



UNITED WAY
Fostoria

SEPTEMBER 2026

STORIES OF IMPACT

Message from our Director



Hello friends and supporters, this has been a season of movement for United Way of Fostoria — new faces, new partnerships, and new ways of reaching families across our community. You'll see the numbers behind that work throughout this issue, and I hope they remind you just how far your support reaches.

But I want to use most of this space to talk about what's ahead.

On September 16, we kick off our 2026 campaign: Leading with Purpose. Delivering Results. It's the first time in fifteen years we've changed our giving levels — because the needs Fostoria families face today aren't the needs we faced fifteen years ago, and our ask has to grow with them.

We're not opening this campaign by asking you to hit a number. We're opening it by showing you what's already true: four community leaders have stepped forward with Founders-level gifts, because they believe in what's possible here. Our neighbors have shown what's possible. Now it's our turn.

Whether you give as an individual, lead a workplace campaign, or represent a local business through our 365 Small Business Circle, there's a place for you in this campaign. Every dollar stays right here in Fostoria — funding the Empowerment Hub, First Call for Help, and the sixteen agency partners who show up for our neighbors every day.

Thank you for being part of what comes next.

With gratitude,
Libra Tedrow
Executive Director, United Way of Fostoria



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In This Issue:

In this issue, we kick off our biggest campaign in fifteen years — new giving levels, four community leaders already leading the way, and one big question: will you join them? We're also celebrating the power of partnership — from the dozens of organizations coming together for the Back to School Bash to our work with the Kiwanis Shoe Program — we're showing how it's what makes Fostoria stronger.

Quarterly Impact:

3,695 touch points

(see page 6 for Quarterly Impact agency breakdown)

Issue Highlights:

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Upcoming United Way &

Agency Events, p. 7



Special thanks to POET and NCAT!

POET hosted a food drive that filled all 6 Blessing Boxes across our community, and NCAT stepped up to pick up the donated items and restock the boxes. Grateful for partners who help keep our neighbors fed!



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UNITED WAY

2026 Annual Campaign

**LEADING WITH PURPOSE.
DELIVERING RESULTS.**



Feature Story

2026 ANNUAL CAMPAIGN KICK OFF: LEADING WITH PURPOSE. DELIVERING RESULTS.

On September 16, United Way of Fostoria launches its 2026 annual campaign — the most significant shift in our giving structure in fifteen years, and one of the biggest asks we've ever made of this community.

For over a decade, our giving levels stayed the same while the needs around us didn't. Families are navigating housing instability, workforce gaps, and mental health challenges that look different than they did fifteen years ago. This year, we rebuilt our campaign structure to match — and we're not launching it by asking you to hit a number. We're launching it by showing you what's already happened.

Four community leaders have already stepped forward with Founder-level gifts, the highest tier in our new giving structure. They didn't wait to be asked twice. They saw what United Way makes possible in Fostoria — the Empowerment Hub and our sixteen local agency partners — and decided to lead.

Our neighbors have shown what's possible. Now it's our turn.

Every donor has a place in this campaign, from our new Circle giving levels — Founders, Legacy, Cornerstone, Impact, and Neighbor — to the Frank J. Kinn Leadership Society for those carrying forward a legacy of leadership giving, to our 365 Small Business Circle, built for Fostoria's small businesses that give in a way that fits their size. Workplace campaigns will roll out through the fall, with new, simplified coordinator resources making it easier than ever for local employers to get involved.

This is a campaign built on the belief that when Fostoria invests in itself, the whole community moves forward. Leading with purpose. Delivering results. That's the promise — and it starts with you.

[CLICK HERE](#) to give, learn about giving levels, or bring the campaign to your workplace.



United Way of Fostoria is continuing its quarterly workshop series designed specifically for agency partners. This initiative provides ongoing education, practical tools, and shared resources to strengthen organizational capacity and support long-term sustainability. Through these sessions, agencies have opportunities to learn, collaborate, and enhance their ability to fulfill their mission and deepen their impact in our community.

WORK SMARTER, NOT HARDER: AI FOR NONPROFIT IMPACT

Small staffs can still make big wins — especially with the right tools. That's the focus of our second workshop in the series, Work Smarter Not Harder: AI for Nonprofit Impact, a session built for agencies where every team member wears multiple hats.

On Friday, September 25 from 9:00–10:00 AM at the Fostoria Learning Center, agency staff and leaders are invited to explore how to integrate AI into their everyday workflows responsibly and effectively. From freeing up time on routine tasks to sharpening the tools already in your hands, this session equips local nonprofits to do more with the capacity they have.

Because when our partners work smarter, our whole community benefits.

PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION: HOW OUR AGENCIES DELIVER IMPACT

At United Way of Fostoria, we believe transformation happens when a community pools its resources, time, and heart toward a shared purpose. This quarter offered no shortage of proof.

It started in May, when volunteers from United Way of Fostoria/First Call for Help, Fostoria Habitat for Humanity, the City of Fostoria, Fostoria Kiwanis Club, Win Waste, and Olmstead Hauling rolled up their sleeves for a Community Clean-Up, hauling away more than 12,000 pounds of trash and leaving our streets and neighborhoods brighter for it.

That same month, the Nazarene Church opened its doors for a Veterans and First Responders Fair, bringing together United Way of Fostoria, First Call for Help, HOPE in Fostoria, and the Fostoria Learning Center. Nearly 20 organizations shared resources with veterans, first responders, and their families, who also enjoyed a complimentary lunch, desserts, and door prizes — generously donated by community supporters.

In May, nine individuals graduated from Staying Ahead, the second phase of the Getting Ahead program, building skills in budgeting, goal-setting, community resources, and emotional regulation. Three of the nine graduates are now paired with a mentor to help carry that momentum forward.

Throughout the summer, the Fostoria Empowerment Hub became a hive of practical, life-changing support. (Continued on page 5)



Women's empowerment sessions welcomed 30 attendees for a hands-on gardening demonstration led by Sarah Betts of Seneca County Parks, and another 20 for a healthy eating workshop.

Attorneys Phillip Wylkan and Melissa LaRocco volunteered their expertise on wills, estate planning, family law, and tenant rights, meeting one-on-one with families navigating major life decisions. Henry Matthews, a United Way board member and electrical engineer, shared home electrical safety tips, while GLCAP's Devin Black connected residents with the Financial Opportunity Center. Seven area agencies even joined Thrive Community Partners at the Hub for a Grant Readiness Workshop, strengthening the nonprofit sector's capacity to bring more resources home.

August closed the quarter with two of our biggest community celebrations. The Back to School Bash, hosted by United Way of Fostoria alongside Fostoria City Schools, National Machinery Foundation, Findlay Community Foundation, and dozens of generous partners, drew an estimated 450–500 families for school supplies, hygiene products, food, and fun — plus free haircuts and vouchers courtesy of Au Soleil Spa, Designer Cuts, Freshest Fades, and Savvy Expressions. Days later, the Kiwanis Shoe Program — proudly steered by our own team — fit 356 local students with new shoes, socks, and book bags for the year ahead.

None of this happens alone. Every clean street, every workshop, every pair of new shoes represents dozens of organizations and volunteers choosing to show up for their neighbors. That's the spirit of giving in action — and it's what makes Fostoria stronger, together.

And these are only a few highlights. Every day, our partners are actively living out their missions — from YMCA Golf and Theater Camps for kids, to enriching programs at the Fostoria Senior Center, and so much more — adding countless life-changing touchpoints to the ones we share with you each quarter.



Back to
School Bash



YMCA
Golf Camp



Getting Ahead
Graduation





Quarterly Impact: 3,695 life changing touch points

This quarter, April-June, your support made a meaningful impact across our community. Here's a snapshot of the many touchpoints where United Way agency partners are meeting needs, strengthening lives, and creating lasting change.

First Call for Help: 337

Getting Ahead: 7 participants

Red Cross: No fires reported this quarter

HOPE in Fostoria: 588

Habitat for Humanity: 23

St. Vincent De Paul: 257 individuals served

Patchworks: 119 clients served

NCAT: 473 Fostoria trips

Girls Scouts: 108

Scouts: 36

Day Break: 23 client sessions

FACTS: 27

First Step: 8 in shelter, 15 outreach clients

Senior Citizen Center: 463 Visits

Fostoria Learning Center: 120 GED & High School Students

Geary Family YMCA: 1,091

First Call for Help & United Way of Fostoria Volunteer

Hours: 97.75

YOUR GIFT STAYS LOCAL – AND CHANGES LIVES RIGHT HERE IN FOSTORIA

When you give to United Way of Fostoria, your donation doesn't travel far. It stays here — funding for youth programs, and health services that Fostoria families rely on when life gets hard.

No community is immune to hard times. But when neighbors choose to invest in each other, the difference is real and lasting.

United Way of Fostoria distributes funds thoughtfully and accountably, with local decision-makers who know this community and are committed to making every dollar count. We publish an annual report detailing exactly where contributions go, because we believe donors deserve that transparency.

When you give, you are not simply writing a check. You are choosing to be part of the safety net that holds this community together. You are fueling hope, stability, and possibility for the families and individuals who need it most.

Thank you for being part of this work. We would not be here without you.

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” - Helen Keller



SAVE THE DATE

CAMPAIGN KICKOFF
September 16

**FOSTORIA WOMEN
EMPOWERING WOMEN**
September 21, 5:30-
7:30 p.m. Geary Family
YMCA Annex

**PARTNER AGENCY
WORKSHOP- WORK
SMARTER, NOT HARDER**
September 25, 9-
10a.m., Fostoria
Learning Center

JOB FAIR
September 30, 1-3
p.m., Fostoria
Nazarene Church Hope
Center

STUFF THE BUS
October 2 @ Kroger

COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP
October 3

BED BUILDING
October 24, Fostoria
Nazarene Church

FOSTORIA EMPOWERMENT HUB

SEPTEMBER 2026

Support Starts Here

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 3	11:30 AM TO 1:30 PM Rachel Burleson, First Call for Help Drop in any time between 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM at the library. Learn how First Call for Help may assist you and learn more about the Fostoria Empowerment Hub and available resources.
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 10	10 AM TO 11:30 AM CPR Training Join us at the library for a free CPR training class! Learn lifesaving skills and gain the confidence to respond during an emergency. Only 16 spots are available, so call today to save your spot! <i>Need more information? Call 419-435-2555 or email Ltedrow@uwfostoria.org</i>
FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 11	10 AM TO 12 PM Rachel Burleson, First Call for Help Drop in any time between 10 AM to 12 PM at the library. Learn how First Call for Help may assist you and learn more about the Fostoria Empowerment Hub and available resources.
MONDAY SEPTEMBER 14	3 PM TO 4 PM Mind Matters - Ashley Morrow, Behavioral Health Specialist Join Behavioral Health Specialist Ashley Morrow at the library for Mind Matters, an informative session focused on understanding mental health, breaking common myths, and learning practical tools to support your well-being. Need more information? Please call 419-435-2555 or email Ltedrow@uwfostoria.org. All who attend, will receive a free gift.
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 15	1 PM TO 2:30 PM Rachel Burleson, First Call for Help Drop in any time between 1 PM to 2:30 PM at the library. Learn how First Call for Help may assist you and learn more about the Fostoria Empowerment Hub and available resources.
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 17	4 PM TO 5 PM Carolyn Tienarend, RD, LD, CDCES, Diabetes and Nutrition Education Join us at the library to learn simple, practical ways to prepare healthy snacks and lunches. Need more information? Please call the library at 419-435-2813.
WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 23	1:30 PM TO 3:30 PM Libra Tedrow, First Call for Help Drop in any time between 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM at the library. Learn how First Call for Help may assist you and learn more about the Fostoria Empowerment Hub and available resources.
WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 30	1:00 PM TO 3:00 PM JOB FAIR @ Fostoria Nazarene Church Hope Community Center Stop by the Job Fair from 1:00-3:00 PM with your résumé and connect with local businesses and hiring agencies that are ready to meet job seekers!



Connecting You to the Resources
You Need—*All in One Place.*



419-435-2555



EVENTS TAKE PLACE AT:
KAUBISCH MEMORIAL LIBRARY
205 Perry St, Fostoria, OH 44830



Funded in part through a federal Institute of
Museum and Library Services (IMLS) STA
grant awarded by the State Library of Ohio.



Stay connected and be part of the impact—follow [United Way of Fostoria](https://www.facebook.com/UnitedWayofFostoria) on Facebook for the latest event details, community updates, and stories that show your support in action.