

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



## WHAT IS UNITED WAY OF NORTHEAST LOUISIANA AND WHAT DOES UNITED WAY OF NORTHEAST LOUISIANA DO?

- United Way of Northeast Louisiana is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) agency that works with volunteers, donors, and other local organizations to fight for the Education, Financial Stability, and Health of every person in our community
- Our mission is focused around Helping People & Improving Our Community
- Our Values are Inclusiveness, Compassion, Integrity, Respect and Dignity and Positive Impact



### Together, our work is focused on:

- Children, Youth, & Young Adults Successful in School & Life
- Economic Opportunity for All
- Healthy and Safe Individuals, Families and Community



## WHO RUNS UNITED WAY OF NORTHEAST LOUISIANA

- All United Ways are locally run and governed in each community. Our staff works with knowledgeable, well-trained volunteers representative of our community here in Northeast Louisiana.
- A volunteer-led Board of Directors sets policy and strategic direction.
- Various volunteer committees oversee financial practices and provide counsel on operational issues.
- The Chairman of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee of United Way of Northeast Louisiana is Daniel Taylor, Argent Financial Group.
- The President of United Way of Northeast Louisiana is Janet S. Durden.



## WHAT DOES IT COST TO RUN UNITED WAY OF NORTHEAST LOUISIANA?

- Our administrative and fundraising cost is 18.8% for the most recently filed 990 (October 2021).
- United Way of Northeast Louisiana overhead rate is well below industry standards and recommendations (like the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance at 35% and the Office of Personnel Management/OPM at 25%). United Way helps other nonprofits maintain low overhead rates too.
- Overhead costs include important investments non-profits make to sustain and improve their work: investments in training, planning, evaluation, internal systems, and a professional staff, as well as their efforts to raise money so they can operate their programs. Other factors that contribute to non-profit performance include transparency, governance, leadership, and results.



## WHICH PARISHES DOES UNITED WAY OF NORTHEAST LOUISIANA SERVE?

United Way of Northeast Louisiana is a regional organization serving 12 parishes. These parishes are Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin, Jackson, Lincoln, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas, Union, and West Carroll. Parish-wide information on funded programs is available from your United Way staff person and on our website at [unitedwaynela.org/toolkit](https://unitedwaynela.org/toolkit).





## WHAT IS UNITED WAY WORLDWIDE AND HOW IS OUR LOCAL UNITED WAY RELATED TO IT?



United Way Worldwide is the leadership and support organization engaged in nearly 1,800 communities across more than 40 countries and territories. It provides national media advertising including television Public Service Announcements. It also sets national impact goals and provides brand leadership for local United Ways. Use of the United Way logo is based on United Way Membership Requirements regarding governance and fiscal accountability. In addition, United Way Worldwide conducts a vast array of research to assist member organizations in the development and implementation of their local community impact agenda. United Way Worldwide DOES NOT provide funding of day-to-day operations for any local United Ways. United Way of Northeast Louisiana pays 1% of its annual campaign dollars to United Way Worldwide for dues.



## HOW ARE DOLLARS RAISED ALLOCATED IN THE COMMUNITY?



When you give your undesignated gift to United Way of Northeast Louisiana, you are allowing local volunteers, representing all segments of the community, to determine how to invest the money in the issues and areas that need it most, ensuring our work is both focused on our community's aspiration and achieving measurable results. The recommendations for funding are reviewed and approved by our volunteer Board of Directors.



## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN UNDESIGNATED AND DESIGNATED GIFT?

An undesignated gift takes advantage of United Way of Northeast Louisiana's thorough, research-based program selection that gets the money to the issues and areas that need it most. You can also choose to direct your gift to any of our Community Impact Initiatives or collaborations centered around our work in Education, Financial Stability, and Health.



**By completing a Specific Care Form and submitting it with the pledge for, a designated gift restricts your gift to a specific 501(c)3 non-profit health and human service agency:**

- Designated gifts must be \$100 or greater.
- Gifts of less than \$100 will be directed to the general fund.
- These gifts will be adjusted for pledge loss and an administrative fee.
- Specific Care Forms must be turned in to your Campaign Coordinator with the pledge amount and signed by the donor along with address and or email address by February 15th to be honored.



## HOW IS UNITED WAY OF NORTHEAST LOUISIANA ACCOUNTABLE TO ITS DONORS?

United Way of Northeast Louisiana is committed to the highest standards of accountability and transparency when investing donor dollars. As a matter of practice, no single staff member is able to process any transaction from start to finish and all checks must be signed by two authorized signers. The Finance Committee and Board of Directors review financial statements monthly to ensure adherence to the budget. An independent accounting firm audit United Way of Northeast Louisiana once a year and the Audit Committee and Board of Directors must review and approve this audit each year.

Our annual reports, audits, and 990s are accessible to the public at [unitedwaynela.org/publicreporting](https://unitedwaynela.org/publicreporting).



In order to receive funding from United Way of Northeast Louisiana, a partner agency program or organization must demonstrate that it is meeting strict accountability requirements:

- Be a tax exempt, non-profit corporation
- Be governed by a volunteer board whose members are elected and supported by trained, professional staff
- Meet reasonable standards of financial responsibility and efficiency
- Quantify or measure the changes that the agency/program is making in the lives of the people it serves
- Financial reporting requirements are based on the level of United Way NELA funding.
  - Up to \$25,000: Latest Financial Records
  - \$25,000 to \$50,000: Financial Compilation
  - \$50,000 to \$100,000: Financial Review
  - Over \$100,000: Independent Audit





## WHO IS ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PARTNER AGENCIES?

While United Way of Northeast Louisiana has standards for Partner Agencies, each agency is autonomous and is governed by a Board of Directors. The agencies determine the programs they provide to the community and their criteria for receiving services.



Agencies are not totally funded by United Way of Northeast Louisiana dollars and may depend on service or membership fees for financial support. Frequently, agencies offer sliding fee schedules so that people who are unable to pay the total fee can be charged based on their ability to pay.



## WHY ARE SOME COMMUNITY NON-PROFITS NO LONGER UNITED WAY OF NORTHEAST LOUISIANA PARTNER AGENCIES?

Some agencies choose to discontinue their partnership with United Way of Northeast Louisiana; others do not continue to meet partnership standards and are asked to exit AFTER every effort is made to help the organization meet the partnership criteria and standards.



## HOW DOES AN AGENCY BECOME FUNDED BY UNITED WAY OF NORTHEAST LOUISIANA?

Any registered nonprofit agency in our service area that provides health and human services and is aligned with our Community Aspirations and goals identified by United Way may contact Kim Lowery, Director of Strategy (klowery@unitedwaynela.org) to get information regarding available funding opportunities. Funding availability is posted at [unitedwaynela.org/ourpartners](http://unitedwaynela.org/ourpartners) each year.



## IF I KNOW SOMEONE WHO NEEDS HELP OR ASSISTANCE HOW DO I GET INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT IS AVAILABLE?

While United Way of Northeast Louisiana supports and serves our local community, we do not provide monetary assistance to individuals. The fastest and most efficient way to find out what resources are available in our community is to call 211. With just one call to 211 by cell or landline, anyone who needs help can speak with a caring, highly trained Specialist who will listen, assess their needs, offer emotional support, and get them connected to local services that could meet their needs. Call Specialists have access to a vast array of community and social service resources. For more information, visit the 211 Community Services Directory on the United Way of Northeast Louisiana website at [www.unitedwaynela.org/211](http://www.unitedwaynela.org/211), or simply call 211.



## IS MY CONTRIBUTION TAX DEDUCTIBLE?

YES. United Way of Northeast Louisiana is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation. Donations to United Way are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by an individual's or corporation's circumstances.



# HANDLING POTENTIAL OBJECTIONS

Sincerity and accurate information are the best tools when responding to objections and overcoming misconceptions.

## DOES UNITED WAY OF NORTHEAST LOUISIANA PRESSURE PEOPLE TO GIVE?

NO. Giving is a personal decision. United Way of Northeast Louisiana has a strong policy against coercion. Whether a person gives and how much the person chooses to give is up to the individual. United Way of Northeast Louisiana DOES NOT support the use of threats or coercion of any kind. United Way never endorses pushing/coercion/recognizing 100% participation. The award and recognition level for participation/employee giving rate is 51% for ALL awards.

## I KNOW SOMEONE WHO ASKED FOR HELP AND DIDN'T GET IT.

We have a very generous community, but there are certainly times when resources are not available to meet a specific need. United Way of Northeast Louisiana works closely with local government entities, organizations, and non-profits to connect individuals in our community to available services. We do this through 211, which is available 24/7, 365 days a year. As resources and available services change, 211 is a constant connection to the most up-to-date information. Simply **dial 211** (available 24/7) or **text your Zip Code to 898-211** (available Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm).

## I CAN'T AFFORD TO GIVE TO UNITED WAY OF NORTHEAST LOUISIANA.

Every gift to United Way of Northeast Louisiana, no matter its size, makes a difference in our community. Many people find that giving through payroll deduction allows them to make a contribution that fits their budget. One of the advantages of giving to United Way is being part of a community effort that combines all of our giving to multiply the impact. If you would like to give your time, **call 211** or email **[volunteer@unitedwaynela.org](mailto:volunteer@unitedwaynela.org)** to connect to VolunteerUNITED.

