

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER. August 10, 2021

Building our Future Together



A group of students who participated in the first 21-Day Equity Challenge offered by United Way of Washtenaw County

We are looking ahead to fall and taking all that we have learned and experienced with our community partners to build an equitable future where zip codes don't determine our opportunity in life. We know the impact poverty, racism, and trauma have on our community, and in response we are changing the way we work. Read on to engage with us on new initiatives and life-changing opportunities.

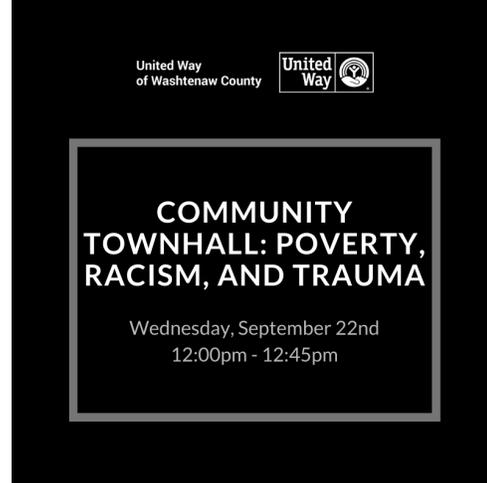
EVENTS

Community Townhall - Fighting Poverty, Racism, and Trauma: September 22nd

What's one hope you have for Washtenaw County's future? We envision an equitable community where opportunity is not limited and every member reaches their full potential. Join us for our restructured Campaign Kick-Off, a virtual Community Townhall on Wednesday, September 22nd at NOON. Listen to local experts who will share updates on Poverty, Racism, and Trauma how they differentially shape our community and

neighborhoods. As we envision a more equitable community, we are asking all community members to be a part of the solution. We are #UnitedforEquity.

[Learn more and register today.](#)



Labor and Management Golf Outing: September 10th

The annual Labor and Management Golf Outing is back! Join us at the Pierce Lake Golf Course in Chelsea on September 10th for a fun-filled day of golfing and support UWWC's union and labor partnership.

[Learn more and download the application!](#)

NEWS

Flooding Assistance

We know families in Washtenaw County are struggling with the impact of the recent flooding across our region — this, on top of the losses and stresses the pandemic has brought. In the face of this crisis, United Way wants to share the resources available to help families return to stability as quickly as possible. Please share widely with your network.

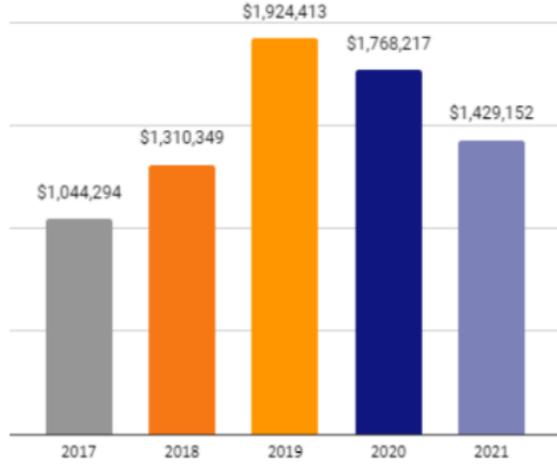


Our 2-1-1 crisis helpline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Dial 2-1-1 from any phone at any time or [visit the online 2-1-1 database](#) for assistance.

Impact of United Way's Free Tax Preparation Services (VITA)

Every tax season poses a new challenge and tax season 2021 was one challenge after another. We are proud of the impact the VITA Team, our wonderful volunteers, and dedicated partner organizations were able to achieve. Through our VITA efforts, we filed 669 tax returns for a total of \$1.42 million back into the hands of Washtenaw

County residents.



This tax season gives a glimpse of the impact the pandemic has had on people with low to moderate incomes in Washtenaw County. 23% of clients received unemployment benefits at some point in 2020 and many received larger returns than previous years due to the Recovery Rebate Credit (stimulus checks) and the American Rescue Plan Act changes to unemployment.

[Learn more about the Impact of VITA.](#)

Become a VITA Host Site -- Help People Keep What They Earned.

The VITA Team is searching for new VITA partners where we can host our free tax filing services in Washtenaw County. Nonprofit organizations with computer support, a large meeting space, and proximity to the local community and public transit would be the ideal partners. Contact Emma Roeder, VITA Program Manager, at eroeder@uwwashtenaw.org to discuss this partnership and find out more.



Our Community Partners:

Aid in Milan

Community Resource Center (Manchester)

Housing Bureau for Seniors

Ypsilanti District Libraries

Vaccinating the Great Lakes State

The [Michigan Association of United Ways](#) and the Michigan Nonprofit Association are launching *Vaccinate the Great Lakes State*, a new initiative to encourage COVID-19 vaccination uptake and support reaching the state's target of a 70% vaccination rate. MAUW's efforts will include:

- Forming a state-level steering committee composed of statewide organizations that represent the groups serving hard-to-reach communities, including the Michigan Primary Care Association and Federally Qualified Health Centers
- Initiating statewide communications with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and CDC, and making their resources widely available to local nonprofits
- Assisting nonprofits in identifying and reaching vulnerable populations
- Awarding mini-grants to local nonprofits to target fieldwork and engagement
- Collecting, analyzing, and visualizing data to assist local effort

[Learn more about this effort.](#)

G.A.V.E. Blog

Have you checked out our blog? The G.A.V.E. blog, written by our staff member Grace Toll, will be posted monthly and explore topics related to Giving, Advocating, Volunteering, and advancing Equity.

[Read about Grace's perspective from the front desk](#) and how answering phone calls for our VITA clinic this tax season shaped this perspective.

G.A.V.E.

BLOG

United Way
of Washtenaw County



EQUITY

21-Day Equity Challenge Impact Recap

We want to thank participants in our 2021 Equity Challenge for joining us on this journey. As a reminder, you can access content from all 21 days by [visiting our 21-Day Challenge Catalogue](#).



Equity Challenge highlights:

- Over 2,000 individuals, 91 community partners, and 6 sponsors participated
- Anecdotal survey data:
 - respondents reported learning more about themselves and their community as a result of engaging with the 21-Day Equity Challenge
 - respondents learned how to get involved with advocacy and making changes in their community as a result of engaging with the 21-Day Equity Challenge
 - Day 13, Talking to Children about Race, was the most powerful day of the Challenge
- 124 different zip codes were represented as well as participants from 5 states

LOCAL LIVES CHANGED



Washtenaw United: Equity and Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities

For over 60 years, the St. Louis Center in Chelsea has housed those with developmental disabilities and helped them find employment and work toward independence. Yet, like many nonprofit organizations, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected

the center financially and emotionally. The center's Chief Operations Officer, Deana Fisher, joins WEMU's David Fair to discuss how her establishment and its residents have adapted to the pandemic.

[Listen to the interview.](#)

GIVE TODAY AT [UWGIVE.ORG](https://www.uwgive.org).

MORE RESOURCES

2-1-1 - United Way's free and confidential service, which is available 24/7 and provides information about health and human service resources available. Call 2-1-1 from any phone or visit [2-1-1 online](#) to live chat, email, or search the database.

Child Tax Credit - Families are now receiving up to \$300 per child every month in tax credits. United Way for Southeastern Michigan curated [this resource](#) to learn more about how to check your tax filing status and get help filing.

STAY CONNECTED!

