

- ✓ Help 2 parents prepare their children for success in kindergarten
- ✓ Provide mentoring support for 8 high school students to help them stay in school and graduate
- ✓ Support mental health services for 7 local individuals
- ✓ Help 2 families move toward self-sufficiency and learn the skills to plan a stable future

For \$10.00 a week/ (\$520/year) you can buy a medium pizza, or:

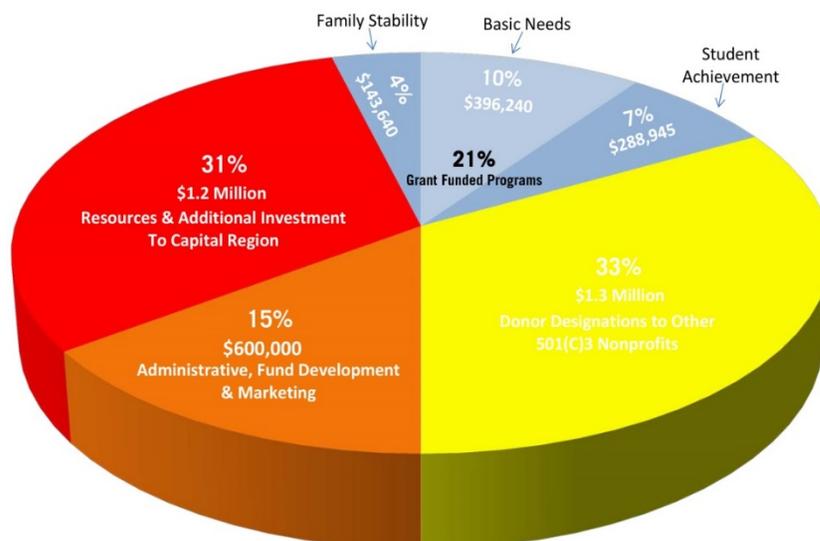
- ✓ Help 2 people affected by domestic violence get to safe emergency shelter and support services
- ✓ Provide emergency shelter for 12 individuals
- ✓ Help 8 families transition to stable and safe housing
- ✓ Help 2 teens learn how to improve their behavior in school
- ✓ Provide supplementary programs to 10 individuals to alleviate underlying causes of emergencies that need health and human services
- ✓ Help 3 high school students stay in school, graduate and be ready to enter the workforce

For \$20 a week (\$1,040 a year) you can buy 4 fast food Happy Meals, or:

- ✓ Provide food, clothing and emergency shelter to 8 families
- ✓ Help 21 youth avoid suspension from school by participating in restorative justice programs
- ✓ Support 3 individuals affected by domestic violence in developing the financial skills necessary to leave an abusive relationship
- ✓ Help 2 families develop budgeting and money management skills necessary for financial stability
- ✓ Help 4 children enter kindergarten ready to learn and succeed

3. Where are my dollars invested in the community?

The chart to the right shows how the donations and other revenue of Capital Area United Way is invested in the community. More than 85% goes into local resources, collaborations, programs and agencies as directed by donors.



4. Why not give directly to a nonprofit?

First, United Way is the best-informed local organization on “*health and human services issues and resources.*” Other organizations generally focus on a single issue, but CAUW keeps a constant pulse on local issues and trends and leads collaborative efforts to determine the greatest needs at any given time. Additionally, after a rigorous vetting process, our trained community volunteers/donors decide which programs will make the most significant impact and improvements in our community and choose where the funds will be invested. That’s done on your behalf so you don’t have to do all that research and vetting.

5. I heard the administrative fee is 15%...how does that compare to other charities?

It’s very low compared to others. CAUW’s administrative rate is well below both the Better Business Bureau and GuideStar’s acceptable nonprofit rate of up to 35%. It is also lower than the national average rate for charitable nonprofits, which is 20%. CAUW keeps costs low so more dollars can be invested directly in local health and human resources. Some of the costs are used to research and evaluate the community’s needs, issues and trends to ensure proper resources for people in need. Think of CAUW as a macro-level, unbiased entity that ensures the community has what it needs.

6. Why does CAUW receive an administrative fee for each designation?

As described above, a significant amount of time and resources are devoted to the fundraising process, materials and processing each pledge to ensure the dollars are distributed properly. There simply are built-in costs. Additionally, nonprofits that receive dollars through CAUW understand they probably would not have received those dollars without the fundraising efforts of United Way. Additionally, as the largest *annual* fundraising campaign in mid-Michigan, many smaller nonprofits may not have to incur the expense of fundraising their costs can stay lower.

7. “I want to designate my pledge to a favorite agency, why is there a minimum donation?”

While direct pledges are allowed to any 501(c)(3) organization, a minimum of \$50 ensures processing costs are covered and your “charity of choice” receives a significant amount of your donation. It costs approximately \$4.00 to process each agency designation, so donations below \$50 do not yield enough for the designated charity. The minimum was NOT established to raise additional revenue for CAUW; rather to ensure administrative fees remain low and designated nonprofits receive the majority of the donation.

8. How can I be sure my dollars are safe?

CAUW uses some of the strictest internal controls in the industry. Not only is staff required to follow intensive organizational procedures when handling cash and pledges, but external auditors and an Audit Committee of the board of directors reviews internal operations regularly.