

May 2024
Connecting Communities, Changing Lives

A promotional graphic for "Get Connected" volunteer opportunities in Spring 2024. It features a yellow background with a large, stylized pink and blue banner at the top that says "GET CONNECTED with volunteer opportunities". Below this is a pink box with "Spring 2024" in white. A list of events follows, each with a date and description. At the bottom, it says "VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!" in large blue letters, followed by the website "unitedwayyellowstone.org" and the United Way of Yellowstone County logo. The bottom edge is decorated with a row of pink flowers.

GET CONNECTED
with volunteer opportunities

Spring 2024

May 15 **Workshop Wednesday** - 10 am - 12 noon we will be preparing for our CARE Academy/Discover Zone Carnival.

May 17 **CARE Academy/Discover Zone Carnival** - Volunteers are needed from 4 pm- 7:30pm to help whoop it up and say goodbye to the school year with a blast of games, food, and a whole lot of fun.

June 12 **Workshop Wednesday** - 10 am - 12 noon we will be preparing for our Day of Action

June 15 **Juneteenth Festival** - Help us at our kindness rock booth. We will need volunteers from 10:30 am - 4:30pm

June 19 **Day of Action** - Join us for our Annual Day of Action out at Dover Park from 1:00pm-4:30pm with a post-event celebration at Tiny's Tavern.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

unitedwayyellowstone.org

The United Way of Yellowstone County logo, featuring the words "United Way" in white on a blue background, with the circular icon below it, and "United Way of Yellowstone County" in white on a blue background below that.

Join us in this spring to make a difference in our community- whether through giving, advocating or volunteering, your support helps create lasting change for those in need.

If you're looking for ways to "Get Connected" please click below and visit our website!

Get Connected

May is Mental Health Awareness Month



In May we bring increased awareness about the vital role that mental health plays in our overall health and well-being. Mental health is essential to an individual's life in the same way our physical health is.

- May 3 - National Garden Meditation Day
- May 4 - National Renewal Day
- May 5 - National Silence the Shame Day & World Laughter Day
- May 7 - Childhood Depression Awareness Day
- May 21 - World Meditation Day
- May 27 - Memorial Day
- May 31 - National Smile Day



In honor of Older Americans Month in 2024, it's time to put a spotlight on the importance of connections in our lives. This year's theme, "Powered by Connection", emphasizes the profound impact that meaningful relationships and social connections have on our health and wellbeing, especially for our older adults.

Fostering social connections for older adults is not just about spending time together. It's about creating quality moments that make seniors feel loved, valued, and engaged. These connections can come from a variety of sources: family, friends, community groups, or even volunteer organizations. They all play a significant role in enhancing the quality of life and overall health of older adults.

Celebrating Older Americans Month

Older Americans Month is a time to recognize and celebrate the contributions of our elder citizens. It's a time to express our gratitude for their wisdom, resilience, and the roles they play in our society. It's also an opportunity for us to support them in maintaining and building connections that can enrich their lives.

There are many ways to celebrate Older Americans Month and show support for our seniors. One of the most impactful ways is through volunteering. Volunteering not only provides valuable assistance to seniors but also creates meaningful connections between generations.

Volunteering Opportunities

There are numerous agencies that offer opportunities for us to lend a helping hand to our seniors. Whether it's delivering meals, offering companionship, or teaching new skills, there is a wide range of activities that we can get involved in.

For those interested in volunteering, visit [YouCanVolunteer.org](https://www.youcanvolunteer.org) for a comprehensive list of opportunities. By volunteering, we not only help our seniors but also build connections that can have a profound impact on us as well.

"Powered by Connection" for Older Americans Month 2024 is a poignant reminder of the importance of relationships and social connections in our lives. It implores us to show love and appreciation to our seniors and help them stay connected. Let's celebrate our seniors and the invaluable connections they bring to our lives.

United Way of Yellowstone County receives \$160,000 from FHLB Des Moines and 5 local Institutions

We at United Way of Yellowstone County want to express sincere gratitude to Green Dot Bank, First Interstate, Valley Credit Union, Wells Fargo, and all financial institutions involved for their generous support through the Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines Member Impact Fund. This collaboration, which includes a \$3 to \$1 matching from FHLB

Des Moines, has provided nearly \$20 million to support affordable housing and community development initiatives in targeted areas of the FHLB Des Moines District.

We are incredibly grateful for the support, their generosity, combined with the matching funds from FHLB Des Moines, will enable us to continue our mission of creating positive change in our community.

The Member Impact Fund grants will be used for a variety of purposes, including down payment assistance, emergency housing, financial literacy programs, food banks, and youth programs. This support is a testament to the commitment of these institutions to strengthen communities and improve the lives of individuals and families in Yellowstone County.



UWYC Staff with Brandon Scala and Casey Klein from Valley Credit Union



UWYC Staff and Community Relations Committee members with Steven Lybbert from Green Dot Bank



Kim Lewis and Eric Jensen with FHLB Des Moines during FIB's check presentation

United Way of Yellowstone County staff attends 3rd Annual DEI + More Leadership Conference

At the 3rd Annual DEI + More Leadership Conference, United Way of Yellowstone County demonstrated our steadfast commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) as a participating sponsor, showcasing our impactful work within the community. The conference's theme, "This is about people, not politics," resonated deeply with our core values, highlighting the importance of prioritizing people in every decision. Through engaging workshops and networking opportunities, our staff members were able to deepen their understanding of DEI principles and explore strategies for creating a more inclusive community. Our participation reflects our dedication to fostering systemic change and ensuring fair and just treatment for all individuals, mirroring our DEI commitment statement.



Kim Lewis, Steph Brazill, Sheila Veatch & Michelle Lamberson attend 3rd Annual DEII + More Leadership Conference

Engaging with Future Leaders at Local Career Fairs



Haiven Hayes and Sheila Veatch at BPS Let's Get to Work Career Fair

Our Out-Of-School-Time team has been busy engaging with the community, including the recent Billings Public Schools Let's Get to Work Career Fair at the MetraPark Pavilion and the Laure High School Career Fair. These events provided and excellent opportunity to showcase our CARE Academy and Discover Zone programs to students from 8th to 12th grade. We're thrilled to connect with the future leaders of our community and share the exciting opportunities available in our Out-Of-School-Time programs.

For more information on how you can get involved in these opportunities, contact Michelle at ostdirector@uwellowstone.org

UWYC Spotlight: Girl Scouts of Montana and Wyoming share their STARLAB with Discover Zone



The Girl Scouts of Montana and Wyoming recently visited Discover Zone, with their STARLAB, a portable planetarium. This unique, immersive learning experience transported students into the night sky, where they explored constellations, planets, and other celestial bodies. The hands-on approach to astronomy sparked curiosity and excitement, making learning about the cosmos and unforgettable adventure.

This immersive experience fosters critical thinking and creativity, inspiring a passion for learning.

We extend our thanks to the Girl Scouts for bringing the STARLAB to Discover Zone, empowering young minds and nurturing the next generation of explorers.



Discover Zone kiddos and the STARLAB

Volunteer, share a skill, or host a booth at our Carnival

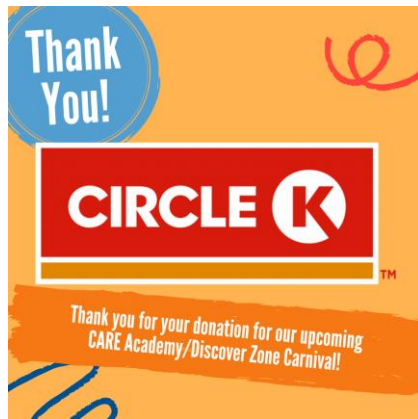


Our Out-Of-School-Time Family Night for this quarter is our annual CARE Academy/Discover Zone Carnival which will be held on May 17th from 4:30 pm to 7:00 pm at the United Way campus! We're going to celebrate the end of the school year with a party including lots of games, snacks, hot dogs, and lots of FUN!

We need your help to make the carnival a success! If you can donate goods, prizes, volunteer your time or share a unique skill (like face painting etc.) we would appreciate your support. Any of our non-profit partners are welcome to host a booth with a fun game and information about your program.

Please bring your kids, friends, and neighbors for a fun event and a chance to come together as a community.

[Sign-up Here](#)



We extend a heartfelt thank you to Circle K for your generous donation of hot dogs, buns and a volunteer BBQ master for our CARE Academy and Discover Zone end-of-school-year carnival. Your support helps make this event a memorable and enjoyable experience for all. Thank you for being a part of our community and for your commitment to making a difference!

Diapers for Days: A Community Celebration of Giving



In the spirit of community service and making a significant impact, we recently held our 5th annual community diaper drive. It was a remarkable testament to the power of collective effort. Our community continues to demonstrate its capacity for compassion and generosity, with 16 individuals and 10 organizations coming forward to contribute to this drive.

Huge thanks to our amazing community members, through your generosity we were able to collect over 36,000 items including diapers and wipes for the Community Diaper Bank!

The Power of Giving

The diaper drive is more than just an event; it's a movement that brings our community closer together. Every year, it serves as a reminder of the difference we can make when we join hands and work towards a common goal. The diapers collected during this drive go a long way in supporting families that are struggling to provide for their babies. It's a cause that resonates with many, and the overwhelming response we receive each year is proof of that.

Get Involved

If you missed out on the diaper drive and are looking for other ways to contribute, fret not. There are numerous other volunteer opportunities that you can get involved in. Be it helping out at a local soup kitchen, participating in a tree plantation drive, or spending time at a retirement home, there are countless ways to make a difference.

Whether you want to offer your skills, your time, or your resources, there's a place for you in the volunteering world. By getting involved, you can help create a ripple effect of positive change that can transform our community for the better.

If you're interested in discovering more volunteer opportunities, [CLICK HERE](#). Or contact Chrissy at volcoord@uwyellowstone.org. Remember, every little bit helps, and your contribution could be the one that makes a significant difference.



Family Promise YV needs
Diaper Bank volunteers!

When: **Tuesday's from 3:30pm -
5:30pm.**

Sign up [HERE](#) for any Diaper Bank
Day!

Spotlight on Family Service: Building Stability, Creating Hope



This month, we are proud to shine a light on Family Service, an organization whose mission is to create a better life for our neighbors in need. With a rich history dating back to 1906, Family Service has been a cornerstone of support in Yellowstone County for 118 years, dedicated to preventing hunger, homelessness, and poverty through community involvement.

At the heart of Family Service's mission is the belief that every individual, regardless of their circumstances, deserves the opportunity for a new beginning. They provide crucial options for low and very low-income families, seniors, and individuals to lift themselves to stability and self-sufficiency, offering a pathway to a brighter future.

One of Family Service's impactful programs is their Emergency Rent and Utility Assistance, which provides a lifeline for individuals facing housing and utility crises. In the fiscal year 2021-2022, Family Service distributed \$23,177 to 92 households for rental assistances and \$12,893 in utility funds to 81 households. These grants, made possible with support from United Way of Yellowstone County, make a tangible difference, helping families stay in their homes and keep the power on.

The need for assistance is evident, with rental rates increasing significantly, and utility costs continuing to rise. Despite these challenges, Family Service remains a beacon of hope, providing critical support to those in crisis.

We are incredibly grateful for the dedication and compassion of Family Service and its commitment to creating a better, more stable future for our community. Thank you, Family Service, for all that you do.

Child Care Community Conversation



United Way had the privilege to host a Child Care Community Conversation. "The Workforce Behind the Workforce" in partnership with Big Sky Economic Development and the Billings Chamber of Commerce. This event was held on behalf of the Yellowstone County's Best Beginnings Coalition, specifically the Child Care Capacity Building Cohort, which includes members from the United Way, RiverStone Health, HRDC, and AWARE. Through a grant the Cohort received from Zero to Five Montana, the group has been studying the landscape of child care in Yellowstone County. The primary focus of this event was for individuals to share the importance of child care and how it affects the workforce. This also included dialog between businesses and child care providers in Yellowstone County. There were multiple problem-solving solutions shared and their important work is being continued over the coming months. To learn more, click "Read More" below to check out the article in the Billings Gazette.





[Read More](#)

A Toast to Community Support: Thank you, Sophie's Kitchen, Black Orchid Yoga, and Fresco Juice Co.!



Heartfelt thanks to Sophie's Kitchen, Black Orchid Yoga and Fresco Juice Co. for their generous support and partnership in giving back to our community.

Throughout the month of April, Sophie's Kitchen ran a special mimosa promotion, with a portion of the proceeds benefiting United Way of Yellowstone County. This initiative not only provided a delightful treat for patrons but also contributed to making a positive impact in our community.

We are grateful for the support of local businesses like Sophie's Kitchen, Black Orchid Yoga, and Fresco Juice Co., who are dedicated to making a difference.



UWYC Staff enjoying lunch and mimosas at Sophie's Kitchen

If you would like to join us in making a difference, please consider making a donation by clicking the donate button below.

Your generosity and commitment to giving back are truly commendable.

Together, we can create positive change in Yellowstone County!

[Donate](#)

Transforming Our Community Resource Center with Wyo-Ben's Generosity



We extend a huge thank you to Wyo-Ben for generously donating cubicles to our office. These cubicles are helping us create more space for a large conference gathering area, enabling us to better serve our community.

We also want to give a special shoutout to Kimberly Guy, her dad , Greg Neill and the volunteers who helped with the transportation of the cubicles. Your support has been invaluable in making this transition possible.

Together, we are creating a more efficient and welcoming space for our team and the community we serve!

Mark Your Calendars!

School District 2 Safety Levy Voting

School District 2's Safety Levy ballots must be postmarked by May 7th.

Let's come together as a community in this important decision-making process. Every vote counts, and helps ensure that our community's needs and values are represented.



Sign-ups are from May 22nd to June 14th. United Way's annual community-wide Day of Action. It's a brilliant opportunity to get outside, roll up your sleeves, and make a positive impact in our community. For more information [CLICK HERE](#).

Day of Action will be held on June 19th, from 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm at Dover Park, This isn't just an event, it's a global movement dedicated to creating a stronger, more vibrant community through our collective actions.

We have numerous projects lined up that could use your team's help. These include trail restoration, removing invasive trees, spreading rocks around benches and shelter areas, and

even some fence work. It's a great chance to emphasize the importance of volunteerism, mental health, and connecting with nature.

To top it all off, we'll be wrapping up the day with an epic after-party, hosted by none other than Tiny's Tavern!

So, what do you say? Will you join us in making our community even better?
For more information contact Chrissy at volcoord@uwyellowstone.org,

Add event to calendar

[Apple](#) • [Google](#) • [Office 365](#) • [Outlook Web](#) • [Outlook](#) • [Yahoo](#)

Honoring Our Heroes: Memorial Day Ceremonies in Yellowstone County



As Memorial Day approaches, United Way of Yellowstone County would like to take a moment to honor and thank those who have served and continue to serve our country. Your dedication, sacrifice, and courage are deeply appreciated, and we are forever grateful for your service.

This Memorial Day, we invite you to join commemorating our heroes at these two special ceremonies in Yellowstone County:

Memorial Day Ceremony at Yellowstone National Cemetery

- Date: May 30, 2024
- Time: 10:00am
- Location: Yellowstone National Cemetery, 55 Buffalo Trail Road, Laurel

Memorial Day Observance at Veterans Park

- Date: May 30, 2024
- Time: 1:00pm
- Location: Veterans Park, 13th Street West and Poly Drive, Billings

These ceremonies are an opportunity for our community to come together to honor the memory of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. We encourage everyone to attend and pay tribute to our fallen heroes.

Let us remember and honor the brave men and women who have served and sacrificed for our freedom. Thank you to all who have served and may we never forget the true meaning of this important day.

Partner Agency Events



VNN Connect Barbecue

For Military Veteran's, and Their Families

Date: Friday May 3

Time: 10:30am-2:00pm

Where: Base Camp Billings

5179 Midland Rd





Dancing with the Big Sky Stars "Boots & Bling" Fundraiser

A tip of the hat to the TV show, "Dancing with the Stars," this event features local celebrities who are matched with professional dance instructors to compete for the winner's trophy.

Date: Saturday May 11

Time: 5:30 pm Doors open at 5:00pm

Where: DoubleTree Inn by Hilton

Monthly Honor Roll

Associated Food Stores
Carol L. Atchison
Marquice Barnett
Billings Clinic
Stephanie Bond
Joan Brewer
Brown Law Firm
Jennifer J. Carmody
Caterpillar Foundation
Amanda Clark
Renee K. Dyer
Darrell & Sally Ehrlick
Eide Bailly, LLP
Deanna Emmett
Stacy D. Emmett
FHLB Des Moines
Karissa E. Fenstermacher
First Interstate Bank
Shari Foos
Stefani S. Freese
Green Dot Bank
Randy Hammerquist
Rachel Hill
Derek & Shawn Hinz
Nathan Hirsch
Mark Horn
Robert Janicek
Jenny Jutz
Jonnie Keeling
April E. Keippel
Leyna Kingman

Brenda L. Koch
Joan B. Koch
Maureen M. Ladd
Dawn Leslie
Wendi Lewis
Megan Littlefield
Kimberli Martin
Matthew Steven Martin
Geraldine Mollett
Joshua Monson
Anne M. Nelson
Courtney & David Nicolato
DeAnna Niles
Kathleen A. Nordahl
Jamie Ohl
ONEOK, Inc.
Eric Owen
Keri Perez
Mark W. Petesch
Luke Reinschmidt
Patti Reisinger
Steven Restad
RiverStone Health
Lori R. Sawicki
Barbara J. Schneeman
Donna R. See
Clark Snyder
Heather Fink Stambaugh
Valley Credit Union
Josephine Verlanic
Wells Fargo Bank

Thank you to the following donors for contributing to improving lives through health, education, and crisis stabilization for those in Yellowstone County.

Want to see your name here? Donate below!

[Donate](#)

United Way of Yellowstone County



United Way of Yellowstone County
406.252.3839
www.uwyellowstone.org
2173 Overland Ave, Billings, MT 59102

Connect with us

