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April 2024

Mobilizing the Caring Power of our Community | www.unitedwaycemo.org

Our Focus in 2024



Lee Knernschild,
United Way President

One thing I have come to learn in my short time with the United Way of Central Missouri is that the work of the United Way never stops. We celebrated the beginning of 2024 being grateful for all that we achieved in 2023 and highlighted our biggest accomplishments at the United Way of Central Missouri's Annual Meeting. We are blessed with a community that supports one another and volunteers who step up to lend a hand whenever and however they are needed. Closing the chapter on 2023 leaves us with much to be proud of and optimism for all that 2024 holds.

As we began 2024 we affirmed three strategic objectives to ensure we are steadfast in carrying out the United Way of Central Missouri's mission of improving lives by mobilizing the caring power of our community. The United Way of Central Missouri is committed to:

Be the trusted steward of community resources used to provide positive impact and create lasting results.

Mobilize the community by identifying human service needs and facilitating solutions. Grow our revenue to enable

continued support for the counties and agencies we serve.

Being the trusted steward of community resources is not something United Way takes lightly. We value every donation that United Way receives. By giving to United Way, our donors entrust us to ensure donations are used wisely and have meaningful impact. This year we will be taking a closer look at our current internal operations to determine how resources should be aligned and determine new opportunities where United Way can and should be more actively involved.

Our efforts to mobilize the community and identify human service needs continue into 2024. Our Early Childhood Initiative has blossomed since its inception over 10 years ago. What started as an effort to support quality learning opportunities for children birth to 5 years old has expanded far beyond the original goal to encompass providing positive parenting practices, bringing conscious discipline training to early childhood providers, creating partnerships between early childhood centers and the business community and so much more. The opportunities are endless when looking for ways to support the profession of early childhood and provide the best support to young children in the central Missouri community. In 2024 we will explore what United Way's role should be in Early Childhood and how United Way can truly impact the future of the childcare industry and learning opportunities. Supporting Early Childhood Initiatives is an investment in our community that we are proud to champion in support of our community's most precious gifts, our children.

Without the generous support

of our giving community, there is no doubt that United Way could not successfully support our partner agencies year after year. Donating to United Way translates into direct and meaningful services in our community. If you are a donor to United Way, we thank you for entrusting us with your charitable contribution. Each year as we determine our need-based campaign goal it fills me with a bit of trepidation knowing that not meeting the goal could negatively impact our agencies and our community. Our agencies rely on United Way funds to provide stability within their organization and enhance programming. Likewise, United Way relies on our agencies to meet and solve real needs in our service area. It is a long-standing partnership that has continued for nearly 100 years. Each year we look for new opportunities to educate new potential donors on what a gift to United Way can do in our community. This year is no different and provides an opportunity to look more closely at how we are servicing the 9 counties in our service area. We will be concentrating additional efforts to better understand the needs in Phelps County and where United Way services are needed.

As we accomplish our objectives this year, we hope the community sees that United Way is a good steward of all donations, makes meaningful impact, and shows how much we care about our entire central Missouri community. We have some ambitious goals, but fortunately, United Way's volunteer base is strong; together we will close 2024 with a more strategic focus and continue to be the organization that our community turns to when deciding to Give, Advocate and Volunteer.

Empowering Central Missouri Through the United Way

By Ashley Varner,
Hitachi Energy

Hitachi Energy is one of the world's leading providers of electrical infrastructure for power utilities, industries of all kinds and the infrastructure sector, providing everything needed to move large volumes of electricity from where it is generated to where it is consumed.

Hitachi Energy's mission is to provide a sustainable energy future for all. The company is enabling the digital transformation required to accelerate the clean energy transition, integrating large-scale renewable energy generation into the grid, providing charging solutions for electric vehicle (EV) fleets and supporting the development of new high-voltage transmission links throughout the US.

Hitachi Energy employs more than 6,300 people in both manufacturing and office locations throughout North America, with 10 major production facilities across the US and Canada. Globally, Hitachi Energy has a proven track record and unparalleled install base in more than 140 countries, with headquarters in Switzerland and more than 40,000 employees globally and generating business volumes of over \$10 billion USD annually.

Located in Jefferson City, Missouri is one of our distribution transformer manufacturing factories. Opening in 1972 as Westinghouse, we built our first transformer and sold it to the local utility, Ameren.

In 1988, Westinghouse became ABB and during 2020 entered a joint venture to become Hitachi Energy. Currently, our team in Jefferson City is composed of nearly 1,200 team members both hourly and salary. Our site is vertically integrated as we sustain all support services such as design, engineering, human resources, sales, marketing, and more.

This facility spans 100 acres; of which, thirteen acres are under roof. We produce two types of distribution transformers: single-phase and three-phase. These transformers power everything from your personal residences and shopping malls to electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and data centers.

We celebrated our 50th anniversary in May of 2022 with an exciting expansion



To generate creative additional funds for the United Way, Hitachi Energy has sold steel scraps and other materials to employees and donated the proceeds to the United Way as part of its campaign.

announcement to include a third product line of a larger size transformer to support the growing renewable energy market to begin production in 2024.

As our company has grown, so has our team and the need to support workforce development through attraction and retention of employees. In 2022, we created the position for Community Relations in Jefferson City as a strategy for community support, corporate social responsibility, and workforce development.

This position has allowed our brand to become visible in the mid-Missouri region. More importantly, this position has allowed our company the opportunity to embrace our community. We have been able to provide support to educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, and give back in the form of volunteering.

From 90 partnerships in 2022 to over 150 partnerships in 2023 (and still growing!), we quickly realized that the United Way of Central Missouri was a powerful partner that would help us stretch every donor dollar to every corner of need in our community. We know that the future of our community and company is dependent on the support of our team members and their families.

To partner with the United Way, we knew we needed to find a creative way to engage

our team members with a fundraiser that appealed to them. Our team has enjoyed hosting 'bid sales' on a quarterly basis to supplement our United Way Campaign.

As we continue to grow and reinvest in the facility, we have found that we are disposing of material and equipment that our employees find useful in their personal pursuits. Similar to a garage sale, we sell this material and equipment to our employees, with the proceeds benefiting the United Way.

In 2023, we kicked off our first campaign as Hitachi Energy. We implemented the payroll deduct option for all employees and found fun ways to use the United Way's Super Mario Campaign theme.

Team members dressed up in costumes to draw attention to our campaign and provide education around who the United Way is and the agencies they serve. United Way staff attended fourteen back-to-back employee meetings in one day for our campaign. Incentives were given to every person who donated.

Looking forward to 2024, we are excited to increase the amount of 'givers' from Hitachi Energy and increase our gift.

Working with the United Way has been a tremendous opportunity to witness the heart of our team. We are grateful to be welcomed so warmly by the community of Jefferson City. We truly are #ProudtobeHitachiEnergy!

What We Give Makes A Life



Gregg Bexten,
United Way Board Chair
Hawthorn Bank

As this year's Board Chair for the United Way of Central Missouri, I'd like to encourage you to get involved - whether that be through the United Way or one of its partner agencies. Getting involved is not only beneficial for the community but also for individuals who choose to engage with these organizations. Here are several compelling reasons why you should consider getting involved:

Addressing Local Needs: The United Way and its agency partners focus on addressing specific needs within the community, whether it's providing food and shelter for the homeless, offering educational programs for at-risk youth, or supporting healthcare initiatives for underserved populations. By getting involved, community members can directly contribute

to efforts that make a positive impact on the lives of their neighbors and fellow residents.

Building a Stronger Community: Active involvement in the United Way and its agency partners strengthens the fabric of the community by fostering connections and relationships among residents. Through volunteering, fundraising, or participation in advocacy efforts, community members come together to work towards common goals, creating a sense of belonging and shared purpose.

Personal Fulfillment: Volunteering and contributing can be deeply rewarding on a personal level. It provides individuals with the opportunity to make a meaningful difference in the lives of others, which can lead to a sense of fulfillment, purpose, and satisfaction. Knowing that your efforts are positively impacting the community can boost self-esteem and overall well-being.

Skill Development and Networking: It offers opportunities for skill development and networking. Whether it's learning new skills through volunteer work, gaining experience in leadership roles, or connecting with other like-minded individuals, involvement can enhance personal and professional growth.

Promoting Social Responsibility: Through

financial, volunteer or advocacy support community members demonstrate their commitment to social responsibility and civic engagement. Taking an active role in addressing social issues and supporting causes that align with personal values helps to create a culture of giving back and caring for others within the community.

Creating Positive Change: United Way and its agency partners play a vital role in advocating for social change and driving progress on important issues. By getting involved, community members can contribute to efforts to address systemic challenges, promote equality and justice, and create a better future for all members of our community.

Strengthening Community Resilience: In times of crises or disaster, these agencies often serve a critical resource for communities in need. By supporting these organizations and being actively involved, community members can help build resilience and support systems that enable the community to recover and thrive in the face of adversity.

And there are so many more reasons to get involved and give back to our community. As Winston Churchill said, "From what we get, we can make a living; what we give, however, makes a life."



The Hitachi Energy team attended the United Way's Victory Celebration last November, where it was announced the United Way surpassed its 2023 Campaign goal.

Collaborative Project Results in “Good Nights” for Families

By Angela Hirsch, Rape & Abuse Crisis Service (RACS) and Brian Vogeler, The Salvation Army

Rape & Abuse Crisis Service (RACS) and The Salvation Army Center of Hope teamed up to ensure that families leaving both shelters have a bed for each family member as they establish independent housing. RACS is a United Way partner agency that provides services to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking in a nine-county area in Central Missouri. The Salvation Army is another United Way partner agency that provides safe shelter for families facing homelessness through their Center of Hope shelter in Jefferson City. Both agencies have seen a dramatic increase in the number of families seeking help as they come into shelter with little more than the clothes on their back.

In April of 2022, the two agencies partnered together to submit a Community Support Grant to the United Way of Central Missouri. The purpose of the grant was to purchase new beds for each family member as they leave shelter for their new home. The idea came after Center of Hope Director, Brian Vogeler,

realized that a resident of the Center of Hope had not left the shelter even though she had obtained housing. When Brian asked her why she was hesitant about moving out of the shelter, she told Brian that she had no place for her or her children to sleep in their new home and she did not want her children to have to sleep on the floor. It was then that Brian realized that many families leaving shelter were indeed moving into homes with little to nothing, including beds to sleep in. Brian approached RACS Executive Director, Angela Hirsch, and asked if families at RACS were experiencing a similar barrier. Indeed, families leaving the RACS shelter also had difficulties finding or affording basics for their new homes, like beds.

To address this issue, RACS and The Salvation Army partnered to develop the “Good Nights” program. RACS approached JC Mattress and asked if they would be interested in being a part of this project. After an enthusiastic “yes”, JC Mattress agreed to provide brand new full size and twin size bed mattresses and frames for each adult and child leaving shelter. The agencies then wrote a combined grant to the United Way seeking funding to purchase the beds. The funding received from the United Way is used to purchase the beds at-cost, ensuring that families have a safe and comfortable place to sleep in their new home. To date, the grant has supported the purchase of 26 beds for clients served by RACS and 27 clients served by The Salvation Army.

According to Angela Hirsch, RACS Executive Director,

the ability to have a safe, comfortable place to sleep is critical to the path of healing that the survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault are undergoing. “Families that have fled a violent household come to shelter with little to nothing,” Hirsch said. “They certainly don’t come with furniture for a new home. This partnership allows us to provide survivors and their children with a small bit of comfort as they rebuild their lives.”

Brian Vogeler, Director of The Salvation Army Center of Hope, echoed Hirsch’s comments. “Families going from homelessness to housing are trying to rebuild their lives and find success. Providing a bed gives our clients not only a good night’s sleep, but also the support they need to be successful in work, school and their daily lives.”

The “Good Nights” project is a first of its kind as two agencies who saw a similar need came together to identify a solution to fulfill that need. United Way of Central Missouri is all about collaboration and partnerships among its agencies and finding ways to work together to provide holistic support for families while also maximizing donors’ investment at the same time. It is a shared belief that no one agency can achieve its mission on its own and that by working together we can build a strong community where families thrive. United Way supports RACS by providing the vital funding necessary to ensure that survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking have a safe place to go when it isn’t safe



In June of 2023, Rape & Abuse Crisis Service (RACS) and The Salvation Army were awarded a joint grant from the United Way of Central Missouri to purchase beds for the clients leaving their shelters.

for them at home. Similarly, funding from the United Way to The Salvation Army Center of Hope ensures that the shelter doors remain open to families when they have no home.

According to the United Way, they were excited about

the grant request from RACS and The Salvation Army. These agency partners saw a critical need that families from both of their agencies were experiencing, and they built a collaboration around that need to ensure families transitioning out of

their shelters after an extremely difficult and vulnerable time have the ability to move towards self-sufficiency with one of the most necessary household items needed to start their new lives.



A client of The Salvation Army was awarded the first bed from the Good Nights program in June of 2023.

MOBILE FOOD PANTRY SCHEDULE IN THE UNITED WAY OF CENTRAL MISSOURI SERVICE AREA

April 2024

The Food Bank for Central & Northeast Missouri will be providing food at no charge to those in need at the following locations. Please confirm any location, date and/or time changes for this month on The Food Bank website at sharefoodbringhope.org. For questions, call The Food Bank at 573-474-1020.

Mobile Food Pantry Tips:

- Remain in your vehicle for distribution; it is a drive-thru process.
- Clear space in your trunk or back seat to receive food.

(FRI)	5	SOUTHERN CHEROKEE 15792 COUNTY RD 5200, ROLLA 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
(SAT)	6	CATHOLIC CHARITIES 1015 EDMONDS ST, JEFFERSON CITY 9:00 - 11:00 AM
(TUES)	9	TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH 13007 ROUTE C, RUSSELLVILLE 1:30 - 3:30 PM
(THUR)	11	KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS 1822 TANNER BRIDGE RD, JEFFERSON CITY 3:30 - 5:30 PM
(FRI)	12	CHURCH OF OSAGE HILLS 5237 OSAGE BEACH PKWY, OSAGE BEACH 1:00 - 3:00 PM
(WED)	17	BOYS & GIRLS CLUB 11105 LAFAYETTE ST, JEFFERSON CITY 4:00 - 6:00 PM
(SAT)	20	CAPITAL WEST CHRISTIAN CHURCH 1315 FAIRGROUNDS RD, JEFFERSON CITY 8:00 - 10:00 AM
(TUES)	23	FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF BELLE 203 2ND ST, BELLE 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
(WED)	24	ST. MARTINS CATHOLIC CHURCH 7148 ST. MARTINS AVE, ST. MARTINS 4:00 - 6:00 PM
(THUR)	25	ANNUNCIATION CATHOLIC CHURCH 310 MILLS ST, CALIFORNIA 4:30 - 6:30 PM

✂

YES! I want to support our community! My total annual gift is \$ _____.
 Gifts to United Way of Central Missouri are tax-deductible. For information about the tax advantages for including United Way in your will and estate planning, please call 573-636-4100. United Way provides no goods or services in consideration for this contribution.

Name _____ Phone _____
 Address _____ City _____ State _____
 Zip Code _____ E-mail Address _____

I would like to remain anonymous in any publications regarding my donations to United Way of Central Missouri.

Payment Option 1: Cash or Check

Include your cash/check donation with this cutout and mail to the United Way of Central Missouri at 205 Alameda Drive, Jefferson City, MO 65109.

Please use my donation to benefit all of the United Way of Central Missouri partner agencies, allowing me to make a greater impact in our community.

DESIGNATIONS: Please designate my donation to the following partner agency(s). Minimum designation amount is \$25.00. Designations to agencies not a part of the United Way of Central Missouri network will be directed to our general campaign fund.

Payment Option 2: Online

Make your donation online by going to our website at www.unitedwaycemo.org or scanning the QR code below:

To support our community cut out the form, complete the information, and mail it to the United Way of Central Missouri at 205 Alameda Drive, Jefferson City, MO 65109.

Partner Agencies

4-H Youth Program	Council for Drug Free Youth
ABLE	Dreams to Reality
American Red Cross	Girls Scouts
Big Brothers Big Sisters	Homemaker Health Care
Boys & Girls Club	Jefferson City Area YMCA Child Development Center
Boy Scouts	Little Explorers Discovery Center
Capital City CASA	Rape & Abuse Crisis Service
Capitol Projects	Salvation Army
Catholic Charities	Central Missouri Foster Care & Adoption Association
Central Missouri Foster Care & Adoption Association	Senior Nutrition Council
Common Ground Community Building	Special Learning Center
Community Health Center	The Sneaker Project
Compass Health Network	Tri-County YMCA
	UCP Heartland - Gibbs Center for Independence

What's Happening

WE NEED YOUR FEEDBACK!

Please scan here to fill out a short five minute survey on how we can better serve your community.



To express our gratitude for your participation, we're excited to announce that completing the survey gives you the chance to win one of four \$150 gift cards! Additionally, six more participants will be selected to receive some fabulous CMFCAA swag.

THE CENTRAL MISSOURI Foster Care & Adoption ASSOCIATION

COLE COUNTY 4-H FLOWER FUNDRAISER

Send flowers to anyone, anywhere, anytime

Scan the QR to go to our ordering webpage

Call Dakota Souders with any questions 573-634-2824



JC AREA BOARD OF REALTORS 18TH ANNUAL CINCO DE MAYO 5K WALK AND RUN 2024

SATURDAY, 4/27/24
Registration begins at 7:00 am @ 810 Sandstone Street, JCMO

\$20 Youth & \$30 Adult Early Bird Registration - 4.9.24 Deadline
\$25 Youth & \$35 Adult after 4.9.24
All proceeds benefit Council for Drug Free Youth Programs

TO REGISTER



IT'S TIME TO Shine Serve

JEFF CITY APRIL 20, 2024

Join us for a community-wide day of service to make a significant impact on our city! The event will begin at 8:00 am at McClung Park's Outdoor Pavilion with pancakes and sausage served by Senator Mike Bernskoetter. Groups will break for their projects around 9:00 am. Stay tuned on our Facebook page @ServeJeffCity for details!

WWW.UNITEDWAYCEMO.ORG/VOLUNTEER

Presented by: REPUBLIC SERVICES, We'll handle it from here.™, Register

Also made possible by: Central, Fecthel Beverage & Sales, Inc., Hawthorn BANK, JOE MACHENS CAPITAL CITY, Ford, HITACHI Inspire the Next, Mike Bernskoetter Missouri State Senator District 6, Hitachi Energy, LINCOLN UNIVERSITY, MISSOURI STREAM TEAM, SCHOLASTIC, the Y, United Way

Paid for by Serve Jeff City through the Jefferson City Parks & Recreation Foundation

Driving Out Domestic Violence

A charity golf scramble benefiting the Rape & Abuse Crisis Service of Jefferson City

RACS Rape & Abuse Crisis Service of Jefferson City

JEFFERSON CITY COUNTRY CLUB

Monday, April 22 11:00 AM Checkin | 12:00 PM Lunch | 1:00 PM Shotgun

Text DRIVEDV to 26989 to Reserve Your Sponsorship or Foursome Today!

\$600 Foursome | \$250 Hole Sponsorship | \$750 Foursome + Hole Sponsor Package

Scan to Register or Visit racsjc.org/drive

Presented by **QUAKER** WINDOWS & DOORS

17th ANNUAL CAPITAL CITY COOK-OFF

FRIDAY, APRIL 19

RIBS • MUSIC • BEER

Jefferson City Jaycees Fairgrounds



Meet Our Board: Kirk Duncan, Treasurer



Community Involvement:
United Way of Central Missouri Board Member, Little Explorers Discovery Center Board Member and Central Missouri Foster Care and Adoption Association Board Member

Why did you say yes when asked to be on the United Way Board of Directors:

The Jefferson City community is full of charitable organizations that help make our community so special. However, there is no organization that has a greater impact on our community than the United Way of Central Missouri. It was an honor to be asked to serve on the board of directors of such a phenomenal organization.

Favorite thing about United Way:

The People! The United Way of Central Missouri staff, leadership teams at the partner agencies, and the countless community volunteers are who make United Way so special. These individuals put in so many hours helping make our community great!

Favorite thing about our community:

The generosity of Jefferson

City community never ceases to amaze me. Our community is filled with people who give so much of their time, talents, and treasures. Whenever a need arises, the community steps up to make sure things are taken care of.

Number one on your bucket list:

I would like to see the University of Missouri win a national championship in football or basketball. Unfortunately, based on how things have played out the last 38 years of my life this appears to be unlikely.

Fun fact about you:

I am a huge Mizzou sports fan and enjoy watching Tiger football and basketball (though my family does not always enjoy it if they are losing!).

Words you live by:

“With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” - Matthew 19:26

My faith is important to me and has a big impact on my daily life. This verse has helped get me through challenging times, and I am hopeful that it will one day help make my bucket list item a reality!

Tell us about you:

I am a sports loving CPA who has been blessed with an amazing family. My beautiful wife, Elizabeth, and I have three wonderful children: Hallie (7), Alaina (4), and Clark (1).

In my professional life I have been fortunate to work for two very special companies in our community, Williams-Keepers and Central Bank. These organizations and their great leaders have had a profound impact on my life. They have allowed me to grow professionally while also teaching me the importance of giving back to a community that means so much to me.

Employer:
Central Bank

United Way Grant Ensures Thriving Embryology & Incubation Program

**By Sean Eberle,
4-H Youth Program**

4-H is a positive youth development program that connects research-backed programming with the youth of the state of Missouri. We have a presence in all 114 counties and Saint Louis. We exist as a part of the University of Missouri Extension which exists to connect the research of the University to the people of this state. 4-H curriculum uses the research of our land-grant universities to develop activities to help our youth learn by doing.

A large part of our program in the United Way of Central Missouri coverage area is Embryology and Incubation. This is the chicks in the classroom that our partners know and love. We have many teachers who come back year after year to participate in this one-week program. This 4-H project reaches over 3,000 youth just in Cole County. The Community Support Grant we received helped us purchase thirty new incubators and other supplies. Before, we had been using incubators that were built

by 4-H project members decades ago which could be finicky. These new dome incubators offer more modern functions, automatic turning, and hold their temperature better.

These new incubators will help us to keep the cost of this program low and continue to serve the schools, libraries, homeschools, and daycares of the region for the next couple of decades. These new incubators take a lot of the pressure off the teachers to keep the temperature right to ensure safe hatching. Many teachers have to pay for this program out of their pocket. We can't change the cost of the eggs but we can control our own cost through the generous support of this grant.

We also run community clubs (ten in Cole County) that administer year-long programs run by our wonderful volunteers. Without volunteers, 4-H would not be possible! We multiply the amount of youth we reach with every single one of our volunteers helping with different programs.

4-H is America's largest youth development organization. We exist in all fifty states and Washington, D.C. Our projects range from

robotics to livestock and everything in between. We also attend summer camp at Camp Clover Point down at Lake of the Ozarks State Park each June. We rent a bus that travels from Fulton and Jefferson City, helping families get their youth down to the Lake and back. Campers swim, canoe, play sports, dance, and participate in educational programs. This is a classic camp experience and you do not have to be in 4-H to come. Reach out to us at the Cole County Extension Center at 2436 Tanner Bridge Road if you need help registering.

We want to thank the generous donors of the United Way that help support programs across all nine counties. We were able to fund projects in Cole, Maries, Osage, Miller, Camden, and Phelps counties last year. We hope to grow 4-H in these communities and reach more youth through community clubs, school enrichment, afterschool programs, and summer camps. We also would like to thank our volunteers during National Volunteer Month. We could not make the impact that we do without our volunteers!



4-H Youth members participate in the annual Feeding Missouri fundraiser, a program aimed to raise awareness of the issue of food insecurity and to encourage 4-H members and volunteers to take action to fight hunger.



Children at The Special Learning Center participate in the Embryology program using incubators purchased through a grant from the United Way of Central Missouri.

HealthTran Helps Transport Patients to Health & Wellness Appointments, Seeks Volunteer Drivers

HealthTran - a program to help transport patients to and from their health and wellness appointments - has officially launched in the central Missouri area. HealthTran was created to tackle transportation challenges, especially in the healthcare setting. It operates as a volunteer driver program that closes the transportation gap, enabling people in Missouri to arrange rides for their health and wellness appointments.

With the help of United Way and Community Asset Builders, HealthTran was able to expand to central Missouri in partnership with SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital, Jefferson City Medical Group (JCMG), and the Community Health Center of Central Missouri.

Community Health Center's Chief Executive Officer Dr. Crystal Sullivan said, "The Community Health Center of Central Missouri is always looking for ways to reduce barriers

to healthcare. Oftentimes, our patients do not have reliable transportation, and that prevents them from coming to their appointments. HealthTran is a great opportunity for us to be able to provide another transportation option for our patients."

For SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital, rides are available to all SSM Health Medical Group clinics. "We are excited to collaborate with HealthTran, the United Way and our other community partners to bring transportation assistance to patients at our SSM Health Medical Group clinics. We encourage our patients to visit with our registration staff if they have concerns about getting to future appointments. We are happy to help address this concern for our patients," said K.C. DeBoer, Regional President for SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital.

For JCMG, rides will be available for their Transitional Care Management patients. "Jefferson City Medical Group is utilizing HealthTran for our patients who have been discharged from the hospital with moderate to high complexity. This 30-day window post-hospitalization is a critical time when missing an appointment

due to lack of transportation would be detrimental to their care. By offering HealthTran to these JCMG patients, we hope to reduce hospital readmissions and continue providing vital care coordination services," said Ron Rockwood, Director of Medical Services & Population Health for JCMG.

To secure a ride, patients should communicate with the scheduler as they make their future healthcare appointments, and the scheduler will coordinate the ride on behalf of the patient.

The program is available for patients now and is seeking additional volunteer drivers. Being a volunteer driver has many benefits in addition to serving their community and those in need; including mileage reimbursement, supplemental insurance coverage, choosing their own driving schedule, and selecting which county(s) to drive in - Cole, Osage and/or Moniteau. Those interested should contact glennette@cabllc.com for additional information.

United Way of Central Missouri is grateful for the collaboration between these community partners to provide this critical support to patients in need.



BECOME A VOLUNTEER DRIVER FOR HEALTHTRAN

VOLUNTEERS:

- Receive mileage reimbursement of at least \$0.80 per passenger miles
- Pick your own schedule - select the rides that meet your availability
- Set your own limits - drive locally or long distance
- Receive supplemental insurance coverage

Help members of our community get to their much needed health & wellness appointments!

Contact Glennette for more information!

573-469-9117

glennette@cabllc.com



Meet an Agency Leader: Gina Clement, Capital City CASA



Tell us about you

My husband and I moved to Jefferson City almost thirty years ago. Growing up with a foster brother and parents who were foster parents led me to work as an AmeriCorps VISTA Volunteer at Prevent Child Abuse Missouri. It opened my eyes to the harsh realities of child abuse and poverty, and its impact on families.

I transitioned from AmeriCorps to the role of Administrative Assistant with River City Habitat for Humanity. My office was in the stairwell of a local business. Working with families who had full-time jobs, living in poverty, and becoming first-time homeowners, I saw the struggles they faced. I

worked with the families, committee members, and board members to change how construction days with the community were organized so we could better support the families. As the organization grew, my position grew with it. I became the first Executive Director of the organization. With the guidance and support of many wonderful board members and volunteers, I secured grants essential to the growth of the organization for the building currently housing River City Habitat for Humanity offices and the Re-Store, as well as a box truck used to pick up donations in the community for the Re-Store.

As our family began to grow and childcare became a challenge, I decided to step away from my job to stay home with our children. During that time, I volunteered at their school, in the community, and became a substitute teacher.

In 2013, I learned about a new organization dedicated to providing a voice for children who have been removed from their homes due to abuse and neglect. Knowing the experiences of my foster brother, I decided to go through training to become a volunteer Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA). I became a CASA volunteer in 2016 and served on two cases before learning about the Executive Director position. I applied and became the Executive Director for Capital City CASA in 2017. Through

it all, I've witnessed firsthand the impact that one individual can make by simply committing to helping those less fortunate. From volunteering to leadership roles, I've been fortunate to see the power of compassion, determination, and belief that even the smallest action can significantly impact the lives of those in need in our community.

Tell us about CASA

Capital City Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) is a unique organization filling a need in our community that had not been met before the organization started serving children in 2011. A local Kiwanis club member, Melva Dean Lipsey, saw the need for children, who, through no fault of their own, are thrown into the child welfare system, to be given a voice about what is happening in their lives. With the help of John Landwehr, Mike Ryno, and other Kiwanis Club members, a committee began to work towards starting the organization. It took a couple of years and several conversations with current Juvenile Court Judge Jon Beetem to establish the organization within the court system. Capital City CASA came out from the umbrella of the Kiwanis Club in 2012. One of the things that makes Capital City CASA a unique organization is that it allows lay people to work

within the juvenile court system. Volunteers must pass screening and background requirements, complete 30+ hours of training, and be sworn in as an Officer of the Court before they can serve a child. A judge must assign them to a case through a court order, which allows them access to information about the child's life. The volunteers establish a relationship with the children they are assigned to serve and become consistent adults in the child(ren)'s lives. Our volunteers serve the hardest and most complex cases involving abuse and neglect of children in our community ranging in age from newborn to 21 years of age. They are assigned to one or two cases with one or two children to provide the focus the children deserve. The CASA volunteers don't have any part in removing the child or handling any casework. They provide information on the child and their needs to a team of professionals with overwhelming caseloads. It is through the CASA volunteer's consistency that change is affected in a child's life. The best-case scenario is that a child is reunified with their family in a healthier home environment. When that can't happen, the CASA volunteer works for the best outcome for the child.

Tell us about the latest happening at CASA

We are currently training our 30th class of new volunteers and looking

forward to having two more classes of new volunteers this year. We also have three continuing education classes for our active volunteers, one on current narcotics in our community.

We will be at the Capitol with other CASA programs from around the state.

Red Wheel Steam House is helping us spread awareness in April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

What is your favorite thing about CASA?

My favorite thing about CASA is the incredible people I have the privilege to work with and meet from the community. From dedicated volunteers to committed board members and staff, I'm fortunate to be surrounded by a collaborative and supportive team. Despite the challenges we face, having a supportive community is truly invaluable; it is a constant source of strength and encouragement.

When I meet a parent or child(ren), it reminds me of the importance of our volunteers and staff's work to help children and families. Seeing the positive impact on families because of the dedicated volunteers reinforces the importance of our mission and the meaningful difference we can make in the lives of those we serve.

Do you have any upcoming events/programs?

We will host a Trivia Night on Tuesday, May 7th, our 9th Annual Golf Tournament on Monday, June 3rd, and Raise Your Glass for CASA on Thursday, October 12th, with a special guest speaker who spent her entire life in foster care. She didn't let that stop her from achieving her dreams. She became a professional ballerina and a successful actress.

What is a fun fact about you?

My fun fact is there is an Italian soccer team with the same name as my maiden name, and I have family in Sicily.

What are you most looking forward to this year?

Growth! Recognizing the changing needs of children and families in our community within the child welfare system, we are actively pursuing new strategies to better support the most vulnerable children in our community.

A New Era, Laying the Groundwork for Infinite Possibilities

By Stephanie Johnson, The Special Learning Center

Special Learning Center (SLC) stands as a symbol of hope and progress in the Central Missouri region, offering a lifeline to children with developmental challenges through its comprehensive early intervention services. SLC's partnership with United Way of Central Missouri as an agency partner has been instrumental in its growth and success, enabling the center to reach over 900 children across 11 counties with specialized education, enrichment and therapy services. This collaboration has not only provided essential financial support but also fostered vital connections with other community agencies, enhancing the collective impact on families in need.

As SLC's services expanded, the limitations of its current facility on Fairgrounds Road became apparent, prompting a visionary response from its Board. The foresight to plan for a new building was a strategic move that would ensure the continuity and expansion of SLC's vital services. The commitment of local government officials, exemplified by Senator Mike Bernskoetter's advocacy for funding, was a testament to the center's importance to the community. The support from key figures in both the Senate and the House, including Senators Lincoln Hough and Representatives Cody Smith, Dave Griffith, and Rudy Veit, was crucial in securing the legislative victory.

The signing of the bill by Governor Mike Parson in 2022 at SLC marked a historic moment, symbolizing the state's recognition of the center's value and its commitment to the welfare of its youngest citizens. The subsequent rallying of support in 2023 led to a remarkable \$7.5 million total appropriation for the new facility, reflecting the enduring dedication of SLC's champions. This financial pledge is more than just a contribution; it is a promise to future generations that their potential will not be hindered by developmental delays or disabilities.

SLC is poised for a

significant transformation, thanks to this generous \$7.5 million seed funding. This initial investment has catalyzed the "Small Steps, Mighty Strides" capital campaign, which aims to gather an additional \$6 million required to bring the project to fruition. Remarkably, the campaign has already secured over 80% of its target, demonstrating robust support and confidence in the initiative.

In 2025, SLC will transition to its new home on Weathered Rock Road, a move that promises to be a game-changer for the organization. The new campus will boast two adjacent buildings, encompassing a vast 40,000 square feet, effectively more than doubling the current facility's capacity. This expansion is not just a quantitative upgrade but a qualitative leap forward, offering ample room for the agency to grow and evolve in response to future needs.

The decision to name the new campus after Debbie Hamler is a heartfelt tribute to her enduring legacy. As the Executive Director of SLC from 1985 to 2020, Hamler's leadership was instrumental in both the physical growth of the organization and the expansion of its mission. Her most enduring legacy, however, is the deep commitment and love she demonstrated for the children under her care—a sentiment that continues to resonate within the SLC community.

The Mike Bernskoetter Education & Enrichment Center, a cornerstone of the Hamler Campus, stands as a testament to Senator Bernskoetter's contributions. This center will be a

hub of activity and learning, housing special education classes, therapy services, and childcare rooms designed for children with special needs. Additionally, it will feature a family resource room and library, inclusive playgrounds, and an outdoor therapy track. The center is not just a space but a beacon of hope, equipped with advanced technology and state-of-the-art facilities that will empower educators and therapists to deliver an exceptional play-based learning experience.

The Hamler Campus expansion also includes the Goldschmidt Pediatric Therapy Center housing the Special Learning Center's SKIP Clinic, which stands for Super Kids Infinite Possibilities. The clinic provides cutting-edge, evidence-based physical, occupational, and speech therapy in a clinical setting, tailored to meet the unique needs of each child.

The inclusion of a gymnasium dedicated to physical activity and gross motor skill play within the Goldschmidt Pediatric Therapy Center is a testament to the holistic approach taken by the Special Learning Center. It recognizes the importance of integrating play with therapeutic and educational practices, which is essential for the development of children's motor skills, learning and overall well-being.

The groundbreaking ceremony for the new campus, scheduled for Tuesday, May 21, at 3:00 p.m., located at 905 Weathered Rock Road, marks the beginning of a new era for the Special Learning Center. It is an open invitation to the community to witness and participate in the growth of a facility that promises to shape the future of pediatric therapy and special education.

This event is not just about the laying of a foundation stone; it is about laying the groundwork for infinite possibilities that will empower children to reach their maximum potential. The Special Learning Center, with its commitment to innovation and excellence, is set to embark on an exciting new chapter that will resonate with countless families and professionals dedicated to supporting children with special needs.



At a media reception held earlier this month, The Special Learning Center unveiled renderings for 'Hamler Campus' that will be the new home for this agency beginning 2025. Featured above are renderings of the Mike Bernskoetter Education & Enrichment Center as well as the Goldschmidt Pediatric Therapy Center.

Why Fund Allocation is Critical to United Way's Success

By Janet Wear-Enloe, Fund Allocation Chair

Spring is a time of plans and projects. For United Way of Central Missouri, one of the biggest projects involves more than 70 volunteers who dedicate many hours to weekly meetings, site visits to agencies, and team conversations to determine the distribution of funds for its partner agencies. This very thoughtful, important process is called Fund Allocation.

I have had the good fortune to be involved with Fund Allocation for many years. I can assure you the United Way staff do a terrific job constantly reevaluating this process to make it better, more thoughtful, and productive. And our volunteers take their responsibility very seriously.

Fund Allocation is not only critical to the success of supported agencies, but also the United Way, itself. It provides transparency and accountability to thousands of donors. Equally as important is the work of the Finance/Audit and Strategic Funding Committees. Multiple checks and balances are built into this process to ensure volunteer hours, donor dollars and agency clients are served with the utmost care and accountability.

Fund Allocation begins in February when the agencies complete their application for funding for the following year. The first step of this springtime process is United Way Board approval of the funding pool. This determines the level of funding available to provide for partner agencies – whether that be an increase, decrease or to hold steady allocations.

Volunteers assigned to Fund Allocation are divided into six teams called panels. Each panel is responsible for reviewing the applications of four to five United Way partner agencies. These volunteers are comprised of people from all walks of life. They are business owners, state agency workers, accountants, bankers, health care providers and staff, manufacturing, marketing and utility executives, managers, retirees, etc. From all these different perspectives, agencies are scrutinized from a wide variety of unique viewpoints. In many ways, this is a business review where the agencies are made stronger because of the time, care and recommendations offered to each.

The Board also critically evaluates the feasibility of offering one-time Community

Support Grants. If grants are possible, the Community Support Grant Committee (also known as the Strategic Funding Committee) will review the applications in April or May – after completion of the Fund Allocation process.

Panels hold their weekly meetings in March and April to review the applications, budgets, agency details, demographics of people served, outcome measurements, volunteer information, governance, and quality standards. Each panel member will visit an agency at their site to see the work of the agency in action and also meet clients, the director and other staff. These visits are the most helpful part of the process for me as a volunteer. Not only has it been educational, but it also often prompts a special story to share during the Community Campaign.

At the conclusion of their evaluations, each panel submits their recommendations to the

Fund Allocation Steering Committee for another review before going to the Board of Directors in late April. The Board hears from each panel about each agency before giving the final approval.

This process sets us apart in that it makes the United Way of Central Missouri more responsive to its stakeholders and ensures good stewardship of their investments, time and resources.

Each spring, you can count on dozens of volunteers to gather and provide a fresh look at each United Way partner agency. At the heart of this process are the key questions - What can we do better? How can we maximize those gifts so generously given? How can we make our community stronger?

Fund Allocation Volunteers:

- Mark Baker, Vice Chair
- Jennifer Bauer
- Dakota Baumhoer
- Kristen Berhorst
- Drew Biddle
- Pete Brightwell
- Stacy Brown
- Kristi Campbell
- Tammy Chute
- Aaron Cooper
- Jeff Davidson
- K.C. DeBoer
- Ross Dickneite
- Chris Ebright
- Mike Ely
- Colby Forrest-Dietzel
- Mindie Friederich, Chair
- Julie Gates
- Casey Gentry
- Bret Gerard
- Diane Gillespie
- Carlos Graham
- Peter Grefrath
- Doug Hagenhoff
- Randall Haight
- Tammy Hartley
- Emily Harvey, Chair
- Dan Haug, Chair
- Shanon Hawk
- Adrian Heckman
- Julie Henley
- Patty Henry
- Jim Hickman
- Luke Holtzschneider
- Alana Hoover
- Lauren Houge
- Pat Hubbs
- Michael Huber
- Valerie Huhn
- Dennis Hunsberger
- Kelli Jeffries
- Austin Johnson
- Mark Kaiser
- Jenna Korsmeyer
- Matt Kujath
- Pete Langston
- Michael Love, Vice Chair
- Janel Luck
- Tyler Luebbert
- Emily Mantle
- Madeline Matson
- Gail Metz
- Marianne Mills
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- Josh Moore
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- Kirk Schreiber
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- Cassandra Sundermeyer
- Crystal Tellman
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- Michelle Varcho
- Ashley Varner
- Arlene Vogel
- Janet Wear-Enloe, Fund Allocation Chair
- Chip Webb, Vice Chair
- Ronna Wilson
- Treaka Young, Vice Chair

Life Experiences with Children

By Paula Stallings,
Stepping Stones Preschool

Stepping Stones Preschool is a small center established in 2016 located in Jefferson City, Missouri. We are located centrally on Dix Road. We created a center that is like family; children should feel at home when they come in. Children and babies are away from their parents and families for 8-12 hours per day. When Stepping Stones Preschool was created, it was to fill the gap of the waitlists and daily phone calls that I received and could not fulfill. I knew there were many families that needed childcare and not enough openings for children. We wanted a loving, nurturing, safe place for all children. We serve children from infants up to age 12, for after-school care. We wanted to be able to help each child develop and be independent little humans that would carry them into their kindergarten class and have the best experiences possible.

Learning experiences for them start at the infant level with us. We strive to help each family with their struggles, challenges and all the good things that is also happening in their lives. We participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program and Social Services Child Care Subsidy Program to help low-income families. All children should have the same start in the way they are fed and how we help them develop. Our teachers are the strongest part of childcare and are doing all the hard work to create the environment in their classrooms and with each child. They range in experience from 1 year to 18 years. We help our families in many ways, many of the teachers helping after hours or weekends when someone might need care for a child in an emergency or just for fun.

We learn so much just from sitting, reading, talking and walking with a child that the impact on us is never-ending. The process

of watching them grow from a baby to a 5 year old shows us that resilience, patience, and understanding make a difference in their reactions and actions on a daily basis. I receive hugs every morning and it may be from a different child every morning depending on their demeanor that day and it is always received with love. Mornings are the best!

The value of being an Early Childhood Initiative Partner with the United Way of Central Missouri is being able to meet new people that have experience and background in childcare. I have learned a lot from all of the other providers that I am around. I have found new resources at every meeting. Those resources I am able to use or pass on to a family or staff members that can take advantage of the information. We have started using Conscious Discipline center-wide, which is a discipline approach program that United Way helps to teach and facilitate to area childcare centers. Most of the teachers had been using some aspects of the program but taking the classes and getting the experience hands on has helped us implement it easier.

Recently, United Way of Central Missouri and the Jefferson City Area Chamber of Commerce collaborated to expand the existing PIE program – Partners in Education – to include childcare centers. The purpose of this program is to support the collaboration between businesses and schools to provide programs that enhance student learning and strengthen our local workforce. Stepping Stones Preschool's PIE Partner is JCMG in Jefferson City. Alana Hoover with JCMG Human Resources has some ideas for both Stepping Stones Preschool and for JCMG to team up, and we can't wait to see what we accomplish together!

Last week, we celebrated Week of the Young Child (WOYC). WOYC is organized by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and is a fun-filled

week celebrating early learning, young children, their teachers, families, and communities. Each day of the week is themed to a type of learning activity. This year, we wanted to add WOYC activities to our curriculum, so we celebrated each day as follows:

Music Monday – The teachers read their favorite musical book, and the children created their favorite music books.

Tasty Tuesday – The children made a tasty snack for snack time.

Work Together Wednesday – We built with legos.

Artsy Thursday – We created a mural on our outside wall with sidewalk chalk.

Family Friday – We organized breakfast outside with mom or dad.

We are also excited to announce we are purchasing Show Me Child Care Center. This will open more doors for families and for staff. Julie Schmitz is the current owner and she is looking forward to having some down time with her family. Julie is leaving me big shoes to fill! The plan is to jump right in and let my learning begin. The name of the center will be Capitol Kids Development Center. We will also participate in the Social Services Child Care Subsidy Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program. We want all children to have the food to help them develop, grow, and succeed.

We have many exciting plans ahead of us, and we are grateful for partners like the United Way of Central Missouri that allow us to continue to enhance our services!

Enrollment for Give 5 Retiree Program Open for Class 5

By Hannah Gerard,
United Way of Central Missouri

The GIVE 5 program is a volunteer program that serves to connect retirees with meaningful volunteer opportunities through local nonprofits that best fit their skill sets and passions. GIVE 5 is made up of 4 program days over 4 weeks, followed by a graduation celebration in the 5th week. A typical program day starts at our community room where we hear from a community speaker who gives their take on our community focus, strengthening families. We then board a bus and visit two nonprofits, break for lunch and visit 3 more nonprofits. These visits allow for a 'behind-the-scenes' look with a 45-minute presentation and facility tour, that typically also includes a testimonial from a client being served or a volunteer who has felt the impact of the organization from their volunteer experience. During these presentations, participants learn about the most challenging problems that our community faces and uncover ways they can be a part of the solution. After participants have had their behind-the-scenes look at each organization, they are encouraged to choose one or more nonprofits to 'give 5' hours a month to in volunteer service at the graduation celebration.

The GIVE 5 program began in Springfield, Missouri where Greg Burriss and Cora Scott saw

a need to help retirees transition from their 'work life' to enjoying retirement and making it more fulfilling. Current retirees and the coming wave of baby boomers have a variety of skills and assets – experience, expertise, financial resources, a desire to give back to their community – and for the first time in their lives, time. This program was designed and created upon one central assumption: people are good. And once people see the need, they want to help. The GIVE 5 program is now in 14 different cities spread out among 4 states!

The GIVE 5 program in Jefferson City has been made possible through a grant that Aging Best, the Central Missouri Area Agency on Aging, received from the state. Aging Best asked the United Way of Central Missouri to partner with them in the fall of 2022 and we kicked off our first class together in March of 2023. My co-facilitator, Jody Doppelt, is the Volunteer Services Manager at Aging Best. Together, Jody and I lead the participants through the program in hopes that each retiree will find a connection with a nonprofit that has volunteer opportunities available that best fit their passions and talents. It is our goal to ensure a fun, memorable experience for the participants that include at least one 'aha moment' per day, while also increasing awareness and empathy around the challenges our community faces.

Following the conclusion of a GIVE 5 class, one of the questions

I like to ask class members is, "Did going through the GIVE 5 program increase your sense of responsibility to help improve the community?" The answer is always an overwhelming yes! Participants also agree the best part of the program is getting to tour the inside of the agencies and hear from the individuals who have been impacted by the nonprofit or who have been served by the nonprofit.

Right now through April 26, enrollment for Class 5 is open. Class days will be on the following Tuesdays: April 30, May 7, May 14 and May 21 from 8:30 am – 4 pm. Graduation will be held on Tuesday, May 28.

Through the GIVE 5 program, there is a chance to do so much good in our community. I truly believe that through volunteerism, we don't just have the opportunity to make a change at the nonprofits we volunteer with, but we have the opportunity to feel change within ourselves – more gratitude, more compassion, more understanding, more joy. Please consider experiencing the GIVE 5 program for yourself and sign up on the United Way website today at www.unitedwaycemo.org/give5!



GIVE 5 Class 4 prepares their last session day of touring nonprofits in the central Missouri community.



GIVE 5 Class 2 listens to a presentation at Dreams to Reality about the services they provide and the many ways they use volunteer help.

Making Jefferson City Shine

Serve Jeff City started in 2012 as a partnership between United Way of Central Missouri, JC Parks and the Jefferson City Area YMCA. Leaders of these organizations saw an opportunity to collaborate on a day of service for our community. Projects for that first event included the cleanup of local parks, tree planting along the greenway, creek clean up, projects at various non-profit agencies, beautification of the downtown area and more. Over 300 volunteers participated in that first day of service.

Over time, this event has grown into an even bigger day of volunteering! This year's Serve Jeff City will take place on Saturday, April 20, 2024. An expected 350+ volunteers of all ages from the community will provide labor and skilled trades to 24 community and non-profit projects in the Capitol City.

The event will kick off with volunteer check-in and a pancake breakfast hosted by

Missouri State Senator Mike Bernskoetter, followed by deployment to the service areas.

Projects include helping non-profit agencies like Boys & Girls Club, Rape & Abuse Crisis Service, Little Explorers Discovery Center, The Healing House & New Beginnings, Special Learning Center, Independent Living Resource Center, Catholic Charities of Central & Northern Missouri and Central Missouri Foster Care & Adoption Association with tasks such as landscaping, cleaning, painting and more. Lincoln University, the downtown area, our parks and our streams will also receive attention and beautification at many project locations around the city.

Volunteers are encouraged to register in advance on the United Way of Central Missouri volunteer platform, Volunteer Connection, at www.unitedwaycemo.org/volunteer. Additional information can also be found on the Serve Jeff City Facebook page at www.facebook.com/ServeJeffCity.

Serve Jeff City is brought to you by Republic Services of Jefferson City, and other sponsors including Central Dairy, Fechtel Beverage & Sales, Hawthorn Bank, Hitachi Energy, JC Parks, Joe Machens Capital City Ford, Lincoln University, Senator Mike Bernskoetter, Missouri Stream Team and Scholastic. Organizers for the event include Eastside Business Association, Jefferson City Parks & Recreation Foundation, Jefferson City YMCA, Missouri Stream Team, Republic Services and United Way of Central Missouri.

Serve Jeff City is a great opportunity for all to volunteer – from individuals to families to scout troops to co-workers. We look forward to seeing you on April 20!

"Every person is created for a purpose, and luckily I found mine at a young age. I love to create deep connections with people and to be a guiding light through the grieving process."

—BreAnna Williams, Funeral Director & Embalmer



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