



**UNITED WAY OF DANE COUNTY 1922-2022:**

# **CELEBRATING A CENTURY OF INNOVATION, COLLABORATION AND POSITIVE CHANGE**

Written by Doug Moe



UNITED WAY OF DANE COUNTY  
1922–2022:

**CELEBRATING  
A CENTURY  
OF INNOVATION,  
COLLABORATION,  
AND POSITIVE CHANGE**

By Doug Moe



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## *Dedication*

*This book is dedicated to our Dane County community – without whom none of the innovative and impactful work accomplished over the past century would have been possible. Thank you for trusting us with your hard-earned dollars and deep partnerships – and for continuing to help us build a Dane County where everyone can succeed in school, work and life. Together we are The Power of Many. Working for All. And for that we are forever grateful!*



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## INTRODUCTION

### LISTENING... RESPONDING... LEADING...

**A**s United Way of Dane County (UWDC) looked forward to celebrating its centennial in 2022, a once-in-a-century pandemic that surfaced early in 2020 created a reckoning. Suddenly, after nearly 100 years, the people of Dane County needed UWDC more than ever.

By March 2020, schools were closed across the country, along with many businesses. Essential workers were scrambling to find care for children who weren't in school. Incomes were disrupted as unemployment skyrocketed. Hunger and evictions loomed. Neighbors were getting sick. People wanted to help, but how could they volunteer safely in a pandemic?

UWDC's response was immediate. A recent board commitment to a significant technology upgrade meant staff could coordinate remotely.

They spoke daily with elected officials, social service agency executives, and business leaders and weekly with education, health, and law enforcement leaders to identify needs and set safety protocols for service delivery, volunteerism, and the coordination of efforts.

On March 13, 2020, UWDC partnered with the Boys & Girls Club of Dane County and Waunakee-based Selfless Ambition to establish the Dane County COVID-19 Emergency and Recovery Fund. Within a week, more than \$900,000 was raised. Eventually, the figure would top \$2.3 million for food, rent assistance, childcare scholarships, and more.

Yet the need did not abate. Calls to UWDC's resource information helpline, 211, increased by 400 percent. As more people spent time at home, UWDC's annual fundraising drive went virtual— including a Back to the Future television commercial, the organization's first commercial in two decades—and succeeded in raising \$17.9 million in a desperately difficult economic year.

In May 2020, the country was shocked by George Floyd's death at the knee of a law enforcement officer in Minnesota. UWDC, overtly addressing racial inequity for three decades and co- facilitator of the Dane County Law Enforcement Leaders of Color Collaboration (LELCC), was uniquely positioned to help the community understand and respond.

With local and national protests occurring, UWDC's board committed to further deepening racial equity leadership with staff and partners, including investing in grassroots agencies and facilitating conversations about race with CEOs and board members.



UWDC also delivered in less traditional ways.

On a Saturday in August 2020, UWDC distributed at its Atwood Avenue office disposable and reusable face coverings, along with hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies. For two days in November, people could come to UWDC headquarters for a take-home COVID-19 test kit. Madison's Exact Sciences processed the completed tests. In-kind donations valued at \$444,000 for infant care, school supplies, and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) were received and distributed to agency partners.

The pandemic year provided a sterling reminder of how UWDC can singularly activate the community: understanding needs, high-trust partnering with a variety of organizations, harnessing and distributing resources effectively, mobilizing volunteers, and sharing impact results.

Such enduring relevance is perhaps unsurprising when one considers that throughout its 100-year history, UWDC has championed and often originated ideas that became best practices for nonprofits and United Ways across the United States and beyond.

From its earliest days, an effort was made to involve everyone in Madison in charitable campaigns. That's right—everyone. A Wisconsin State Journal newspaper story about the very first fundraising effort, in September 1922, was headlined: "Every Resident of City Listed in Coming Drive." The story reported how volunteers, working weeks ahead, had prepared prospect cards for the entire citizenry.

In 1946, prominent volunteer Lowell Frautschi, a member of a storied Madison business family, delivered a credo that stressed how social service organizations need to listen to their communities and be

adaptive. Looking to the future, Frautschi said, they needed to become more than a consolidator of fundraising (an early charter) and work to develop strategies for solving local problems.

# EVERY RESIDENT OF CITY LISTED IN COMING DRIVE

800 Community Union Canvassers  
To Carry Prospect Cards For  
Thorough Social Fund  
Campaign

**W**HEN the 800 Community Union workers begin their three-day drive for funds for 14 Madison social agencies Sept. 26, they will have prospect cards for every resident of Madison. So complete is the listing of names that the team members will have not only that of the person renting or owning the home or apartment, but the names of all other occupants as well.

Volunteers, putting in eight to ten hours a day in the Community Union headquarters in the First Central building, have been busy for three weeks with the prospect cards, and the task is still far from completed.

## Will Work Steadily

Officers of the union and members of the speakers' bureau will be at work almost nightly from now until Sept. 26, addressing meetings of church, social, fraternal and business organizations throughout the city on the aims of the new federation, launched to substitute one drive a year for the 14 held in the past.

"The Community Union was formed to reduce the number of financial drives, charity entertainments, campaigns and tag-days in Madison," said Edward D. Lynde, executive secretary.

*Newspaper clipping from Wisconsin State Journal, 10 Sep 1922, Sun.*

Frautschi, at the time, was outgoing president of the Madison

Community Union— a forerunner of UWDC.<sup>1</sup> Frautschi presented his credo, as he called it, at the Community Union's annual dinner. It was then published in the Wisconsin State Journal<sup>2</sup> and, to varying degrees, utilized by community unions across the country.

In January 1946, Frautschi said the following:

I admire the Community Union because it is not static. Having survived a long depression and a great war, it is a very different thing than it was at the start. It is flexible; it enters new fields; it abandons projects which have terminated; it acquires new agencies, and sometimes combines or loses them; it goes in for self-criticism; it seeks ever widening support and participation; it plans ahead and tries to anticipate problems which may arise in the community. It is a constructive force in Madison.

# Credo

## ...for Madison and Community Future

(By Lowell Frautschi, Retiring President, Madison Community Union, Presented at Annual Meeting Wednesday Night)

AN ANNUAL MEETING, PARTICULARLY one which occurs on the threshold of a new era, is an appropriate time to take stock of the extent to which we are equipped for discharging the responsibilities which this organization has assumed.

The Community Union has had detractors as well as many supporters, since it was founded nearly a quarter of a century ago. It has them still.

Where the overwhelming majority contributes generously, whether in time or money, to further the social welfare work and recreation programs in Madison, it is only natural that there should be some who will criticize various aspects of these endeavors, or even question their general methods and objectives.

Having spent several years as a budget committee member, budget chairman, and then president of the Community Union, I venture to set forth here an affirmation of faith in our organization—a sort of testament or credo growing out of my experience.

\* \* \*

I ADMIRE THE COMMUNITY UNION because it is not static. Having survived a long depression and a great war, it is a very different thing than it was at the start. It is flexible; it enters new fields; it abandons projects which have terminated; it acquires new agencies, and sometimes combines or loses them; it goes in for self criticism; it seeks ever widening support and participation; it plans ahead, and tries to anticipate problems which may arise in the community. It is a constructive force in Madison.

\* \* \*

I. CONCERNING WELFARE WORK



LOWELL FRAUTSCHI

Newspaper clipping from Wisconsin State Journal, 31 Jan 1946, Thu.

Frautschi wrapped up his remarks with a call for the Community Union to identify problems in the community and be a leader in developing

solutions:

I believe that the Community Union is an integrating force in metropolitan Madison, developing leadership, bringing together in common enterprise neighborhood and group representatives who would not otherwise meet, and that there have been indirect but positive benefits from that process... I believe that the Community Union has facilities for examining local problems of which we have an abundance and developing future plans in the welfare field; and that increasing intention must be given to this aspect of its work.

Over the years, Frautschi's vision was refined and expanded. In 1984, UWDC assigned a task force to determine how community needs could be best and most accurately assessed.

"We looked around the country," said Leslie Ann Howard, then UWDC's vice president of planning and allocation, "to see what the best practices in funding and needs assessment were."

The task force was chaired by Stanley York, then head of the League of Wisconsin Municipalities. After a year, York told the Wisconsin State Journal, "I'm happy with what we achieved. We did not have a systematic mechanism for identifying need in Dane County. [Now] we have developed a mechanism patterned after our allocation system to identify that need. We are also working with city and county agencies to make it a joint effort."

From that point on, there were other more aspirational collaborative initiatives.

Leslie Ann Howard spent 34 years with UWDC prior to her 2015



retirement, 26 of them as president and CEO, presiding over ambitious projects that included Schools of Hope (SOH) in the 1990s. That collaboration made a major impact in Madison, and beyond.

Howard recalled once being at a national United Way meeting and seeing then-United Way of America<sup>3</sup> CEO Brian Gallagher pointing at a chart and talking about literacy rates for children of color. It took Howard a moment to realize Gallagher was talking about UWDC's Schools of Hope Project. "Nobody sitting near me knew who I was," she recalled, "But they were talking about our stuff."



*Schools of Hope leadership team including Leslie Howard (center), Enis Ragland (left) and Tom Ragatz (right). Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

UWDC was designated a "Center of Excellence" for its Schools of Hope initiative, and representatives from United Ways around the world came to Madison to learn about it. More than two decades later, they're still

coming.

Howard's not-so-secret weapon as she moved UWDC through major changes between 1995 and 2005? Listening.

Renee Moe, Howard's successor and current president and CEO of UWDC, might have said it best: "Something I often tell our staff is the community will always tell you what it needs if you listen."

For Howard in the mid-1990s, listening brought a revelation.

In meetings with top donors from the Dane County business community, she began to receive requests for accountability.

"I started hearing," Howard recalled, "things like, 'You're back every year. And you're telling us the needs are greater. We believe you, but we don't like it. Isn't it your job to reduce and eliminate the underlying causes of these issues?'"

Steve Goldberg, a longtime UWDC volunteer and executive at Madison's CUNA Mutual Group, recalled, "Leslie listened to that. It gave her some additional ammunition when it came to telling key players this was the direction UWDC should take."

**The community will always tell you what it  
needs if you listen.**

"It got me thinking," Howard pondered, "I'd always felt like our value proposition should be higher than it was. Moving the money between



programs, donating it, that's nice. But were we really making a difference?"

While Howard mulled that question, she got a call from Frank Denton, editor of the Wisconsin State Journal. Denton had a doctorate in community journalism, reporting on attempts to help find solutions to community problems.

Denton told Howard he wanted to involve United Way in a civic journalism project. Would she come on board? Howard said yes. Although she didn't immediately understand the concept, she wasn't going to say no to the editor of the State Journal.

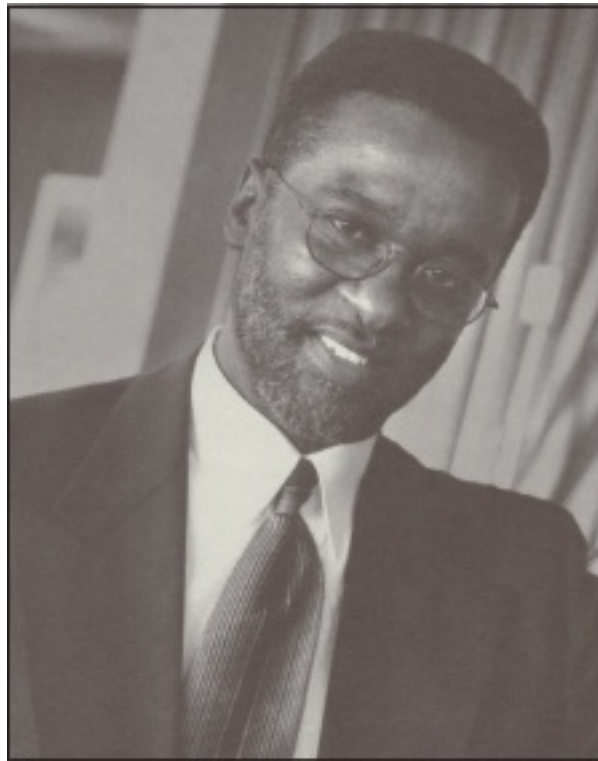
The newspaper, under Denton, had earlier embarked on a civic journalism project called City of Hope in which scores of people were interviewed and data analyzed in an effort, among other goals, to see where the city's social services resources would be best directed.

Schools of Hope would address the racial achievement gap in Madison Public Schools and the alarming rate of reading proficiency among students of color. The first meeting was at the newspaper office in August 1995. Leslie Ann Howard served as moderator for a discussion among community leaders. She later recalled that her United Way board was uncertain about the organization's involvement. Analyzing data wasn't what they typically did, and there was some pushback.

At an early Schools of Hope meeting, Howard had a quiet moment with Enis Ragland, both an assistant to Mayor Paul Soglin and a leader of the organization 100 Black Men of Madison. "I leaned over to Enis," Howard recalled, "and said, 'If I say we'll [UWDC] jump in and do

something [with Schools of Hope], will 100 Black Men join us?”  
“Absolutely,” Ragland said.

Once they began analyzing the data, closing the gap was daunting, but didn’t seem impossible. The number of students involved was manageable. Howard thought, “Can’t we teach these kids to read by the fourth grade?”



*Enis Ragland, assistant to Mayor Soglin and leader of 100 Black Men of Madison. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

People stepped up across the community. The school district shared data, parents and teachers engaged, and the UW–Madison School of Education researched effective strategies. The collective impact—further aided by buy-in from local communities of color, media, business leaders, and more—was quintessential United Way.

Renee Moe—who joined UWDC as a student intern in 1998, in time to see Schools of Hope begin to make a difference—said in retrospect, “To me, the headline was never, ‘United Way Solves Racial Achievement Gap.’ It was, ‘United Way Figures Out How You Frame an Issue, Create a Plan and Mobilize Partners to Get Something Done.’”

One could say UWDC was concerned with community impact before anyone really knew the phrase.

Impact was increasingly becoming a mantra when UWDC rolled out its Agenda for Change in the early 2000s, a series of goals developed by volunteer community solution teams that assessed needs and the best ways to serve them. UWDC utilized research and data and invited hundreds of people to its new building to give input, even symbolically providing Monopoly® money that could be dropped into buckets (labeled with potential initiatives) placed in third-floor boardrooms. All input was welcome.

The goals settled on included decreasing homelessness, improving access to healthcare, further diminishing the achievement gap for students of color, improving early childhood education, helping senior citizens and the disabled remain in their homes, reducing domestic violence, and strengthening nonprofit agencies.

The rollout, announced in March 2003, was not without controversy, because there were winners and losers in UWDC’s new funding allocation. Howard called it “the biggest change we’ve ever made,” and The Capital Times newspaper described it as “an agenda that stresses prevention over support and rewards those who go after root causes of social problems rather than those who provide relief for the symptoms.”

One who had no doubt UWDC was headed in the right direction was Brian Gallagher, president of United Way of America, who since praising Schools of Hope (at the national meeting referenced earlier) had gotten to know both UWDC and its president.

Speaking in Madison in 2004, Gallagher said, “If you want to know what community impact looks like, this is it. And if you want to see incredible personal leadership, Leslie is that.”

If listening to the community helped UWDC establish itself as an innovative leader in its first 100 years, the organization was even more intent on listening as the last few years of its first century approached.

In the fall of 2014, a UWDC delegation, led by UW–Madison Chancellor Rebecca Blank and former Madison police chief Noble Wray, was charged with researching and developing a strategy to help move young families in Dane County out of poverty. It was an effort to go a step beyond the favorable outcomes that had been achieved separately, in areas like improving literacy for students of color and reducing family homelessness. A more integrated approach would seek to move families from poverty to self-sufficiency.

The plan, eventually called Strong Roots, aligned early childhood, employment, and housing providers with a goal of increasing the number of economically stable young families.

It also led to a new framework, ensuring that families participate as co-stakeholders in creating solutions, (i.e., users of nonprofit services) especially those who are challenged by poverty and systemic racism, who do not know where to find resources, and who must navigate multiple

entry points to various agencies, as well as a shortage of culturally safe and competent service providers.

By early 2019, listening led UWDC to further embrace the idea of alignment in its funding process, actively encouraging service organizations to apply jointly for collaborative funds. The goal was to ensure that contact with any program would connect to a 2Gen (two-generation—e.g., care-givers and children) system of holistic support, increasing economic stability for family well-being and generational change.

As Lowell Frautschi noted in his credo in 1946, one strength of UWDC throughout its long history has been a willingness to examine its own standing in the community, how it is perceived, and how, for all its accolades, it might do better.

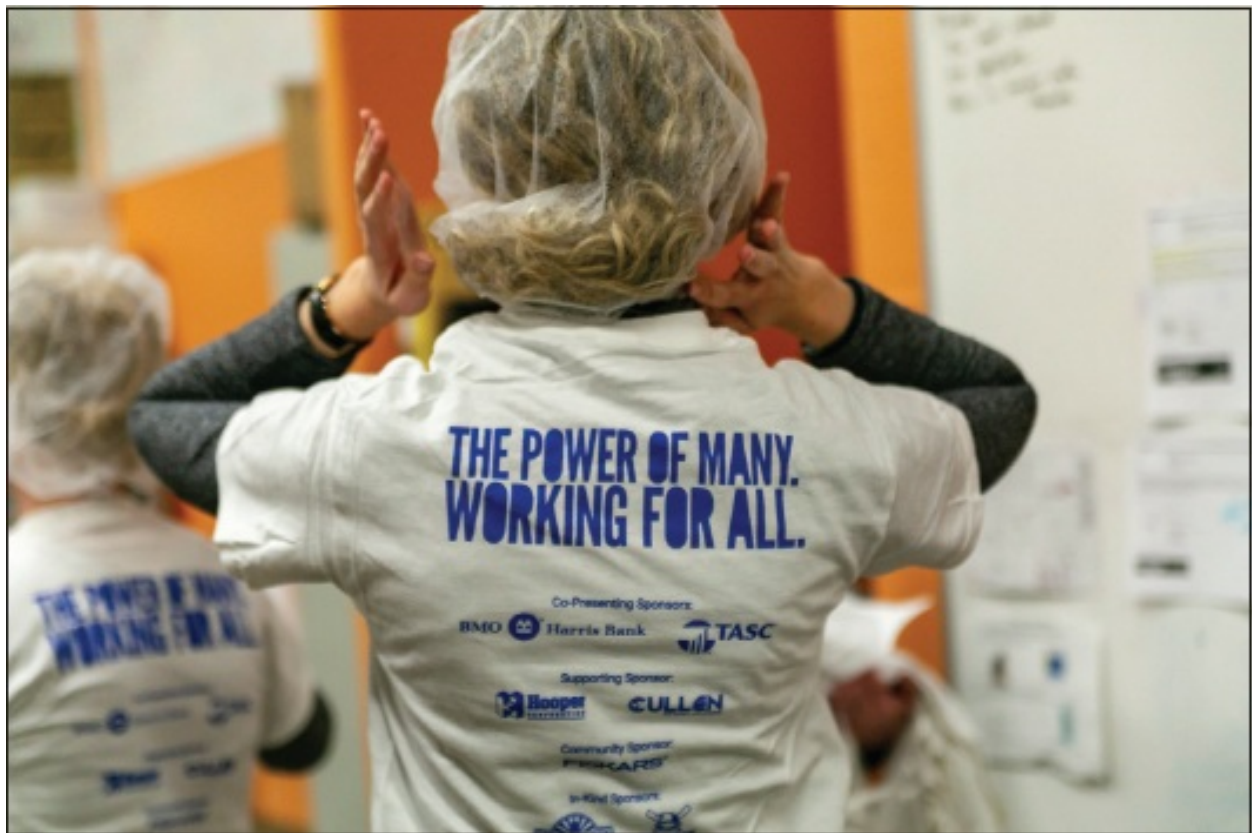
When Renee Moe took over as president in 2015, she was encouraged by the UWDC board to “question everything.” That developed into two broad questions that were posed in numerous focus groups and meetings: (1) What’s your dream for Dane County? (2) What’s United Way’s role in the community?

Most respondents had similar dreams for Dane County and its people, summed up by this quote from a participant: “Extend the quality of life Dane County is known for to every resident.” Economic opportunity, the reduction of racial disparities, good health, and community safety and happiness were key themes.

For the second question, most stakeholder groups—donors, agencies, volunteers, families, partners, and even critics—expressed “everyone

needs United Way to be successful” and noted opportunities represented in these comments:

- “United Way should be relevant to the community, a collaborator and a trusted resource.”
- “The Agenda for Change has come to be viewed as ‘United Way’s Agenda for Change,’ not the community’s.”
- “What does United Way do? Are you a convener, fundraiser, funder, volunteer clearing house, or service organization?”



*Donors, volunteers, businesses and the community truly are The Power of Many. Working for All. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

The most astute may have already recognized what UWDC has truly

become as it prepares for its next 100 years: a community change catalyst.

In the past few years, with “The Power of Many. Working for All.” tagline, UWDC has positioned itself as mobilizing the caring power of the community to create lasting change for multiple generations. That has resonated, even as technology and demographics have begun to alter the ways people and businesses engage in their philanthropy.

UWDC has worked to stay ahead of that evolution, while recognizing some truths are eternal.

Businesses want to attract and retain talent and develop leadership. UWDC can help. Donors and volunteers want engaging experiences and to understand how they can make a difference. UWDC can provide that. Nonprofits want resources and partnerships to serve families more effectively and highlight their work. United Way can amplify impact and understanding. Families want nonprofit services to be accessible, coordinated, and effective to achieve their goals. UWDC can mobilize the community to make that happen.

In 2019, UWDC supported 800 nonprofits with donor choice (or “designated”) dollars and another 50 in impact collaborations co-created with community partners. Greatest needs (or “unrestricted”) dollars continue to fuel these innovative initiatives designed through listening and bringing unique partners together to align action.

Through it all—into the pandemic year and beyond—UWDC listened to what the community was saying. It has for 100 years.

Renee Moe said it best:

Changing lives is not only about users of services and strengthening nonprofits. We mean donors and volunteers' lives, too. That makes a community strong—that proximity. The chance to own your opportunity to clear pathways for others. The chance to be part of something bigger than yourself. We need to get the right people together and be strategic and thoughtful listeners. That's how we will continue to be evolutionary and innovative, constantly being nimble to meet the needs of the community as we grow and change.

A century earlier, a man named Marvin B. Rosenberry felt similar stirrings.

- 
1. The UWDC name was not adopted until 1971.
  2. The city's largest newspaper.
  3. Later "United Way Worldwide".





# CHAPTER 1

## THE MADISON COMMUNITY UNION

**M**arvin Rosenberry,<sup>1</sup> was the first president of the Madison Community Union, which was established on March 1, 1922. It was an effort, as noted in the articles of incorporation, to “consolidate the budgets of those various social, charitable and philanthropic agencies of the city of Madison [and] assist in the coordination of the work of the various social agencies, both public and private, in the city of Madison [and] to encourage and develop social and philanthropic activities in the city of Madison.”

In March 1992, Madison’s preeminent local historian David Mollenhoff, author of *Madison: A History of the Formative Years*, gave the keynote address at the UWDC annual meeting. It was the 70th anniversary of the founding of the Madison Community Union. In his talk, Mollenhoff referenced what he called “the five stages our predecessors went through

to reach the sophisticated model we know as the United Way of Dane County,” going from “episodic individual aid” in the city’s first years to “systematic relief and consolidation” with the establishment of the Madison Community Union in 1922.

Prior to 1922, of course, Madison and Dane County had faced poverty and other economic and social issues and tried to address them.



*Marvin B. Rosenberry, first president of Madison Community Union. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

Madison was incorporated as a city in 1856, but just a year later, the United States economy went into a serious depression, and Madison was not immune.

“The ranks of the unemployed were swelled,” Mollenhoff wrote in *Formative Years*. “As early as the summer of 1857, ward and city ‘poor masters’ were appointed to distribute relief to those whose future was singularly unpromising. Funds for their support came from the city license fund, the principal source of which were liquor licenses. Supplementing city efforts to fight poverty was the Ladies Benevolent Association, a group of ‘Samaritan Ladies’ who raised money and supplies by holding ‘calico balls’ and ‘plain suppers.’”

Mollenhoff wrote that a decade later, in 1867, “the newly formed Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) conducted Madison’s first poverty survey and organized the city into districts so that food and financial relief could be more equitably and efficiently distributed.”

In his 1992 address, Mollenhoff noted, “By the time this [1867] survey was done, organizations, not individuals, had become the principal dispensers of charity. Among the dozens of organizations that dispensed charity in Madison were churches, fraternal lodges, factories, and even the WCTU [Women’s Christian Temperance Union]. Although this mode of delivery represented an intensification and refinement of the system, many needy people, especially if they were not a member of one of these organizations, fell through the cracks.”

In 1887, 20 years after the YMCA’s poverty survey in the city, the Madison Benevolent Society was established.

Its purpose, Mollenhoff wrote, “was to systemize poor relief and prevent promiscuous almsgiving.”<sup>2</sup>

The Madison Benevolent Society’s eight “general principles of poor relief

” seem in hindsight an incongruous mix of compassion and skepticism.

For instance, principle one states, “Promiscuous almsgiving fosters pauperism and ought to be stopped.” And principle two states, “In all benevolent work the open eye must accompany the helping hand.”

Conversely, consider principles four, five, and seven:

4. Real destitution and suffering must be relieved promptly with tact and tenderness.
5. We must remove the cause of distress, and help the poor to help themselves.
7. It is of supreme importance that any family, when reduced to want for the first time, be so treated that the spirit of independence shall be preserved and self-support secured as soon as possible.

The year the Madison Benevolent Society was founded (1887) was by coincidence the same year that a now-famous collaboration between five individuals in Colorado—including several clergy members and Mrs. Frances Jacobs, vice president of the Denver Ladies’ Relief Society—resulted in a united campaign that raised nearly \$22,000 for local charities.

Denver had seen its population rise from less than 5,000 in 1870 to 100,000 by 1887. In a program for the 50th anniversary of what was founded as the Charity Organization Society in Denver, the Denver Community Chest described what followed: “Many of its people were health seekers, some were wealth seekers who had lost their stakes in

search of gold and silver and a great many others unemployed ‘ soldiers of fortune’ who had come West because of the glamour that might be found. Denver was prosperous in many ways but these classes of people brought a serious charity and relief problem.”

The Charity Organization Society in Denver raised funds and coordinated the relief services of 22 agencies.

Today that collaboration is recognized as the beginning of the United Way. Yet in their book *Grassroots Initiatives Shape an International Movement: United Ways Since 1876*, authors Richard and Mary Lu Aft make the case that the movement should date to a decade earlier, in Boston, where in 1876 several agencies formed the first “social service exchange” to “prevent duplication in relief-giving.”

Regardless of the precise beginning, across the nation, a movement was afoot.<sup>3</sup>

In 1889—two years after the Madison Benevolent Society was founded—a second charitable organization formed in the city, one that endures today. Mollenhoff shared its anecdotal formation in both his *Formative Years* book and his 1992 United Way address.

“In 1889 in Madison twins were born to a family so poor they didn’t have rudimentary baby clothing,” Mollenhoff noted.

Elva and Mary Bryant, teenage daughters of prominent, forward-thinking Madisonian General Edwin E. Bryant,<sup>4</sup> heard about the new twins in the indigent family. The Bryant girls engaged their friends, and the group gifted the family baby clothes. The effort led to the realization that other families, with older children, were similarly in need. The girls

stepped up their assistance to the point of emptying their family attics of gently used clothing. By legend, General Bryant saw his daughters emerge from the attic with arms full of clothes and referred to them as “Attic Angels.” They embraced the name, and more than 130 years later, the Attic Angel Association survives as a women-led, volunteer-driven organization.

“The combination of the Madison Benevolent Society, Attic Angels, and many other charity organizations increased awareness of poverty in Madison,” Mollenhoff said, “but also made more obvious the need to take additional steps to improve charity administration.” Attic Angel Association would go on to partner with UWDC on the First Call for Help and later 211 information and referral service, what is now the most comprehensive health and human service database and helpline in the community.

In 1910, an organization called Associated Charities was established in Madison, drawing together some 10 charity groups in the city, whose population had grown to around 25,000. The effort was led by Peter Schram, a member of the Madison City Council, and it was the first consolidation of numerous providers under one umbrella.

“Under the tutelage of their full-time professional director and part-time social workers,” Mollenhoff noted, “Associated Charities ran four health clinics, a day nursery, a neighborhood house, an Italian civic center, and a family welfare department.”

In 1919, Associated Charities became the Public Welfare Association, and on October 16, 1921, a Sunday, the Wisconsin State Journal published an extraordinary full-page story under the headline “What

Welfare Association Is Doing.”

In the lead to his lengthy story, reporter Chester C. Platt noted it was being published “in order that Madison people may know better, and appreciate more heartily, an organization which quietly and without the flourish of trumpets, has been seeking to brighten various corners, in many places.”

A little further down, Platt wrote the following:<sup>5</sup>

Mrs. William Kittle, one of the founders of the Public Welfare Association, has given me five fundamental principles in accordance with which the association seeks to carry on its work:

1. It aims to be democratic.
2. It seeks to remove the causes of misfortune and make family life a self-supporting, self-respecting factor in the city.
3. It aims to have its principle activities carried on by trained social workers.
4. It is progressive, continually seeking new fields of usefulness, and turning over its established activities to the city or the state when broader service can be given.
5. It aims to give immediate care to all emergency cases of distress which arise in the city and are brought to its attention.

Later in the article, Platt asks Mrs. Kittle what a citizen should do if approached on the street by an indigent person looking for the price of a

meal, or if one knocks on the front door of a home with a similar request.

“It is a good thing,” she answered, “to immediately care for such a need, but one must remember that back of every such appeal is some cause, the analysis and treatment of which the untrained person is unable to give. Just as you would send a person suffering from symptoms of disease to a trained physician so one should send these victims of distress to socially trained workers at 22 North Hancock where the applicant’s need will be cared for.”<sup>6</sup>

For all its good work, the Public Welfare Association remained one charitable group among many. “The emergence of new charity organizations,” Mollenhoff noted, “and the continuation of several others that never worked with Associated Charities meant that Madison had about a dozen charity organizations conducting independent annual fund drives.”

This, Mollenhoff added, “was making charitable giving a year-round irritant to most Madisonians.”

A change was needed, and it was coming.

In the summer of 1921, some weeks before the lengthy article on the Public Welfare Association appeared in the Wisconsin State Journal, a Madison man named N. J. Frey attended a national meeting of community chest organizations to learn more and possibly suggest a community chest, or something similar, for Madison.

Frey was an executive with the Wisconsin Life Insurance Company and highly active in civic life, serving as an officer with the Association of



Commerce (now the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce) and as secretary for the Madison General Hospital Association.

According to a 1977 history published by United Way of America and titled *People and Events: A History of the United Way*,<sup>7</sup> the first “modern” community chest organization was created in Cleveland in 1913. Business leaders in Cleveland established a committee to review the needs and appeals of the city’s social service agencies. Donations would be pooled into a fund dedicated to improving life in the city.

As Richard and Mary Lu Aft noted in *Grassroots Initiatives*, the model was not without potential problems.

Debate between agency and business leaders about structure and procedures went on for nearly a year. Why would donors support a campaign that did not have the personal appeal the individual agencies possessed? How could donors continue to support agencies of particular meaning to family and friends? Debates ended as business leaders pressed for action. Finally, the first campaign of the Cleveland Federation of Charity and Philanthropy was conducted in 1913. It produced a net of \$33,715 for 53 agencies. Its success was so persuasive that the debate between agency and business leaders was lost in celebration.

According to “People and Events,” the Cleveland model’s success was in part due to recognizing the failings of earlier community-wide fund-raising initiatives, which didn’t include a public education component or allow donors to target donations if they desired. Cleveland set up a speakers’ bureau to help explain the new initiative and let contributors designate gift recipients.

Cleveland's success led municipalities across the country to follow suit. In 1919—two years before Madison's N. J. Frey attended the national meeting—39 cities in the United States had community chest organizations. By 1929, that number had swelled to 353 cities. A Capital Times newspaper headline in August 1922 stated Madison was the 100th city in the United States to have a community union.

Frey made his initial report to the Association of Commerce in Madison, and its board of directors appointed a committee to consider bringing the community chest idea to Madison. The committee's five men included Frey, Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice Marvin B. Rosenberry, and three others. The committee was subsequently enlarged and included several women, including Mrs. Kittle, one of the founders of the Public Welfare Association. Rosenberry was named chairman of the committee.

According to a later printed summary, "[T]his committee took under consideration the matter of consolidating the drives for the various social and charitable agencies of the city of Madison."

On December 13, 1921, a dinner was held at the Madison YMCA for about 150 people to "consider the matter" of consolidation, according to a story in that day's Capital Times. The article noted that Dr. Charles Parker Connolly, executive secretary of the Rockford Social Services Federation, would "address the meeting on the advantages of a consolidated budget for social and charitable agencies to a city the size of Madison."

As for the Madison committee's effort, The Capital Times noted the following:

This work, according to Judge Rosenberry, chairman of the committee, has been undertaken not for the purpose of diminishing the amount of funds to be raised, but with two main object[s] in view; first, to eliminate the duplication of effort on the part of the various agencies and to relieve the business men and citizens generally of repeated calls upon their time for canvassing and for considering the merits of the various appeals made to them; and second, to procure statements from the various agencies as to the purposes for which funds are expended and to consolidate the efforts of the agencies so that, so far as possible, duplication may be avoided.

“Two important revelations occurred at this time,” Zach Brandon, current president and CEO of the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce, said. “First, the business community recognized the power of the collective and that more could be accomplished together. The second was that to build up the humanity of a community is the surest way to build up the business of a community.”

Over the years, UWDC and the Chamber would continue to work together, most notably to bring together CEOs in “Civic Progress” sessions where business leaders would be educated about community issues. “A century later, the partnership between Greater Madison’s businesses, the Chamber, and the United Way is stronger than ever,” Brandon said.

More than any other individual, Justice Rosenberry was responsible for the city establishing the Madison Community Union. He chaired the committee that recommended Madison adopt the community chest model. The two-page summary of the Madison Community Union’s formation<sup>8</sup> was written by Rosenberry.

“The proceedings from this time on are a part of the records of the Community Union,” Rosenberry noted in the summary, “but the way in which the Community Union was brought into existence should be made a matter of record, in order that the same should not be, as it frequently is, misstated.”



Rosenberry’s large footprint in Madison is somewhat unusual because he arrived relatively late to the city, at age 48, with his appointment as a Supreme Court justice in 1916.

Rosenberry was born in an unincorporated community in Medina County, Ohio, called River Styx, after one of the rivers of the underworld in Greek mythology. The murky landscape of a nearby swamp purportedly inspired the name. On the community’s Wikipedia page, Marvin B. Rosenberry is the only “notable person” listed.

Rosenberry was born February 12, 1868, and was not averse to noting that he shared the birthday with Abraham Lincoln. In later newspaper interviews, he remembered earning 50 cents a day at age 10 by arriving early at school to start the schoolhouse stove fire and sweep up.

A Wisconsin State Journal profile of Rosenberry described how he came to Wisconsin as a teen: “When his father had an accident on the farm in Ohio, Marvin Rosenberry went to live with an uncle in Wausau.”

The uncle was an attorney in private practice. He encouraged the young Rosenberry to consider the law as a career, and he did, graduating from the University of Michigan Law School in 1893. However, a trip to the

state of Oregon on business for his uncle sold Rosenberry on Oregon as a place to live. He was planning to move to the Northwest when fate intervened. His uncle became ill, and Rosenberry returned to Wausau to look after the law office.

He eventually became city attorney in Wausau, and it was from that position that Governor Emanuel L. Philipp appointed Rosenberry to the Wisconsin Supreme Court to replace the retiring Justice John Barnes. Rosenberry was appointed on February 12, 1916—his birthday. He filled Barnes's term, which was up in 1919, and then won election to a 10-year term.

By then, Rosenberry had married, in 1918, Lois Carter Kimball Mathews, dean of women at the University of Wisconsin and a remarkably accomplished woman. A State Journal article said she was one of the first women to be given a doctorate at Harvard University “in history, political science and economics.” She was a published author, president of the National Association of University Women from 1917–1921, and one of the founders of the International Association of University Women.

Marvin Rosenberry won election to two more 10-year terms on the high court (in 1929 and 1939, respectively), finally retiring in 1950. His death in February 1958, at 90, prompted a topline front-page story in the State Journal. It referenced Rosenberry serving as the first president of the Madison Community Union in 1922, noting that he was “made honorary chairman of the United Givers' Fund when it was organized in 1950 to include national charities.”

UWDC later honored Marvin Rosenberry's large contribution with its

Rosenberry Society, individuals aged 40 and under who help inspire the next generation of leaders in Dane County by engaging in an assortment of social, philanthropic, volunteer, and professional development activities.



The March 1, 1922, articles of incorporation of the Madison Community Union stated that it would “have no capital stock” and was organized “exclusively for educational, benevolent, and charitable purposes.”

The articles further noted that the membership of the Madison Community Union would consist of “two representatives from each of the agencies making appeal to the general public for funds with which to support their work, and representatives of the contributors to the funds of any said agencies.”

The articles then listed the 14 agencies to be included under the initial Madison Community Union umbrella:

1. Anti-Tuberculosis Association
2. Attic Angels
3. Boy Scouts
4. Children’s Home Finding Society
5. Girls’ Club
6. General Hospital
7. Human Society
8. Methodist Hospital
9. Public Welfare Association
10. Red Cross

11. St. Mary's Hospital
12. Salvation Army
13. Y.M.C.A.
14. Y.W.C.A.

The two representatives from each of these agencies, along with a few ex officio representatives (including the mayor of Madison and president of the Association of Commerce), and five members of the general public would constitute the governing body of the corporation and be known as the central council. The public members would be chosen by a nominating committee of the other central council members.

**Officers**  
 Judge M. B. Rosenberry—  
 President  
 Mayor I. M. Kittleson—  
 Vice-President  
 Clayton W. Haswell—  
 Treasurer  
 Mrs. A. M. Frish—  
 Recording Secretary

## The Community Union

(Federation of 13 Philanthropies)  
 EDWARD D. LYNDE, Executive Secretary  
 Room 320-321  
 First Central Building  
 Phone Fairchild 2540  
 MADISON, WIS.

**Executive Committee**  
 Judge M. B. Rosenberry  
 Chairman  
 Mrs. C. B. Chapman  
 N. J. Frey  
 Mrs. Wm. Kittle  
 Rev. P. B. Knox  
 Leo Lunenschloss  
 Paul E. Stark

### FINANCE COMMITTEE

A. C. Larson  
 Chairman

F. G. Oetking  
 Mrs. E. E. Steensland  
 H. J. Leftsgordon  
 J. H. Brown

### BUDGET COMMITTEE

Judge E. Ray Stevens,  
 Chairman

Mrs. H. S. Richards  
 Miss Regina Groves  
 M. B. Olbrich  
 F. W. Karstens  
 R. H. Elwell

### CENTRAL COUNCIL

Anti-Tuberculosis  
 Dr. L. R. Head  
 Mrs. L. Lunenschloss

Attile Angels  
 Mrs. C. B. Chapman  
 Miss Elsa Pauerbach

### Boy Scouts

Louis Hirsig  
 Judge Rosenberry  
 Girls' Club

Mrs. A. M. Frish  
 Mrs. A. S. Goodyear

### General Hospital

N. J. Frey  
 E. J. B. Schubring  
 Humane Society

D. H. Sullivan  
 Wm. Buase

### Methodist Hospital

Rev. R. A. Chase  
 G. P. Extrom

### Public Welfare Ass'n

Mrs. Wm. Kittle  
 Miss Janet Davis

### Red Cross

Mrs. P. M. Hoyt  
 T. A. Coleman

### St. Mary's Hospital

Leo Lunenschloss  
 LeB. Crowley

### Salvation Army

Judge A. C. Hoppman  
 Clayton W. Haswell

### Y. M. C. A.

Dean F. E. Turnenura  
 F. O. Leiser

### Y. W. C. A.

Mrs. Louis Reber  
 Miss Jane Sherrill

### Members at Large

M. B. Olbrich  
 Rev. P. B. Knox  
 Mrs. Jos. Jastrow  
 A. M. Brayton  
 Wm. T. Evisse  
 Paul Stark

### Ex-officio Members

Mayor Kittleson  
 Chamber of Commerce

Emerson Els

Federation of Labor  
 F. H. McLain

### IMPORTANT

August 30, 1922.

An effort is being made this year to save the business men from the multiplicity of solicitations for charity to which they have been exposed.

To this end, the Community Union has been organized to raise the money for fourteen charitable agencies of Madison, all in one drive. None of these agencies (thirteen of which are listed in this letterhead) will make a separate appeal.

We desire if possible to spare business men also, a second solicitation at their homes during this drive. For that reason we are requesting you to list on the enclosed sheet, if you care to do so, the people connected with your institution, giving, if convenient, their home addresses. By a system of cross-indexing we will then endeavor to prevent these people from being solicited in their homes, making one solicitation only for the whole year for the charitable agencies of Madison.

If you care to send in such a list, it must reach us at once, if it is to be effective.

Very sincerely yours,

Edward D. Lynde,  
 Executive Secretary.

EDL/S

Original Madison Community Union Solicitation Letter, 1922. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.



Of the nine articles of incorporation, of particular note was Article 6, which dealt with money:

“Each agency shall prepare and submit to the budget committee [six members from the central council, no representatives of any participating agency] ... its proposed budget. The budget committee shall thereupon examine and analyze the same, but before making any recommendation, either of acceptance, rejection or modification, the agency submitting the budget shall be accorded a hearing. Final action on all budgets shall be taken after the recommendation of the budget committee has been submitted to the central council.”

Although the articles were adopted March 1, the leadership of the new Community Union was still selling the concept to the public—an important component of the success of the first community chest campaign in Cleveland in 1913.

On March 10, 1922, just 10 days after the Community Union was incorporated, Marvin Rosenberry made a presentation at the Girls Club encouraging them to participate as a Union agency. The next day's Capital Times reported, “The directors unanimously voted to join the Union.”<sup>9</sup>

Ten days after he addressed the Girls Club, Rosenberry spoke at the weekly meeting of the Kiwanis Club of Downtown Madison, again explaining the Community Union concept and detailing the work done by the local organizers starting in late 1921.

“This plan,” Rosenberry said, “has worked in all but one of the cities in the United States in which it has been tried, and it is my opinion that

public opinion here in Madison will force organizations into the Community Union. If an organization has a worthy cause, it will be helped.”

**If an organization has a worthy cause, it  
will be helped.**

A preliminary meeting of the central council was held April 20, 1922, in Room A of the YMCA, and then the first regular meeting was six days later, April 26, in the same locale. Justice Rosenberry, as chairman of the organizing committee, called both the preliminary and first meetings to order. A few historically prominent Madison names on the council, among others, were as follows:

- Paul E. Stark, founder of an enduring Madison real estate firm and one of two representatives from the YMCA
- William T. Evjue, founder of The Capital Times newspaper and a citizen member
- Michael Olbrich, founder (with Stark) of the Madison Parks Foundation and, like Evjue, a citizen member.

Rosenberry was aboard as a representative of the Boy Scouts.

It was in the April 26 meeting that the nominating committee selected Rosenberry as the Madison Community Union’s first president.

From March to July of 1922, the central council worked hard and fast to

mount a fund drive projected for fall. At a July 26 meeting of the central council in Room A of the YMCA—just the fourth meeting overall— the campaign goal for the finance committee was set at \$90,000, after a motion to leave the amount unstated until a final report from the budget committee (which weighed the monetary requests of the 14 participating agencies) was defeated.

On August 8, a front-page State Journal article let its readers know the new Community Union had moved into offices in the downtown First Central Building, itself a new structure with three merged banks as the core tenant.<sup>10</sup> The Community Union would have two rooms in the new building, and Edward P. Lynde, formerly the executive secretary of the Wisconsin State Conference of Social Work, would serve as executive secretary.

Lynde was quoted by the State Journal explaining the mission of the Community Union:

There are two ideas that we would like to put across to the people at the beginning. The first is that instead of the numerous drives, tag days and solicitations from different organizations of the city, there will now only be one appeal from this central organization.



*Several of the first Community Union officers. Newspaper clipping from Wisconsin State Journal, 10 Sep 1922, Sun.*

That does not mean, however, that the Community Union is to manage the affairs of the different organizations. It is simply to manage the financial end of them.

The other is that anyone who wishes to do so may designate to which organization a contribution may go, or he may designate simply to the general fund which is then divided among the members of the union.

The Madison drive was slated for September 26–28, 1922, when 800 volunteers equipped with prospect cards for every homeowner and apartment dweller (as well as the names of others living at that address) would begin knocking on doors.

In the days leading up to the drive, numerous stories and short reminders were published in both the Wisconsin State Journal and The Capital Times.<sup>11</sup>

On September 10, the State Journal ran a long story previewing the upcoming drive, which included photos of several Community Union

officers, Rosenberry among them. Two days later, The Capital Times published a similar story, noting that the drive's slogan was "over the top in two days," meaning it could be wrapped up without the need of the scheduled third day. The story mentioned that in the coming days local merchants would display exhibits highlighting the work of Community Union agencies.

On the evening of September 22, the Community Union's central council met at the Monona Hotel. Thirty-two members of the council—the Community Union's governing body—were in attendance. A full one-third of them were women, although in the tradition of the time, they were identified in the meeting minutes by their husbands' names (e.g., "Mrs. C. B. Chapman") or, if they were not married, simply as "Miss Sherrill" or "Miss Groves."

At the meeting, President Rosenberry gave each attendee a copy of the recommendations of the budget committee. The rough goal of the pending three-day fundraiser had been set at \$90,000. The exact figure needed<sup>12</sup> came in at \$87,358. The largest allocation was to the YMCA: \$15,569. Next was the Madison Public Welfare Association at \$15,411.50, and then the YWCA with a \$10,017.56 budget.

On September 23, just a few days before the drive, the State Journal donated an entire newspaper page for an advertisement that was headlined "14 – 1 = 13 Saved."

The rest of the copy explained the "one drive" concept and listed the participating 14 Community Union agencies, noting that donors could, if desired, designate which agency would receive the donation. Supporting even one favorite cause would ultimately "save" 13 others

and save the donor's time!

At the bottom, in all caps, was this: "GREET THE SOLICITORS WITH A SMILE AND A CHECK WHEN THEY CALL ON YOU NEXT TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY OR THURSDAY TO ASK FOR A CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMUNITY UNION FUND."

On September 25, the day before the drive would begin, there was one last front-page article in the Wisconsin State Journal.

The headline read, "Madison Ready for Community U. Drive: Several Hundred Workers Will Begin Three Day Canvass [sic] Tuesday to Raise \$87,000 for 14 Agencies."

The story began, "Everything is in place for the biggest charitable and social agency drive ever held in Madison." It went on to note that the city had been divided into 15 districts, with a "general" in charge of each. A final informational session and rally was scheduled for 7 p.m. at the Beavers Insurance Building downtown<sup>13</sup> where volunteers would also be able to get free meals during the three-day drive.

Perhaps the most interesting note in this last pre-drive news story came from Executive Secretary Edward Lynde, who said the \$87,000 stated goal of the campaign would save Madison contributors \$63,000, as the original budget requests from the 14 agencies totaled \$150,000.

"This big savings was made without impairing the work of the organization in any way," Lynde said. "The union is coordinating the work of the various agencies and eliminating duplication."

Optimism was in the air. The slogan "over the top in two days" from

earlier in September, suggesting the planned three-day solicitation might not be necessary, was too optimistic as it turned out.

The drive began as scheduled September 26. But 36 hours into the drive, or roughly halfway, a total of \$26,972.18 had been raised.

There was a meeting of volunteers at noon on September 27 at the Beavers Insurance Building. The Reverend P. B. Knox, rector of St. Patrick's Church, spoke at the gathering: "The enthusiasm of the workers at this meeting today assures the success of the drive," Knox said. "Madison has not fallen short [on] drives in the past and it is not going to do it now."

A front-page State Journal editorial that day, however, noted that halfway in, the Community Union was less than one-third of its way to the stated goal of roughly \$87,000. "The facts must be faced," the State Journal noted. "Not all Madison businessmen are giving the Union back equal to the aggregate of the backing they gave the separate organizations with separate drives."

In hindsight, it certainly figured that a new concept, even one with the widespread support of the Community Union, might take some time to completely find its footing.

A particularly astute editorial appeared in The Capital Times on September 28, the last scheduled day of the fundraising drive. It made the case for Madison as an innovative leader—a mantle UWDC has embraced now for a full century—in its approach to not just charitable fundraising but its community impact.

Attempts have been made to federate budgets, but the wider social

aspects of the movement have been more emphasized in the plan presented to the city of Madison than in any other proposed in the state, of which we have knowledge. The eyes of the state are upon us and we cannot afford to fail in this effort. Not only is the welfare of this community at stake but the success of this movement will result in similar efforts elsewhere, all the to the great common good.

When the three-day Community Union campaign ended on the evening of September 28, it was \$24,000 short of the \$87,000 goal, and an announcement was made that fundraising would continue into Saturday, September 30. Several more thousand dollars were raised, still short of the goal, but good enough all told for the October 1 front-page State Journal headline to read “First Campaign of Community Union [a] Success.”

**Not only is the welfare of this community at stake but the success of this movement will result in similar efforts elsewhere, all the to the great common good.**

The story noted that the total \$67,674 raised was nearly three-quarters of the way to the final goal and that the total budget of \$87,000 should be “easily attainable” as less organized efforts continued in the weeks to come.

“The great throng of [volunteer] workers,” the State Journal noted, “disbanded Saturday night, tired, but happy.”



The Community Union president, Judge Rosenberry, wrote a guest column in the State Journal thanking the city for its support, noting that 6,743 people had contributed to the Community Union, 53 of them giving \$100 or more.

The generally enthusiastic reaction in Madison was not universally shared in other cities that held similar drives. At year's end, on December 30, the State Journal published an editorial titled "Organized Charity" that noted a prominent voice in California had recently come out against coordinated community giving: "The Los Angeles Times expressed the opinion that, by making a business matter of charity, the community budget idea destroys the spirit of charity, which, of course, is real charity itself."

The State Journal editorial continued, "A copy of the Los Angeles Times editorial has been sent to this desk. It might do harm were it generally circulated, and unanswered. The answer is the history of the Madison Community Union."

The State Journal editorial suggested Madison's first-year experience should be a model for others:

The old community chest was originally an organization of givers, a sort of clearing house for charity in which prudence rather than generosity was stressed. It was not a human thing, but sort of a community cash register as insensible to human appeal as was the old-fashioned poorhouse.

The Madison Community Union is built up about the city's social agencies. Their workers are its workers. Their ideas are its ideas. Their

passion for humane service dominates it.... The test of how this worked out could have been ascertained by anyone attending any of the meetings held during the last budget campaign. The thing was done in a business-like way, but business was not its inspiration. The milk of human kindness flowed throughout its proceedings.

With this, the State Journal was declaring Madison a leader in the incipient movement of creating community charitable organizations.

The immense effort of many people had made 1922, the Community Union's first year, a success worth emulating. Within a few years, Judge Rosenberry would step down as president. But among the Community Union's new leaders were names that would resonate in Madison into the next century.

- 
1. Rosenberry eventually became the chief justice of Wisconsin's Supreme Court.
  2. Alms is a historic term referencing donations to the poor.
  3. The Afts did acknowledge the historical importance of Denver's initiative: "Their need for money to support the philanthropic enterprises led them to create a fundraising campaign that would come to be replicated time and again. Their leadership united their community in a way that had never before been done. Their example did far more than raise money. It demonstrated a way for caring people to reach beyond single agency interests to unite their compassion on behalf of their entire community.... The power of Denver's pioneering example was to be replicated in cities throughout the United States, Canada, and 41 countries around the world."
  4. Earlier in the decade, Bryant had helped organize a convention on women's suffrage in Madison.
  5. Original newspaper article excerpt from October 16, 1921.
  6. The address was The Welfare House, a gift to the city from Mrs William F Vilas.
  7. Alexandria, VA: United Way of America, 1977. xvi + 268 pp. Illustrations, tables, notes and index.
  8. Included with the detailed minutes of meetings that began in March 1922.
  9. It's worth noting that the Girls Club was included as a participating agency in the March 1 articles of incorporation, prior to the March 10 directors' vote. Presumably, the 14 named

agencies were those the Community Union hoped would participate. All eventually did.

10. The site is currently occupied by what is known as Madison's "glass bank," at 1 S. Pinckney St.
11. At a meeting of the Community Union central council in October, with the first drive completed, Justice Rosenberry authored a resolution sending "cordial thanks and hearty appreciation" to the two newspapers "for the hearty, enthusiastic and effective support which they have given to the Community Union since its inception."
12. Arrived at by totalling the 14 separate agency budget allocations along with a contingency and expense fund.
13. Located at what is now the corner of East Doty Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.



## CHAPTER 2

# DEPRESSION, WAR, AND REMARKABLE RESILIENCE

**A**t a February 8, 1926, meeting of the Community Union's central council at the Hotel Loraine, just off Madison's Capitol Square, real estate executive Paul E. Stark was elected the organization's second president, succeeding Judge Marvin Rosenberry.

That evening, Rosenberry offered an optimistic assessment of the Community Union going forward:

"I don't believe there is another city of its size in the United States with a more intelligent program of this kind. I believe in the Community Union and believe it will grow into the life of the city and become a part of it.

"This year," Rosenberry continued, "we have met with a more cordial and intelligent reception than ever before. That alone makes the outlook

for the coming year more encouraging.”

The incoming president’s remarks were proforma. “I accept the office with the promise that I will do the very best that I can to further the purposes of the union,” Stark said.

Although long oration apparently wasn’t one of Paul Stark’s strong suits, no matter, he had others.



Soon after Paul Stark’s birth in Centralia, Indiana, his family moved to Hastings, Nebraska, where his father, A. C. Stark, took a position as a pastor of the Presbyterian church. Stark went through high school in Hastings and spent one year at Hastings College before moving again with his family, this time to Madison, in 1904. His father was pastor of the Presbyterian church on Webster Street across from the Madison police station. Stark attended the University of Wisconsin–Madison.



*Paul E Stark, the second Community Union president. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

After graduation, he taught school for a year in Antigo, Wisconsin. He explained in a later newspaper interview that he was “trying to get enough money together to enter law school.” In another interview, Stark reiterated that as a young man he wanted to be a lawyer, but “I got my feet caught in a real estate deal with my father and never have been able to pull myself out.”

His father had left the clergy in 1908 “and persuaded Paul,” according to a newspaper story, “to aid him in a large western land deal.”

Together they formed the Stark Land Co., and Stark attended real estate

classes at night. His first real estate office was on the second floor of a building on East Main Street downtown: one small room, heated by a coal stove. The \$10 rent included stenographer service. There was a desk and two chairs—“one for me,” Stark recalled wryly, many years later, “and one for my client.” Their first month’s gross profits were just \$17, but that picked up to \$145 by their fourth month.

In 1912, Stark and John S. Main spearheaded the formation of the Madison Real Estate Board. They flipped a coin to see who would be the organization’s first president, and Main won. Stark assumed the role in year two.

In 1915, Stark married Julia Polk—they would have five children together—and in 1921, Stark reorganized the family real estate business under the Paul E. Stark Co. name. He was five years away from assuming the presidency of the Madison Community Union but had already embarked on a distinguished career that would include leading the city’s annexation of the Nakoma neighborhood in 1932<sup>1</sup> and serving as president of the National Association of Real Estate Boards in 1937. In the early 1940s, Stark helped UW–Madison initiate a real estate program, one of the nation’s first, under the leadership of Richard U. Ratcliff, a Madison native who worked for Stark’s real estate company after graduating from UW–Madison. Today the program is the Department of Real Estate and Urban Land Economics.

Currently in Madison, Stark Company Realtors remains a leader in real estate, and the company president, Dave Stark, has served on and chaired the UWDC Board, with his term ending in 2016—90 years after his grandfather assumed the role of president of the Madison Community Union.

When Paul Stark died in 1945, at age 61, former Madison mayor James R. Law, who held the office from 1932–43, sent a letter to the State Journal in tribute to Paul Stark:

“When I had the honor of serving the people of Madison as mayor,” Law wrote, “I was constantly aware of the public-spirited attitude of its citizens and their ever readiness to give freely of their time and talents for the general welfare of the community. Paul Stark was one of the outstanding leaders of this group.”



Another outstanding leader was Emil J. Frautschi, who in 1926, Paul Stark’s first year of Community Union presidency, served as chairman of the fundraising campaign.

“It was Emil who set the template for success and service,” wrote Madison historian Stuart “Stu” Levitan in a 2013 Isthmus article on the extended Frautschi family, whom the paper described as Madison’s “most influential family.”

Emil’s father, Christian Frautschi, the son of a Swiss farming family, emigrated to Sauk County (where an uncle had settled) in 1866, purchasing a cabinet- and coffin-making business in downtown Madison three years later. Emil—born 1871—was the first child of 11, after Christian married Elizabeth Kunz. Emil eventually co founded a fuel company, and then when his father died, in 1912, Emil took leadership of the family business—including a funeral home and furniture store— as well.





*Emil J. Frautshi, 1926 Community Union campaign chair. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

Emil's chairing the 1926 Community Union campaign was an early example of civic engagement that spanned generations in the Frautschi family. Emil listed "community service" as his favorite pastime on a Rotary questionnaire and later explained his mindset:

"I made up my mind years ago that my hometown was entitled to two or three hours of my services a day. I know but Madison. It is my home, the home of my father, the home of my boys, and it is little enough that I can give some of my time in an endeavor to make it a good place for everyone."

Emil's son Walter Frautschi chaired the Community Union campaign in 1936, as did Walter's son, Jerry Frautschi, decades later, for UWDC. The staggering scope of Jerry Frautschi's philanthropy came to include a gift of more than \$200 million to create the Overture Center for the Arts near Madison's Capitol Square.

Yet, as related briefly earlier in this narrative, it may have been Jerry's uncle—Walter's younger brother—who left the biggest mark on the Community Union movement in Madison and, indeed, across the country. Lowell Frautschi's 1946 credo expressing the core principles of the Madison Community Union, including that it should be “an integrating force” in the community, was presented at a dinner and then published in the Wisconsin State Journal and in the November 1946 issue of *Community*, the magazine of Community Chests and Councils.

In their *Grassroots Initiatives* book, Richard and Mary Lu Aft noted, “Little did [Lowell Frautschi] know that his statement would form the basis of generations of Codes of Ethics” for United Ways and their predecessors across the country.

The Afts wrote, “[Frautschi's] belief that the Community Chest and Council [Community Union] in his community ‘should be concerned with the welfare of every individual and the total community’ became the basis of credos adopted in other communities and by Community Chests and Councils of America.”

The 1926 Madison Community Union campaign—with Paul Stark as president and Emil Frautschi as chairman—raised \$96,155, and more than 10,000 people donated.

Two years later, Frautschi was elected president of the Community Union, and the chairman of the campaign was another soon-to-be-celebrated figure in the Madison landscape: Oscar Rennebohm.



Rennebohm was a Columbia County native who graduated from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 1911. The following year, he founded Rennebohm Drug Stores, which, over the next 75 years, came to number more than two dozen. It was the go-to place for Madisonians for everything from drug prescriptions to the beloved grilled Danish served at its lunch counters.

Rennebohm was elected lieutenant governor of Wisconsin in 1945 and shortly after became governor, following the death of Governor Walter Goodland. Rennebohm then won election in 1948.

The next year—1949—he founded the Oscar Rennebohm Foundation, which seven decades on, continues to invest in Madison, including partnerships with UWDC, such as an early childhood initiative launched in 2016.

In summer 1928, with the Madison Community Drive a couple months away, the Wisconsin State Journal published an editorial nominating Rennebohm for the “Hall of Fame,” listing the following reasons:

“Because he is one of Madison’s busy businessmen who is not too busy to lend a hand to the social welfare of his community; because in former years he has played an active role in the Community Union drive for funds; because he was selected to be chairman of the campaign this year;

and because his leadership will do much to assure the success of the drive.”

And it was indeed successful—\$101,925 was raised.



Nationally, as the decade drew to a close—a decade known as the Roaring Twenties—the economic boom collapsed with the stock market crash of October 1929 that triggered a decade-long depression.

The 1977 book *People and Places: A History of the United Way* noted the following:

The Depression was an economic disaster without parallel in United States history. By 1930 there were more than 3 million unemployed; by 1933 the number would rise to between 12 and 15 million. Eventually about one third of the population would be unemployed and receiving relief of one kind or another...

But while fear and despair stalked through the land, there rose against them men and women of compassion, courage and determination who went into action. Prominent among them were agency leaders, lay and professional, who constituted a resource of experience, know-how and compassion with which to help meet human distress... The first take of local Chests and Councils was to reorient both philosophy and goals for service. Chests added the problem of relief to their agenda...

In Madison, the 1930 and 1931 Community Union campaigns were successful with \$112,000 raised in 1930 and \$120,000 the following year. By 1932, a harsher reality set in. The goal was more modest at \$92,000,

yet the amount raised—\$75,000—still fell short.

On April 28, 1932, the Madison Community Union held its 10th anniversary banquet at the Hotel Loraine downtown with some 400 attendees. Speakers included Justice Marvin Rosenberry—so crucial to the organization’s launch a decade earlier—and Howland Haynes, identified by the Wisconsin State Journal as “President [Herbert] Hoover’s secretary of the committee on employment.”

Rosenberry spoke of how even after 10 years, the Community Union still faced criticism from people who, according to Rosenberry, didn’t recall the “former wasteful and extravagant way of raising money” with multiple, often competing, campaigns.

Rosenberry noted how the Community Union had grown from 900 donors in 1922 to 11,000 contributors by 1932. Over that decade, in excess of \$985,000 was raised. The Community Union, he added, “has, in fact, decreased the cost of raising funds from about 15 percent of the amount raised to less than 3 percent.”

Rosenberry continued, “My appeal to you is not in behalf of the community but in behalf of the boys and girls, the young men and young women, the sick and disabled, the hopeless and despairing. That spirit of neighborliness, kindness and good will which more truly adorns us as a city than our lakes, temples and boulevards will impel us to carry on even though we are obliged to overcome difficulties and endure hardships.”

He concluded, “To abandon the program of social welfare work is to commit civic suicide.”

Haynes, from Hoover's administration, spoke of the national financial crisis, comparing it to the country's first economic collapse in 1819–21.

Haynes said organizations like the Community Union were more critical than ever and would be for the foreseeable future. "It [the Community Union] is not just a hobby," Haynes said, "but one of the bulwarks to save the most precious things in our civilization."

Madison's Community Union made great strides in its first decade. Among its accomplishments, in the period from 1922–32:

- Development of a social service exchange (i.e., case record index used by public and private agencies to prevent a duplication in service)
- Establishment of the Neighborhood House as a unit independent of the Family Welfare Association, which serves as an educational and social center for hundreds of Madison's citizens
- Organization of a Girl Scouts program
- Transfer of the illegitimacy program of the Juvenile Protective Association to the county (on October 1, 1931)
- Growth of the bedside nursing service from one to five nurses
- Free legal service made possible at the Legal Aid Bureau through the cooperation of the Dane County Bar Association and the University of Wisconsin Law School

- Growth, under the Visiting Nurse Association, of Child Health Centers from one (in 1927) to six (in 1932)
- Transfer of Tuberculosis Clinics from the Visiting Nurse Association to the Board of Health
- Formation of coordinating councils representing family and child welfare, health, and recreation to promote cooperation and understanding between public and private agencies
- Organization of a committee on employment that led to the Board of Employment sponsoring Man-A-Block and other projects to increase employment
- Creation of a county tuberculosis sanatorium due to an education movement sponsored by a citizens' committee

Yet as the 1930s progressed and the national economy struggled to recover, the Madison Community Union grappled with fallout from the Depression. The 1934 fundraising campaign hit a new low with just \$62,538 raised. The following year wasn't much better (\$65,804), leading campaign chairman Walter Frautschi to write an open letter to all Community Union volunteers in September 1936. It was titled "Madison Can't Forget: It's Up to Us."

Frautschi wrote the following:

The secret of selling the Community Union is humanizing [italics added] it – in translating the actual work with individuals into such terms that the giver has a personal and sympathetic understanding of it. I only wish it were possible for every Madison citizen to have some

positive contact with the agency. Then certainly we would not lack for adequate financial support.

This being impossible, we must depend upon the salesmanship of our volunteer workers. I beg of you all to perfect yourself in knowledge of the agencies and their activities, and then by your enthusiasm [*italics added*] and personal interest [*italics added*] make possible larger gifts than we have had before.

Slowly, both the national economy and the Madison Community Union fund drive began to rebound. In 1936—the year of Frautschi’s letter—\$74,641 was raised. Over the next several years, the total grew larger. With \$97,537 raised in 1940, campaign chairman Joseph R. Rothschild set 1941’s goal in the six figures (\$100,729) for the first time since 1931. And the goal was exceeded; \$101,025 was raised.

The success of the 1941 campaign led Rothschild to issue a report praising the volunteer efforts and offering a few suggestions going forward.

Rothschild noted, “When over 800 volunteer chairmen, solicitors, speakers, auditors, etc., set aside several weeks to plan and conduct a campaign which obtains 18,677 gifts totaling \$101,025, you have evidence that the citizens of Madison have heeded to the 1941 slogan, ‘We must care for our own.’”

Among Rothschild’s suggestions for the future? Developing a more sophisticated training program for volunteer solicitors, and continuing to stress a plan offering deferred subscriptions rather than out-of-pocket gifts.



In late 1941, the Community Union also issued a second report, offering a partial list of the projects undertaken by the organization in its decade. Community Union President Frederick Sarles Brandenburg said the following:

Obviously, it is impossible to give adequate thanks to the thousands of citizens who have given without stint of their time and money. As we round out the twentieth year, due credit must be given the active sponsorship of Marvin B. Rosenberry, who unselfishly served as president for the first four years. Ten years ago, during a period of depression and social stress, Judge Rosenberry gave a ten-year summary at the Community Union annual meeting. Now, after another decade the Community Union will receive a twenty-year report of its progress and pay honor to Justice Rosenberry for his contribution.

The partial list of Community Union accomplishments and projects, 1932–41, was as follows:

- Increase from 8,329 members and subscribers to 18,700
- Increase in the financial support from the low point of \$62,358 (in 1934) to \$101,025 (in 1941)
- Addition of one agency to the Community Union: Volunteers of America
- Consolidation of the Juvenile Protective Association and the Madison Public Welfare Association into the Family Welfare and Children's Service Association
- Consolidation of the Service Shop and the Volunteers of

## America industrial department

- Development of central housing arrangements for six agencies in the Cantwell Building (at 121 South Pinckney Street)
- Coordinating Council activities in three fields:
  - Health Council—forum meetings on immunization, group hospitalization, and the health of preschool children
  - Family-Child Council—delinquency survey sponsored and child welfare services in Dane County studied
  - Recreation Council—discussions on camping needs of low-income families, value of community recreation centers in school buildings, etc.
- Active participation in gathering data for a survey of Madison's housing needs and the necessity for a local housing authority
- Expansion of the community gardening program to provide vegetable gardens for an average of 300 families
- Operation of a campership fund<sup>2</sup>
- Cooperation with the Wisconsin Welfare Council in drafting a state welfare law
- Sponsorship of a holiday exchange to eliminate duplication in Christmas giving
- Creation of the Juvenile Exchange for central indexing of members

Of course, all through 1941, the war in Europe loomed. In February of that year, the United Services Organizations (USO) was established by six agencies: YMCA, YWCA, National Catholic Community Service, The Salvation Army, Jewish Welfare Board, and National Travelers Aid Association.

In a June 8 letter released to the news media, President Franklin D. Roosevelt stressed that fundraising for the USO should not negate support for local charitable groups.

“To assure the maximum strength of the entire nation,” Roosevelt wrote, “adequate support of the regular welfare and charitable services through Community Chests is even more important in time of national emergency than in normal times.”

By coincidence or not, just five days later, on June 13, 1941, Wisconsin State Journal editor Roy L. Matson addressed the subject in a column:

“Has anybody thought,” Matson wrote, “of reviving the old War Chest idea of the last emergency [WWI] and letting all these organizations [USO, Red Cross, Community Chests (Unions)] tell their stories at once – one collection, one campaign. That makes it simpler, less painful, faster, more efficient, and more effective.”

If the president and the country were not feeling a pending sense of national emergency in June 1941, six months later, the emergency was clear and present. The bombing of Pearl Harbor and the entrance of the United States into the war brought the kind of fundraising coalition Matson suggested to the forefront.

In April 1942, Madison mayor James Law, in his role as co chair of the

Dane County Civil Defense Council, called a meeting of around 30 community leaders at City Hall to discuss the War Chest idea. The proposal, which was adopted, called for combining the 16 recipient Community Union agencies with 12 war-connected organizations. To no one's surprise, Justice Marvin Rosenberry was selected as honorary chairman of the Madison War Chest. Community Union president Frank Ross was named chairman.

As they had done with the first Community Union drive two decades earlier, the War Chest organizers had to sell the concept to both their volunteers and the public at large. A two-page flyer was prepared to help, with "frank answers to the questions every citizen has a right to ask."

Question 1 was "What is the War Chest?"

Answer: "It is the one official Madison fundraising campaign for USO, war relief, aid to the armed forces, and local needs. This is a four-way drive to support 27 agencies."<sup>3</sup>

The last question spoke to the importance of not neglecting the traditional social service needs in time of war: "Why must local agencies be supported these days when so many people are working?"

Answer: "Because, more than ever, these agencies are needed to fight disease, family breakdown, delinquency – all the morale-undermining enemies the 16 Community Union health, welfare, and youth agencies are constantly battling. We must not have a repetition of the 1918 flu epidemic which almost broke down our home front – nor must we ignore the experience of war time England with its 50 percent increase in juvenile delinquency."

The Madison War Chest's first executive committee contained two people of particular note: Mary Garner and Joseph "Joe" Ford. Garner was the only woman on the executive committee and a trailblazing female civic leader, while Ford was chosen as chairman of the initial War Chest fund-raising campaign in summer 1942.



# Madison War Chest Rally

INAUGURATING THE 1942-43 WAR CHEST CAMPAIGN

Held at

Central High School Auditorium

Madison, Wisconsin

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1942

7:30 P. M.

*Cover of 1942 Madison War Chest Rally Program. Photo from United Way of Dane*



Mary Garner was born Mary Parent and raised on a small farm near Harvard, Illinois, as one of eight siblings. She went to school across the state line in Sharon, Wisconsin, and later described that experience as frightening:

“I think that walking up the steps to that school all alone on the first day took more courage than anything else I’ve done.”

After high school, she enrolled at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. She worked as a secretary at a local law firm to defray costs and thought about becoming a lawyer. But just a year after graduating, she married Harrison L. Garner, and they started a family. Harrison Garner would serve 35 years on the Madison City Council. Mary Garner’s list of civic engagements was long and varied and included serving on the state board of public welfare. In addition, she was president of the Madison League of Women Voters, executive director of Badger Girls State, chairman of the Madison Women’s Crusade, president of both the Madison and Wisconsin American Legion Auxiliary, vice president of the Madison Community Union, and, as noted, a member of the executive committee of the Madison War Chest.

A 1946 profile of Mary Garner in the Wisconsin State Journal declared, “She undertakes civic responsibilities not from boredom or egotism but from an almost Quaker-like concept of service. She regards her work, lovingly, as a duty.”

Garner herself said, “I have a very deep feeling that in our education

process we have neglected to teach children that they owe a responsibility to the community in which they live. We're inclined to grow up and feel our government owes us everything. We never stop to ask: Do we owe anything? We just don't teach our children to be good citizens."

Joe Ford was an invaluable part in marking the War Chest a success. An article published in December 1942—after the conclusion of the first War Chest fund drive in Madison—quoted War Chest president Frank Ross on the importance of picking a campaign chairman: "Selection of a chairman to handle a campaign of this size was a big responsibility because top leadership was essential in rallying all community forces. The happy selection of Joseph C. Ford enlisted full support of labor, business and management."





*Mary Garner, engaged and active citizen of Madison. Newspaper clipping from Wisconsin State Journal, 20 Jan 1946, Sun.*

Originally from Ohio, Ford received an electrical engineering degree from Cornell University and was working for General Electric in Chicago when a trip to Madison convinced Ford it was the city for him.

“I decided Madison was the ideal size and type of city in which to live,” Ford said in a 1942 Wisconsin State Journal interview. “It’s one of the finest and most beautiful cities in the United States.”

He was offered a management position with the French Battery Co. (predecessor of RAYOVAC®) in 1914 and stayed with the company until founding Celon Co. in 1925, a manufacturer of plastic seals for bottles.

Ford was active in the Community Union for several years, which led to his chairmanship of the first War Chest drive.

In a guest State Journal editorial on September 20, 1942, Ford wrote, “The War Chest committee of Madison labor, professional, business, school, religious and civic leaders, after careful study of each organization’s need, set the War Chest goal at \$400,000... The campaign will be held Oct. 11–21.”

It was an ambitious goal, to say the least.

For their Grassroots Initiatives book on United Way history, Richard and Mary Lu Aft corresponded with Carl Warmington, who served as secretary for the first War Chest campaign in Madison in 1942.

Warmington recalled Ford telling the executive committee, “I’m convinced the goal should be four times last year’s because we have four times the needs. The goal must be \$400,000.”

Warmington remarked “what seemed a long silence” followed. Then Justice Rosenberry, the War Chest honorary chairman, spoke.

“Joe, this is an enormous challenge,” Rosenberry said. “But if you think

you can do it, I'm for you. I will make the motion to set the 1942 Madison War Chest goal at \$400,000."

Warmington remembered being stunned—it was a 300 percent increase from the 1941 goal of \$100,000. But Ford was adamant. Warmington recalled him telling union leaders, "Your firm is getting war contracts and you'll be working plenty of overtime. I'm prepared to go to your management and get you a five-cent-an-hour increase with two cents to be pledged to the War Chest."

Ford's appeal appeared to especially bear fruit at his old company, now called RAYOVAC®.

A December 1942 State Journal article on the campaign commented, "Tremendous impetus was given the campaign by an early report from the Ray-O-Vac Federal Union No. 19587 when Alfred Brietzke, union president, announced that members had subscribed \$40,000 on a payroll deduction plan. Further support of the weekly subscription plan was given by 30 Madison AFL and CIO unions."



1940s Madison War Chest Goal Sheet. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.

Warmington expounded on Ford's deal and how Madison accepted the War Chest campaign:



Organized labor had not been strong supporters of the Community Union campaigns. Industrial employees frequently made out of pocket contributions, averaging less than a dollar per employee... However, with the war time acceptance of payroll deductions by many business and industrial firms and vigorous endorsement by labor's leadership, the employees of a number of firms contributed 25 cents per week through payroll deduction – a most important development in the campaign's success.

Madison provided a perfect climate for the War Chest campaign. Competing campaigns and solicitations were virtually eliminated; building campaigns were postponed, tag days and benefits discouraged. Volunteers responded to work for the War Chest.

In the end, Madison met its lofty goal. A December 31 front-page State Journal headline read, "War Chest Rated First in U.S. as Madison Pledges \$404,569."<sup>4</sup>

The story began, "The Madison War Chest won top place in a national ranking of over 500 community war chest campaigns in the percent of increase over last year, according to an official report [from] the national association of Community Chests and Councils."

A jubilant Joe Ford praised the citizens of Madison. "It was the generosity of the 28,000 subscribers which made our effort successful," Ford said. "We must not lose sight of the grand job the givers did in donating this sum."

Madison War Chest president Frank Ross thought it boded well for the city's future.

“This campaign has done more than raise money,” Ross announced. “It has been a powerful unifying force in welding together diverse groups which we hope will last, not only during the war emergency, but in peace time as well.”

The 1942 War Chest drive may have been the first time UWDC and its predecessors set the bar for accomplishment nationally. But it would not be the last.

- 
1. Providing desperately needed tax dollars during the Depression.
  2. Whereby 150 children were sent to camp in 1941 and 300 will be funded in 1942.
  3. Other reports at this time suggested a total of 28 to 30 agencies.
  4. The final official amount was \$412,400.



## CHAPTER 3

# NEW NAMES – RED FEATHER, UNITED GIVERS' FUND, AND UNITED COMMUNITY CHEST – AND A NEW ATWOOD AVENUE HOME

Throughout the war years, Madison continued to hold vastly successful War Chest campaigns. The goal was the same each year: \$400,000. In 1943, it was once again achieved, with a total of \$402,240 raised.

The year 1943 also brought to the forefront a volunteer whose name has already been mentioned: Lowell Frautschi. It was Frautschi's credo regarding core principles, delivered at the Madison Community Union annual dinner in 1946, that was adopted as a code of ethics by organizations across the country.

By the time he delivered his 1946 credo, Lowell Frautschi was the outgoing Community Union president. In 1943, he was chairman of the organization's budget committee and in that capacity wrote a guest editorial for the State Journal explaining the budget committee's role.

Frautschi's editorial made clear both the serious intent and time commitment of the committee volunteers:

What is the job of this budget committee, and how does it go about it? In the spring of the year, it holds a series of meetings, or hearings, at which the 16 agencies present the budgets which their respective boards have approved for the coming fiscal year, starting in October. The program of each agency is discussed, questions are asked and answers given, the requests are compared in detail with figures taken from public audits of the previous year's expenditures, and later in executive session the committee decides what it will recommend that each allotment should be. Its recommendation goes to the central council of the Community Union, and when approved, becomes the campaign goal for the following autumn, or, as it works now, the Community Union requests this amount from the Madison War Chest, and it becomes part of the total War Chest goal.

Frautschi's Community Union service was similar to and likely inspired by his father, Emil Frautschi, who passionately believed that people should give back to their community.



Lowell—born in 1905—had an artistic side to match his business sense. He attended Madison public schools and then the University of



Wisconsin, where he majored in history and the humanities and played the flute in the university regimental band.

Frautschi spent his first college summer in Europe, later saying he wanted “to sit, and think, and snoop around and talk to people.” In summer 1925, he worked at Camp Indianola, a boys camp on the northwestern shore of Lake Mendota, an area now part of Governor Nelson State Park.

Frautschi recalled that the director of the camp told him “an unusual child” was enrolled and asked that Frautschi share his room in the barracks with the 10-year-old. In a June 1943 interview with the Wisconsin State Journal, Frautschi described him:

He was somewhat of a problem child. He used to bore the other boys with interminable stories. He had a great imagination. One day he came to me and explained that he had a one-act, one-man play. I suggested that he give me a private performance and if it was all right, he could put it on in front of the whole camp.

He put on “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,” with a great deal of realism. I approved, so he put it on for the rest of the boys and their parents. He wowed ’em.

The boy was Orson Welles, born in Kenosha and famous—when Frautschi related this story—as the director of the 1941 film *Citizen Kane*.

After graduating in 1927, Frautschi earned a master’s degree at UW–Madison in 1929. He considered continuing for a doctorate and becoming a teacher but opted instead to work at the family furniture

store, where by 1943 he was the manager.

“We wanted him to go for his doctorate,” Dean G. C. Selery told the State Journal. “That boy can study well, and, best of all, he knows people. I guess he was just too modest to push himself forward.”

Frautschi eschewing self-promotion for the promotion of the greater good aligned perfectly with the goals of the Community Union. As noted, he was the organization’s budget chairman in 1943, and a year later, he ascended to the presidency, a post he would keep for two years.



In 1945, the Community Chests and Councils national organization adopted the Red Feather as the campaign symbol for community chests across the country. It also urged cities to utilize the name Community Chest for their fundraising organizations, seeing it as a natural handoff from the War Chest years.<sup>1</sup>

Madison was one of many cities that embraced the Red Feather symbol in 1945.<sup>2</sup>



*Red Feather campaign symbol adopted in 1945. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

“Its use was continued with great effectiveness,” according to the national United Way history People and Places, “until well into the 1950s when growth of the United Fund movement and new local symbols brought about use of the ‘U’ symbol nationally.”

On September 1, 1945, Morgan Manchester, chairman of the final Madison War Chest campaign, sent a letter “to community leaders in metropolitan Madison” on letterhead that read, “The Madison Red Feather Letter.” The central message was that although the war was ending, there remained significant need for a vigorous fundraising campaign.

Manchester began his letter as follows: “The next twelve months will be one of the most critical periods in human history. When a war is over only the fighting stops. Still to be battled are pestilence, famine, death, waste and wreckage... and a staggering backlog of human problems.”

Manchester noted that “Madison war-time and Community Union agencies which have quickly and efficiently filled the gap in welfare and recreational services in a war town will be just as efficiently serving Madisonians in the transition period between war and peace ... Right now all Community Union agencies are geared to meet the needs of a war town converting to peace.”

**Madison war-time and Community Union  
agencies . . . will be just as efficiently  
serving Madisonians in the transition  
period between war and peace**

Madison had set up a Veterans' Information Headquarters, which would be helped by the final War Chest campaign, with the goal again set at \$400,000<sup>3</sup>.

“The Red Feather has been formally adopted as the official symbol of the War Chest and Community Union agencies,” Manchester wrote. “As in the past, the campaign will be run by 99 percent volunteer help, with campaign costs kept under 2 percent.”

Of course, Manchester, the campaign chair, was one of those volunteers.



The Manchester name had been prominent in Madison retailing for decades and would remain so for decades to come.

Morgan’s father, Harry S. Manchester, brought the family to Madison in 1921, from Chicago, where he’d worked as a wholesale buyer for Marshall Field.

“They were wonderful about it,” Morgan said of Marshall Field in a newspaper interview years later. Harry had told his bosses he wanted to go into business for himself. “They gave him a list of stores he might be interested in, one in Superior and [one] in Madison.”

Morgan attended Dartmouth College and as a young man won multiple golf championships at Madison’s Maple Bluff Country Club before he took over the business when Harry died in 1938. The first Manchester’s department store was on North Pinckney Street downtown. By the time Morgan handed over the business to his son Stewart in 1966, they’d opened stores in shopping malls on both the east and west sides of town.

In 1947, the Madison Community Union celebrated 25 years of service. A softcover booklet with a red feather on the cover was produced to mark the occasion—“a quarter century of leadership to make

metropolitan Madison a more livable city.” It was dedicated to Chief Justice Marvin Rosenberry.

Summaries of successful campaigns were provided with salutes to those who held leadership roles in the first 25 years: Rosenberry, Paul Stark, Mrs. William Kittle, Emil and Lowell Frautschi, and several others.

The booklet also described the establishment of the Madison Community Trust Fund, which “was conceived as a means of accumulating funds to minimize drastic cuts in Community Union agencies’ services, such as occurred in the [Depression-era] middle ’30s. While it was fully realized that any such fund raised by voluntary giving could not serve as an unemployment relief fund, there would be need for operational funds to render service during a possible depression period. On August 17, 1942, the Madison War Chest authorized the reserve funds raised by the War Chest be transferred to the Madison Community Trust Fund.”

Total assets for the Madison Community Trust Fund were listed at \$573,914.43. The war, as it turns out, had been a catalyst for philanthropy.



“The War Chest brought about a new era in fund raising in Madison,” the booklet noted. “Active participation of labor greatly broadened the base of support. During the war years there were approximately forty givers per one hundred population, which is a high percentage of support.”

The booklet conveyed that the increased giving during the War Chest years had then carried over: the 1946 Community Chest campaign raised \$271,367 from a total of 24,012 individuals (compared with \$100,025 in 1941, the last pre-War Chest year). A State Journal article commemorating the 25th anniversary stated that “33 out of 100 persons, instead of just a handful in every 1,000, accepted a share of responsibility for financing the work.” The booklet said an incredible 1,200 Madisonians now worked as Community Union/Chest volunteers.

The State Journal 1947 anniversary story read as follows: “Recent undertakings include offering help with things like the Madison community center and planning for its war memorial, the recreation leadership institute, a camping institute, the day nursery, study of the county’s needs in caring for its aged and chronically ill, and the Madison youth council.”

In 1948, the Madison Community Welfare Council was established as part of the city’s Community Chest program. That December a meeting was held to select officers and a board of directors, and a familiar name — Lowell Frautschi—was elected president.

Another familiar name, attorney Frank Ross—a two-time Community Union president in the early ’40s—served as temporary chairman of the Madison Community Welfare Council meeting and, according to a newspaper account the next day, “explained the purpose of the council as an overall social planning group where public and private organizations get together, interchange ideas, and coordinate activities in planning the health, welfare and recreation development in Madison.

“Ross pointed out that for many years there have been various citizens’

committees working on certain projects in these fields, but with the growth of Madison the need has been felt for one 'clearing house' organization."

Consolidation was again the goal in June 1950 when it was announced that a new fundraising campaign, tentatively titled the United Givers' Campaign, would be incorporated in Madison.

The first public announcement came in a June 1, 1950, Capital Times story that began as follows:

"Federation of fundraising drives in a single coordinated campaign in the Madison metropolitan area got underway today with the appointment of a committee to draft articles of incorporation for a new contribution corporation."

Recognizable names (i.e., Marvin Rosenberry, Frank Ross, Morgan Manchester, and others) made up the committee. Ross said the new corporation was necessary to end "the endless, wasteful and inefficient [fundraising] campaigns" by embarking on a united effort by a single entity.

It was the same rationale used three decades earlier when the Madison Community Union was formed. In 1950, however, the consolidation effort might have been prompted by the Red Cross, the national organization with a Dane County affiliate that benefited from the Community Chest drives but also conducted its own.

In fact, there had been tension brewing between the local Community Chests and national organizations like the Red Cross and the American Cancer Society since at least 1947. The national groups were adamant



about doing their own, separate fundraising.

In May 1947, at a meeting of the National Social Welfare Assembly, the tension boiled over. Basil J. O'Connor, chairman of the American National Red Cross, gave a speech in which he said the following:

There is going to break out an open warfare between the school of federated financing and the school of independent financing... We are opposed and unequivocally opposed to joint fundraising... It is not the American way of life... There is no more rhyme nor cause for the communization of our health and welfare activities or for the communization of our fundraising than there is for the communization of our insurance companies or our banks or our oil companies or our industry...

In October 1947, Robert Cutler, a former president of Community Chests and Councils, wrote a piece in *The Atlantic* magazine in which he cast a rebuttal to O'Connor's speech five months earlier:

The views which you have expressed are alien to me, and, upon serious reconsideration, appear to me unsound and misleading. The unification of local appeals in a single voluntary campaign, with its ever-widening participation in the numbers of givers and workers, had made it possible more readily, more effectively, and with a finer spirit to raise the money necessary to carry on the local health, hospital, welfare and social agencies which are vital to each community... The validity of any Community Chest rests wholly upon the will of the people in that community.

## NEW OFFICERS OF WELFARE COUNCIL



Officers of the Community Welfare council elected at a meeting of delegates Thursday night at the YMCA are: Seated left to right, Mrs. Thomas J. Doran, representing Catholic Welfare bureau, vice-president; Lowell Frautschi, of the Madison Business association, president. Standing left to right, Steve Clark, Madison workers education bureau, secretary; Charles Alexander, YMCA board of directors, treasurer.

*New Officers of the Welfare Council, 1948. Newspaper clipping from Wisconsin State Journal, 17 Dec 1948, Fri.*

By 1950, according to the United Way history *People and Places*, the idea of locally federated “United Fund” campaigns that would also include national agencies was gaining traction, an idea the book termed “an olive branch to the American Red Cross.”

The Red Cross did not immediately embrace the compromise. In Madison, at the June 1950 meeting, where the intent to incorporate the Madison United Givers' Fund was announced, a local Red Cross representative, in arguing for their own fundraising, pointed out that the organization had to stand ready for international emergencies as well as cover rural areas not served by the Community Chest.

"Bear with us for a year or two," the Red Cross representative said. "We know we can't buck public opinion forever. But our policy is made nationally."

Justice Rosenberry—identified as "the father of the Madison Community Chest plan" in the Capital Times account—was blunt in suggesting the new United Givers' Fund proceed with its plans.

"Raise what's fair for the Red Cross [with the United Givers' drive]," Rosenberry said. "If they don't want it, let the donors know they apparently don't need it."

On June 14, 1950, two weeks after the initial committee meeting, articles of incorporation for the new entity were filed with the Wisconsin secretary of state's office.


The State Journal reported, "A single federated campaign for raising charitable and welfare funds became a reality in Madison today with establishment of the United Givers' fund."

The story concluded, "The United Givers' fund will take over the drives formerly conducted by the Community Chest. The preamble to the articles states the Chest is no longer considered a proper vehicle for

conducting the drives because it has been associated with purely local collections while state and national organizations have conducted separate campaigns.”

The first United Givers’ Fund campaign was led by two men with highly familiar names in Madison business. The fund president was Bernard Mautz, who in 1922, having just graduated from the University of Wisconsin, borrowed \$22,000 and bought the paint company his father had started with his brother in Madison in 1892. Over the next several decades, Bernard built Mautz Paint Co. into one of the nation’s leading paint manufacturers.

In September 1950, it was Mautz who announced the fundraising goal of the first United Givers’ campaign. It was ambitious: \$346,642.

Name _____		Code _____	
Firm or Address _____		Campaign Worker _____	
 for services through the <b>United Givers Fund, 2059 Atwood Ave., Madison, Wis.</b>		Date _____	
Mr. _____			
Signature Mrs. _____			
Miss _____			
<b>PAYROLL DEDUCTION PLAN</b>		<b>TOTAL GIFT</b>	
I wish to pledge		Total Gift \$ _____	
My FAIR SHARE of one hour's pay per month (\$ _____ each _____ CWEER/MONTH, ETC.)		Paid Now \$ _____	
I wish to join the continuous FAIR SHARE plan as described on reverse side of pledge card		Balance \$ _____	
\$ _____ each _____ amount (week/month, etc)		Be sure method of payment is shown at left. Make checks payable to United Givers Fund.	
<b>DIRECT PAYMENTS PLAN</b>			
I wish to pledge			
\$ _____, which is my FAIR SHARE or more (one hour's pay per month, 6/10's of 1% of annual income)			
or \$ _____			
I wish to pay direct to the United Givers Fund _____ Monthly, _____ Quarterly, or, _____			
Send statement to _____			

For Office Use Only

*United Givers’ Fund Pledge Form. Photo from United Way of Dane County personal collection housed at the Wisconsin Historical Society.*

“Madison has the financial resources to reach the goal and exceed it,” Mautz declared.

Mautz also provided some logistical background on the new United Givers' Fund. Since its formation in June, a 12-member committee had weighed applications from the numerous local, state, and national health and welfare organizations that had held separate fundraising drives in the Madison area. Six area, state, and national agencies were accepted as members of the fund and added to the 15 Red Feather agencies already supported by the Madison Community Chest.

Mautz added, "The door will always be open for membership of agencies which can meet [our] standards."

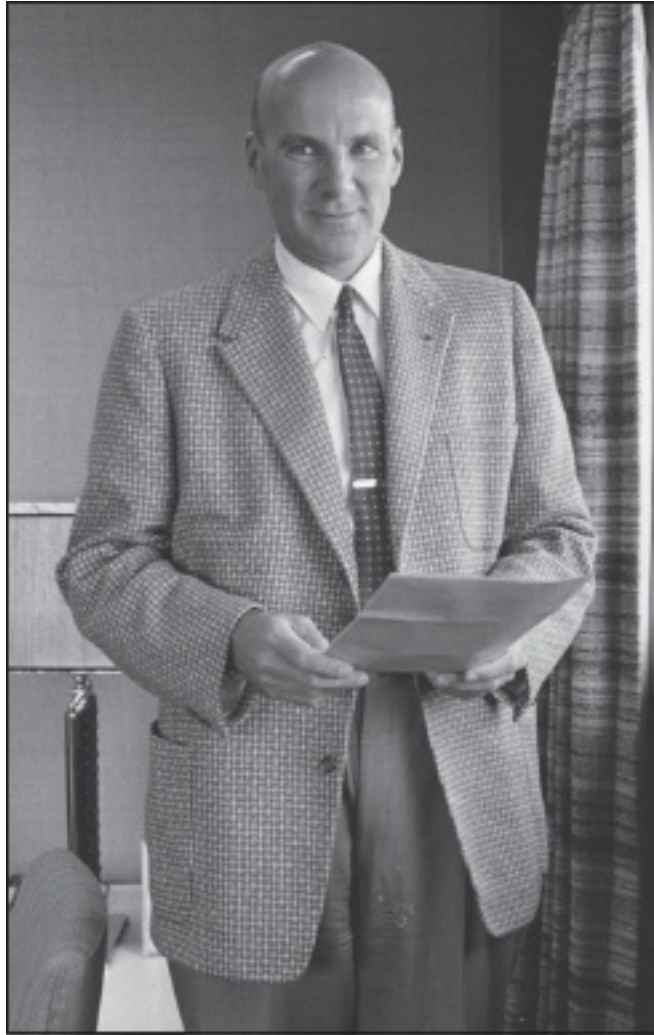
Mautz noted that administrative costs for the 1950 campaign amounted to only 4 percent of the projected budget. And he added that in attempting the united campaign, Madison was an innovator nationally.

"The Givers' Fund campaign is a challenge to Madison," Mautz said. "We are pioneering in a real sense in developing efficient business- like methods of supporting essential health and welfare services.

"The Madison plan is being watched throughout the country with great interest," Mautz continued. "We have a very tangible civic project. One in which success can be definitely measured against a clearly stated objective. We must get behind the United Givers' Fund and make our goal, by giving once... the United way."

People and Places, the history volume of the United Way, said this of the year 1950: "There was great interest in the results of United Fund campaigns that year. They were still pioneering ventures."





*Oscar G Mayer, Jr (1914-2009) president of Oscar Mayer & Co in 1995, and Madison philanthropist. Photo courtesy of the Wisconsin Historical Society.*

The man chosen as the first Madison United Givers' Fund campaign chairman was Oscar G. Mayer, Jr. grandson of the founder of the well-known Oscar Mayer™ meat production company. Mayer was a Chicago native who attended Cornell University and then worked as an accountant for the family business in Chicago. He came to the Oscar Mayer™ Madison facility in 1946.<sup>4</sup> Mayer was a committed philanthropist in the city, up to and including a \$250,000 personal contribution to help make the Madison Civic Center a reality in 1980,

for which the center's main stage was named the Oscar Mayer Theatre.

In 1950, Mayer told the Wisconsin State Journal, "The development of the Givers' Fund is an extension of the tried and tested Community Chest methods."

Those methods worked. The first United Givers' Fund campaign ran from October 23 to November 2 and raised \$362,416, more than \$15,000 over the campaign goal. A victory dinner was held at the Hotel Loraine downtown, and it was announced that 31,741 individuals had pledged to the campaign.

One of the most ambitious and original pledges to the first United Givers' Fund campaign in 1950 came from the Madison-Kipp Corporation and some 300 of its employees. Founded in 1898, Madison-Kipp manufactured machine components on the city's east side.

In that 1950 summer, management at Madison-Kipp sent a letter to every employee, posing a unique way to contribute to the United Givers' Fund:

This year we ask for no cash contributions. We simply request employees to donate four hours of overtime in a given week which will be set aside for this purpose. This will be given to United Givers' as his contributions for the entire year. During this particular week, each employee will be given an opportunity to work four additional hours.

This procedure will eliminate the necessity of taking anything out of his regular earnings for his annual contribution to charity.

Your participation in this is entirely voluntary, but it would be a matter

of great pride to us if we could get a 100 percent response from our employees.

They didn't get everybody, but they got more than 90 percent. The employees worked one extra hour on four separate days.

The amount raised topped \$3,000—more than \$30,000 when adjusted for inflation, circa 2020.

According to a Capital Times article, “The job of allocating the \$3,000 was turned over to a nine-member workers’ committee, officials of the Madison-Kipp Workers’ Club. They voted to turn the entire overtime work [funds] to the United Givers’ Fund.”

The Madison-Kipp executive quoted in The Capital Times story, vice president Joseph Coleman, was a board member of the United Givers’ Fund. His brother, Thomas Coleman, was Madison-Kipp’s president and had been involved with the Madison Community Union since the 1920s. Thomas was also active for most of his life in Wisconsin and Republican Party national politics, including serving as manager for one of Walter J. Kohler Sr.’s gubernatorial campaigns. In 1952, Coleman was floor manager for Robert Taft’s presidential campaign at the Republican National Convention. When Thomas died, in 1964, the front-page, topline headline of the Wisconsin State Journal read, “Thomas E. Coleman, Leader in GOP. Dies.”

With his death, his son Reed Coleman assumed control of Madison-Kipp. Reed later served as the 1977 campaign chairman for UWDC.

Unusual and innovative contributions were always welcome—and sometimes newsworthy.



In January 1952, The Capital Times reported that Madison Mayor George J. Forster had received a letter and a check from the crew of the battleship USS Wisconsin. The check represented a donation from the crew in the amount of \$2,282. It was made out to the Community Chest.

The ship's captain, Thomas Burrowes, wrote, "It is intended for children and youth organizations participating in the chest. It is felt this voluntary gift reflects again the traditional love of children which is characteristic of Navy men."

Burrowes continued, "Your city was chosen because it is the capital city of the state whose name is born by this proud battleship."

It turned out there was another, even more direct, connection.

"It was not generally known on board this vessel," Burrowes wrote, "until after this project had been undertaken, that a member of our crew is the son of the mayor of Madison."

George J. Forster, Jr. was aboard the USS Wisconsin.

"This fortunate coincidence," Burrowes wrote, "is welcomed as a further bond between our ship and the state for which she is named."

A few weeks later, in late January 1952, the Community Chest's budget committee announced the beneficiaries of the ship's gift. They included Neighborhood Centers Inc. (\$515) for work with boys and girls at the Neighborhood House, South Side Youth Center and the East Side Activities Council; the YWCA (\$295) and YMCA (\$250) for youth programs; and the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts (\$255 each).



In June 1953, it was announced that the Madison Community Chest and United Givers' Fund were merging into a single entity called the United Community Chest. Earlier that year, a committee had surveyed the public about the proposed merger and found—according to a State Journal editorial at the time of the announcement—“not a breath of opposition to the merger,” which the paper called “a tribute to this community’s good sense and it’s fine spirit of cooperation in the name of the general welfare.”

The merger was announced at a meeting of the boards of directors of both organizations. Community Chest president Francis F. Bowman Jr., a Madison geologist and industrial consultant, said, “The Community Chest is not going out of business... The merger of the Chest and United Givers’ signifies another important development in the cooperative way of fundraising and budgeting for our essential voluntary health, welfare and youth services in this community.”

United Givers’ Fund president John Guy Fowlkes, dean of the UW–Madison School of Education, said the merger “will consolidate the strengths of these two organizations for greater service to the people of the metropolitan Madison area.” Fowlkes was elected president of the new organization, with Judge Marvin Rosenberry as honorary chairman.

A State Journal editorial pointed out that the two organizations “never were at cross-purposes, but in the three years they have existed here, there has been a certain duplication in fundraising and budgeting. That duplication will be eliminated and all efforts channeled down a single line.”

The annual Red Feather campaign that fall<sup>5</sup> raised nearly \$450,000, bettering the previous year's mark by more than \$27,000 and eliciting pledges from 38,153 individuals—a new record.

In February 1954, the United Community Chest purchased the East Side Businessmen's Association clubhouse building at 2425 Atwood Avenue. The building and lot together were \$34,000. The purchase was financed through the Madison Community Trust Fund, established with War Chest campaign surpluses.

The United Community Chest, whose offices were at 14 West Johnson Street in what was known as the Red Feather Building, was not moving. Rather it leased the Atwood Avenue space to Madison Neighborhood Centers Inc., with the expectation that the group would expand its east side programming.<sup>6</sup>

In the second half of the 1950s, the Madison United Community Chest made a concerted public relations effort to assure area residents who were donating—and by 1956 that number topped 45,000—that the money was being wisely allocated in the best service of the community.

In June 1957, The Capital Times ran a lengthy story detailing the work of what their headline called a “watchdog group”—that is, the 21-member budget and admissions committee of the United Community Chest.

The Red Feather agencies each submit their budgets to the committee, the article explained.

“Needs of the agency are weighed against overall needs of the community and of other agencies. Considerations include whether the agency is doing a good job, whether the interests of the community are

being served and the extent to which the agency is self-supported. Also studied are the number of persons served, cost of service fees charged and unmet community needs.”

It was estimated the 21-member committee spent some 2,500 hours assessing and making recommendations on the requests. There must have been fruitful communication between the committee and the agencies because in 1956, the budget requests totaled \$709,000 and the vast majority (i.e., \$662,000) was approved.

In August 1957, the Community Welfare Council, a member of the United Community Chest, issued an annual report indicating that it, too, was committed to assessing where the true needs of the community resided.

“Within the last year,” a State Journal story remarked, “the [Council’s] research department has established a monthly system of reporting by various public and private agencies. Reports include facts about the number of persons served and the types of services rendered. Basic data about Madison have been charted on maps which show facts about housing, location of industries, business, recreational and religious centers.”



*United Givers' Fund window display advertisement, 1957. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection housed at the Wisconsin Historical Society.*

That same month, the United Community Chest board approved the sale of the Red Feather Building at 14 West Johnson Street to Bethel Lutheran Church.

United Community Chest President R. A. Eissfeldt told the State Journal the sale price was \$265,000 and that the sale “is mutually beneficial to both the Chest and the church,” which would use it as a youth center. He cited the expanding needs of the Red Feather agencies. Occupants of the Johnson Street building included the United Community Chest, Community Welfare Council, Girl Scouts, Wisconsin Welfare Council, Legal Aid Society, Family Service and Children’s Service Society. Though

the sale was approved, the Red Feather agencies would not vacate the building for up to 18 months while a new site was considered.

In April 1958, R. A. Eissfeldt, back for a second year as United Community Chest president, released statistics that indicated at least one in three residents of Madison, and possibly more, were served by the Chest and its Red Feather agencies.

“While exact numbers are difficult to determine,” Eissfeldt said, “because many individuals are served by more than one agency, it is safe to assume that at least one out of three—and perhaps every Madison person—makes use of Red Feather agencies.”

A Wisconsin State Journal story quoting Eissfeldt listed a number of the agencies along with their United Community Chest funding and an accounting of the number of people served. A partial list is as follows:

- Visiting Nurse Service (\$43,416): The most recent statistics were from 1956 and showed 4,195 patients served and a total of 21,743 visits.
- Boy Scouts of America (\$46,534): In 1957, 4,646 boys in Madison belonged to the Boy Scouts.
- Family Service (\$47,543): Statistics from 1956 showed that 856 Madison families had one or more problems that received casework consideration, 566 of which were new to the agency. In addition, 111 families received information and some were referred to community resources.
- Legal Aid Society (\$3,531): In 1957, 665 cases were handled.

- Madison Neighborhood Centers (\$63,106), including Neighborhood House, Atwood Community House, and the South Madison Neighborhood Center: In 84 groups, 958 different individuals were served, plus 1,205 individuals on a once-a-month basis. More than 200 participated in neighborhood councils and 200 in the gardening program. In a sample month, outside groups used the facilities on 51 different occasions, with a total of 1,112 persons attending.

Eissfeldt summed up the United Community Chest's takeaway from the report: "Through federation, more people are served for less cost than by any other voluntary means. If each agency had to raise its own funds, there would be a tremendous increase in money spent for fundraising, and less money available for direct services to people."

United Community Chest often stressed how seriously it took the stewardship of the funds donated by Madison area residents. This was true when the organization's new building at 2059 Atwood Avenue opened in summer 1959. Publicity for the grand opening noted that no United Community Chest funds received after 1948 had been used to purchase either the land or build the building. The total price was \$356,371. It was paid for by the sale of the group's previous building on West Johnson Street and by a grant and mortgage from the Madison Community Trust Fund, established with money raised during the War Chest years of the early 1940s.

An open house at the new location<sup>7</sup> was held on Sunday, August 23, 1959. Each of the agencies housed in the new building<sup>8</sup> mounted an exhibit highlighting their work. Staff and volunteers gave tours to the public, and there was no soliciting for funds.

The new building offered numerous benefits: easier communication between the Red Feather agencies, centralized administration services, and lower rent than would have been paid elsewhere.

A full-page Wisconsin State Journal newspaper ad, touting the new facility and announcing the Sunday afternoon open house, was paid for by businesses that had long supported the Community Chest, familiar names like Frautschi's, Inc., Harry S. Manchester, and Oscar Mayer & Co.

Goodman's Jewelers also helped pay for the advertisement. It should be considered a signpost for the significant role Irwin and Robert "Bob" Goodman would play in Madison philanthropy for decades to come.



# you're invited

TODAY...SUNDAY...2 to 5 P. M.



## open house and exhibit

at the new home of your

### UNITED COMMUNITY CHEST

2059 Atwood Ave. — Near Schenk's Corners

FREE PARKING on Atwood Avenue, behind the new building and in the nearby municipal parking lot.



#### Displays Tell Red Feather Story

**SEE** displays prepared by each of the 25 Red Feather agencies to show how they help make Madison a better place to live, by serving you and your neighbors.

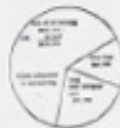
**TOUR** the efficient new Community Chest Building, containing offices of the Chest and eight of the member agencies.

**MEET** staff members and volunteer civic leaders who direct and operate the Chest and the agencies it serves.

(The purpose of the open house and exhibit is to acquaint you with the Chest and the agencies. There will be no solicitation for pledges or contributions.)

#### FACTS ABOUT THE NEW BUILDING

- 3 counties offices of the United Community Chest, Inc. and three staff Red Feather agencies: Dane County Child Guidance Center, Children's Service Society, Community Welfare Council, Family Service, Girl Scouts, Legal Aid Society, Visiting Nurse Service, Wisconsin Welfare Council.
- The site and building plans were prepared after consultation by Madison city, professional, labor and business leaders who make up the Chest Board of Directors and committees.
- The building makes possible greater economy, coordination and efficiency.
- Red Feather agencies now can provide better service at lower cost because administrative and duplicative administrative services are centralized and more paid by the agencies are lower than they would be in separate, isolated structures.
- NO COMMUNITY CHEST CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED AFTER YOUR HAVE BEEN OR WILL BE USED FOR THE NEW BUILDING AND LAND.
- Total cost of the new building was \$268,071. The money came from three sources: (a) 70% from the city of Madison, (b) 20% from the state of Wisconsin, and (c) 10% from the United Community Chest, Inc.
- A gift from the City of Madison, 1954, of the site and building plans, valued at \$100,000, was received by the Chest. This will be paid for by the city of Madison over a period of 10 years.
- A long-term mortgage loan of \$150,000 from the Community Trust Company, Inc. will be paid for by the city of Madison over a period of 10 years.



This Announcement Is Sponsored In The Public Interest By The Following Civic and Community Minded Business Firms:



Borden Co.  
Dyer's Shoe Store  
Fauerbach Brewing Co.  
Frostsch's, Inc.

J. C. Penney Co., Inc.

Goodman's Jewelers  
Madison Newspapers  
Harry S. Manchester  
Oscar Mayer & Co.

Simpson's

Meyer Photoart House  
O. M. Nelson & Son  
Nulife Cleaners  
Olson & Veerhusten

*Full page ad inviting entire community to open house. Newspaper clipping from Wisconsin State Journal, 23 Aug 1959, Sun.*

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1. Madison, at that point, kept the Community Union name but “for purposes of convenience and to derive benefit from national publicity,” the annual fundraising campaign in Madison would be known as the Community Chest.
  2. It was first used in Duluth and New Orleans in 1928.
  3. Held October 15-25, the campaign raised a total of \$438,155.
  4. The city would become the company’s national headquarters a decade later.
  5. Still called the United Givers’ Fund, under the auspices of the United Community Chest.
  6. The United Community Chest itself had a move—also to Atwood Avenue—on the horizon, but not for another five years.
  7. Alternatively called the United Community Chest Building and the Red Feather Building in news accounts.
  8. Eight of the 29 Red Feather agencies were there.



## CHAPTER 4

# STEPPING UP IN THE FACE OF TRAGEDY

The first annual meeting of the United Community Chest in the new decade of the 1960s was held January 28, 1960, in Tripp Commons of the Memorial Union on the University of Wisconsin–Madison campus. It promised a panel discussion of “Madison’s growth and future problems” to be moderated by Frank Ross, a former War Chest president and still a member of the board.

The discussion was titled, “Metropolitan Madison Meets the Soaring Sixties: Its People and Its Problems.” Panelists included: Walter Johnson, director of the city plan commission; Fred Harrington, University of Wisconsin vice president; and Theodore “Ted” Meloy, entering his second year as United Community Chest president.

During the discussion, it was noted that projections indicated Madison

might have a population of 200,000 by 1970—with half of those under 20 or over 65 years of age, groups that historically require more social services. The city needed to be diligent in making certain that growth did not mean an increase in people slipping through holes in the social safety net.

Harrington told the assembled group, “We in Madison are self-satisfied. We are accustomed to saying this is the best city in the state, in the nation. Well, of course, it is. But we may have already slipped in the field of welfare so that we’re no longer on the top of the heap.”

Harrington concluded, “We must do much, much more to say this is the happy city. This is the model city, and we’re going to do it.”

Ted Meloy said it was especially important that the United Community Chest reach out to non-givers and those who give little to remind them of how much the organization does for the city.

**We must do much, much more to say this is the happy city. This is the model city, and we're going to do it.**

“Those who understand our objectives,” Meloy said, “usually care.”

As Harrington suggested, had Madison perhaps “slipped in the field of welfare”? Any conclusion would always be subjective, but this much was certain: Madison, its residents, and its reputation faced a reckoning in January 1962, with the heartbreaking case of an infant named Jimmy

Brockway.



The first mention of the baby in the Madison newspapers was a birth announcement on April 22, 1961, a son born to Mr. and Mrs. James Brockway, who lived in the Truax Park Apartments near the airfield on Madison's north side.

Brockway was from Ohio and had worked at a box factory in Jacksontown before joining the Air Force in 1955. He came to Madison and the Truax Field military facility around 1960. The Brockways did not fare well at Truax. By January 1962, the couple had a total of four children, the oldest just 5 years old and the youngest, Jimmy, nine months. Both James Brockway and his wife were 25 years old. Money was tight. Brockway spent time in the stockade at Truax Field for drunkenness and for writing checks with insufficient funds.

It came to a head in late December 1961 when Brockway punched a superior officer and was given an "undesirable discharge" on December 26.

On the night of January 21, 1962, around 10:30 p.m., the Brockways brought Jimmy, their youngest child, into the Madison General Hospital emergency room. The infant weighed only 9 pounds, 11 ounces—less than half of what a child of his age should normally weigh.

A Madison General intern physician, Dr. Donald Schwab, later testified that the baby was in a coma, "very thin, pale and cold, its toes, lips and fingers were miscolored and its skin was very loose."

Jimmy Brockway died about two hours after entering Madison General, early on the morning of January 22. The cause of death was eventually determined to be malnutrition and dehydration.

Early newspaper coverage of the case—it was covered extensively, even beyond Madison—noted that Dane County Judge Ervin Bruner immediately ordered the three other Brockway children confined to the custody of the county public housing department.

A January 23 Wisconsin State Journal story said this: “Red Cross officials, who have been supplementing the surplus food supply for the family, said they and members of the Visiting Nurse [Service] had been trying to convince the Brockways to take their baby to a hospital at the organizations’ expense for several months.”

But scrutiny of the Red Feather agencies regarding the case would continue, as would newspaper coverage. On January 26, both Brockways were charged with child neglect and jailed when they couldn’t provide the \$500 cash bond.

A preliminary hearing on the charge was held in February and produced this headline in The Capital Times: “Brockway Testimony Bares Tangle in Social Agencies.”

The story began, “A registered nurse from a United Givers’ Fund agency, the Visiting Nurse Service, testified in County Court Monday afternoon that the extent of the service she provided to Mr. and Mrs. James Brockway of Truax Apartments... consisted of visiting the family three times in a three-month period, urging the mother to feed the child more, and suggesting that she take the child to a doctor... [She] said she had

referred the case to the Red Cross.”

Yet a previous witness, a Red Cross social worker, testified that she had referred the case to the Visiting Nurse Service. This was problematic.

On March 11, while the court case against the Brockways was still pending, it was announced that Lowell Frautschi, a pillar of the Community Chest in Madison dating back to the 1940s, would head a special citizens’ committee—under the auspices of the Community Welfare Council— that would review agency services in the Brockway case. A State Journal story reporting the committee’s formation observed, “Several Community Chest agencies have come under fire as a result of the baby’s death.”

On March 16, Mr. and Mrs. Brockway both pled no contest to child neglect and were given suspended prison sentences and placed on probation by Judge Norris Maloney.

With Mrs. Brockway again pregnant, with the baby due in August, the couple was moving back to Ohio and before leaving were given custody of their other three children. “I couldn’t settle here,” James Brockway told the judge. “Not after what happened.”

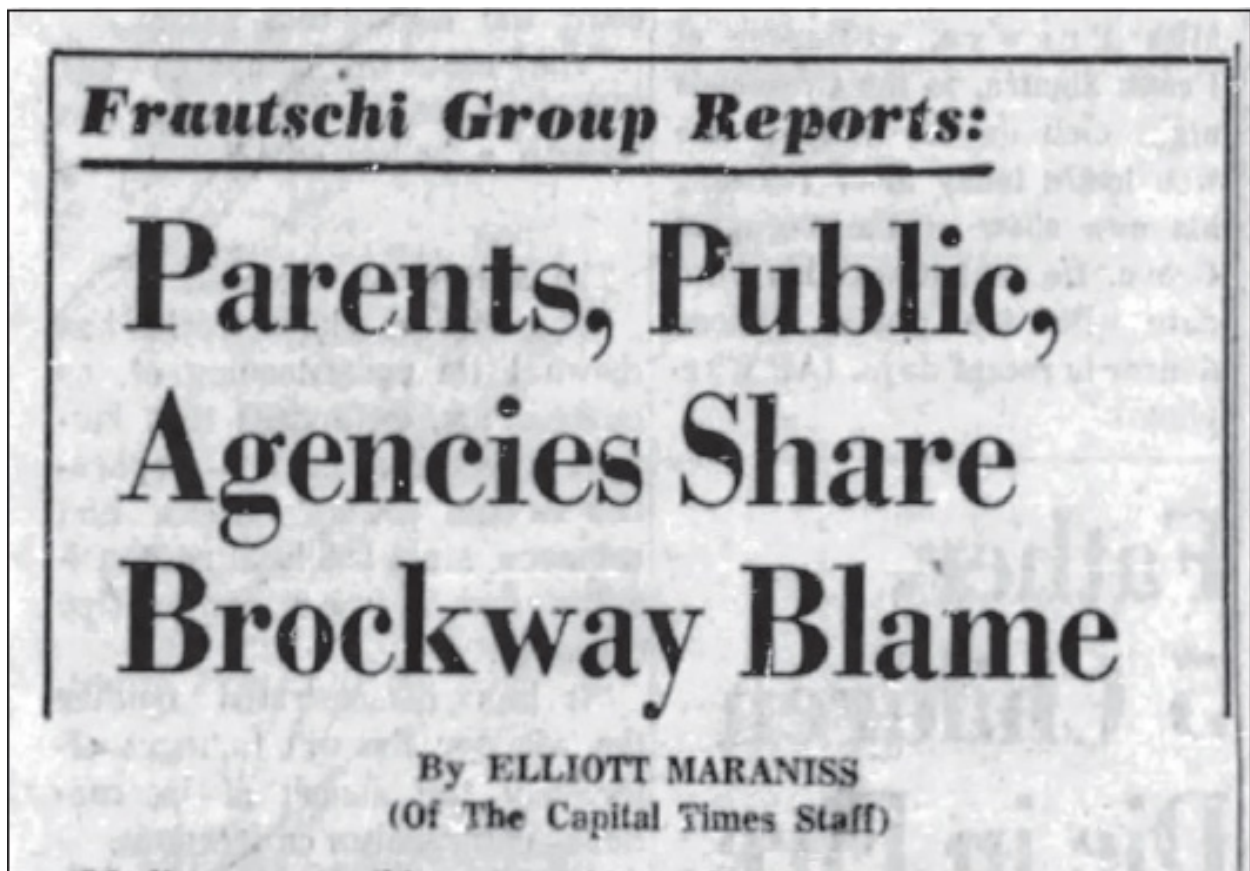
The Dane County assistant district attorney handling the case agreed with the defense’s suggestion of probation, citing that a Visiting Nurse Service nurse had been at the home a few days before the baby’s death but “did not examine the child or think that he was seriously ill.”

The prosecutor said, “I feel [the Brockways] were lulled into a false sense of security by ineptness and inaction on the part of the nurse. This does not excuse them but it may explain their conduct... I feel there is moral



blame to be assessed to the agencies for their failure to heed the pitifully small cry of this dying infant.”

The Frautschi-led committee issued its report on June 6, 1962. It was 28 pages long, and its findings were reported extensively in the next day's Madison newspapers.



*The Capital Times front page headline following the release of the Frautschi Group report. Newspaper clipping from The Capital Times, 7 June 1972, Thu).*

The best and most extensive coverage was in a front-page story in The Capital Times by Elliott Maraniss.<sup>1</sup>

The headline above his story read, “Frautschi Group Reports: Parents, Public, Agencies Share Brockway Blame.”



It began as follows:

Madison wrote this postscript to the sad story of the Brockway baby:

“Little Jimmy Brockway died of starvation because his parents were indifferent and ignorant, the law is needlessly cruel, and welfare agencies didn’t move quickly enough to get him to a doctor while there was still time to save his life.”

The full import of the 28-page report is that the entire community must share the responsibility. Nearly everybody “failed to heed the pitifully small cry of this dying infant.”

The special citizens’ committee report listed 18 “findings” and seven recommendations. The report contended that once it became clear the Brockway parents were in distress and unable to properly care for their infant, “the agencies should have taken more initiative to seek medical care in the face of the parents’ failure to do so.” But the law itself prevents “agencies from compelling medical care for neglected children without authority from the courts,” the report noted. It continued, “The judgment as to what action should be taken in neglect cases, and when to take it, is a difficult one to make.”

The report’s seven recommendations going forward included asking agencies to streamline their intake policies and improve their understanding of each other’s functions, but it also suggested increasing “public awareness of the necessity of supplying the agencies with generous financial support.”

It is not an exaggeration to say the Brockway case was a true test of Dane County’s social services safety net and, by extension, the county itself.

The key was in the response. The easy thing would have been to let some time pass. Given the inevitable new stories that produce new headlines generated by more urgent events, the Brockway case may have slowly faded away.

“Some feared,” a State Journal story remarked, “keeping the spotlight on the Brockway case might hurt all agencies in the Community Chest and cripple the United Givers’ Fund drive.”

But the hard thing to do is often the right thing to do. Dane County and Madison stepped up. A committee was formed—headed by Mrs. Joseph Wilson—that included prominent citizens as well as representatives of city and county social services agencies. The committee’s charge was to encourage that the earlier Frautschi-led committee’s recommendations be adopted. According to a January 1963 State Journal story—timed to the one-year anniversary of Jimmy Brockway’s death—implementation on most had at least begun.

**But the hard thing to do is often the right thing to do. Dane County and Madison stepped up.**

“The first specific achievement of the follow-up committee,” the story disclosed, “has been drafting of a new inter-agency agreement on referral of cases among social agencies.”

Dane County sent the 28-page special citizens’ committee report to every school of social work in the United States. It included an introduction

and commentary from Frautschi committee consultant Professor Helen Clarke of UW–Madison.

Then, in early January 1963, a Madison contingent attended the annual Citizen's Conference on Community Planning held in Indianapolis. Delegates came from throughout the United States and Canada. The Madison group included: Gordon Sinykin, president of the Madison Community Welfare Council; Robert Longstreth, the associate executive secretary; and attorney Joseph Goodman, a member of both the Frautschi special citizens' committee and the subsequent follow-up committee. They offered copies of the 28-page report, and according to a State Journal story, the conference "delegates took every one and sent for more."

Attorney Goodman addressed the Indianapolis conference in a speech of such gravitas that "you could have heard a pin drop," according to one attendee.

Goodman related the facts of the Brockway case, which had received national attention, and then closed his talk by reading a State Journal article published some months after the baby's death and the release of the special citizens' committee report:

In how many cities would the typical citizen have slammed down his morning paper, snapped, "Things like that shouldn't be allowed to happen" and that would be the end of it?

It took a while for the facts to get sorted out and things to get moving here.

But no one ever suggested this was none of the public's business. The

citizens committee came up not with a whitewash or a scapegoat but with a forthright analysis of what happened and how, specifically, the community could strengthen its services.

In the State Journal story published January 22, 1963 (exactly one year after Jimmy's death), reporter Helen Matheson related a story of another (unnamed) Madison baby, whose parents were told by a physician the infant risked permanent paralysis if immediate surgery was not performed. The parents resisted. The doctor, like most everyone in Madison, was familiar with the Brockway case and promptly contacted Dane County child welfare. Within 48 hours, the baby was at the hospital, brought in by the parents who had learned the baby had rights a court could protect. The surgery was a success.

Notable, too, was the success of the 1962 United Givers' Fund drive in Dane County. In the wake of all the Brockway publicity, the drive fell 2.3 percent short of its goal—but still raised \$979,000, the most successful effort ever in Madison.

The 1963 drive did even better. The chairman was Collins (Collie) Ferris, who was then early in a career that would see him become one of the city's most prominent banking executives. A later State Journal article credited Ferris with "the initial actions opening the Madison Club to Jewish members" and noted that as head of the United Givers' Fund campaign, he was "instrumental in finding funding for a major expansion of the YMCA in Madison."

The '63 campaign raised \$1,051,474, the first-ever seven-figure total. "It is the largest sum ever raised in the city of Madison," Ferris told the State Journal, adding it was "a milestone of achievement."

Collie Ferris had earned medals as an Air Force pilot during World War II and subsequently became a major general in the Wisconsin Air National Guard. By coincidence, Arlie Mucks, an associate chairman of the 1963 campaign, was also a pilot, serving as a fighter pilot instructor and later in the Air National Guard. In 1962, Mucks took the reins of the Wisconsin Alumni Association, becoming over the next 27 years a legend in red, the ultimate UW–Madison booster. “I love Arlie Mucks,” said incoming Chancellor Donna Shalala when Mucks retired in 1989. Shalala said she had convinced him to take on some special projects, adding, “The university wouldn’t be any fun without him.”

One way to heal forward from a tragedy like the Brockway case was by getting people like Collie Ferris and Arlie Mucks to lead the drive.

Another, begun right around the dawn of the 1960s, was more coordinated workplace giving. At the January 1961 United Community Chest annual dinner at Memorial Union, 102 Madison firms were awarded plaques signifying their employees had donated their “fair share” to the United Givers’ Fund campaign.

By the 1963 campaign, chaired by Ferris, the number of Madison area firms receiving plaques was up to 200, and the criteria for the award was as follows: at least 50 percent of employees giving an hour’s pay or more per month. A State Journal article called it “a standard of giving accepted by Madison business and governmental leaders and formally adopted by the Madison Federation of Labor.”



*1965 Fair Share Brochure cover. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection house at the Wisconsin Historical Society.*

In June 1965, campaign chairman A. Scott Bowman (an Oscar Mayer™

vice president) announced a fundraising goal of \$1,150,000. Bowman told the State Journal that the “fair share” idea was now the official slogan of the campaign.

Bowman explained, “Our new ‘Fair Share – Everywhere’ slogan has been chosen by our campaign leaders as the symbol and theme for the 1965 campaign. Simply stated, ‘fair share’ is one hour’s pay per month. At any salary or hourly rate, it comes out to six dollars for each \$1,000 of annual income.”

Bowman stressed another consistent United Givers’ Fund theme: a combined campaign costs far less to administer. He said separate agency campaign costs are estimated at 20 percent of contributions, while the United Givers’ Fund campaign in 1964 spent only 4 percent of contributions on administration.

The ’65 Fair Share – Everywhere campaign received a huge boost when, in mid-September, the Wisconsin State Journal announced its intention to profile one individual donating a “fair share” to the United Givers’ Fund every day until the campaign’s end six weeks later. First up was Donald Ring, a service adviser with Hult Chevrolet, who, with his wife, had adopted two children through the Catholic Welfare Bureau, a United Givers’-supported agency.

“We can never repay the debt we owe,” Ring said, “but we figure we can at least show how we feel by contributing to the bureau and all the other fine agencies that belong to United Givers’. Fair Share seems like the best way to do it.”

By the campaign’s end, the newspaper had run 47 such testimonials, the

last one being in late October from Kenneth Davidson, a sausage stuffer at Oscar Mayer™.

“I spent three years on the United Givers’ Fund budget committee,” Davidson said, “and in that time I had the opportunity to visit all the agencies involved... The United Givers’ Fund drive is by far the cheapest and easiest way for all of us to do our fair share.”

The ’65 campaign was also aided by a robust effort by the women’s division of the United Givers’ Fund, which picked one day (October 11) to send 2,200 volunteers, called Belle Ringers, onto the streets in Madison and Middleton with a goal of knocking on every door and asking for donations. Today, UWDC’s Women United continues to invite local women to support local education initiatives.

The 1965 campaign was a resounding success, bettering its ambitious goal by nearly \$79,000, for a total of \$1,228,671.

“Some of the results were almost unbelievable,” Bowman, the campaign chairman, said. “My thanks to the every one of the 6,000 persons who helped.”



The following year, 1966, the State Journal highlighted another United Givers’ program: loaned executives.

According to the Grassroots Initiatives United Way history, the program may have had its genesis in a 1952 initiative in Utica, New York, in which the Utica Community Chest and Council utilized student interns from Utica College to “write releases for local newspapers, radio and TV



stations; speak before boards and committees... and in general, take care of all the daily public relations and publicity chores which the average agency executive is too busy to handle.”

The book suggests that Seattle may have been next. A retired president of the Seattle United Way is quoted, saying they requested local manufacturers to “loan some of their senior executives to the campaign to supplement the efforts of full time campaign staff members. While they didn’t call them ‘loaned executives,’ they did the very things that became the hallmarks of loaned executive programs in nearly every major city.”

Madison’s began in 1958, when seven junior executives were “loaned” to the United Community Chest with the expectation that they would work afternoons for two months before the annual campaign, helping local firms plan successful drives among their employees. The loaning companies included Oscar Mayer™, RAYOVAC®, and Wisconsin Power and Light Co.

“We are extremely grateful,” Ted Meloy, general campaign chairman<sup>2</sup> said. “This is a new plan, and we are seeing great results already.”

By 1966, almost a decade in, the program had grown to 28 loaned executives representing 24 area firms. The executives were loaned during the month-long (September 27–October 27) campaign and received four half-days of training in August. Training included tours of the United Community Chest Building and American Red Cross, as well as the Madison Opportunity Center.

John Ramaker, an executive loaned from Madison Bank and Trust, told

the State Journal, “The opportunity to see people with mental and physical handicaps rehabilitated to the extent they can perform useful and productive work made a powerful impression on us. As volunteers, our tour of the several agencies has made much more meaningful the use of volunteer funds.”



It has been suggested that the contentious 1960s, a period of protest and activism in which society grappled with an unpopular foreign war, civil rights, and more, more accurately spanned the years 1965 to 1974. Those years were a time of unrest in not just the country at large but also Madison and Dane County. Protests against the war in Vietnam rocked downtown Madison and the university campus. A harsh light was cast on racial discrimination in the city. The Community Chest, United Givers’ Fund, and Community Welfare Council were not immune from the volatility.

In February 1965, a short article appeared in the Wisconsin State Journal under the headline “Chest Role Sought for Urban League.”

The story noted that a group called the Madison Friends of the Urban League had applied for admission to the United Community Chest and Community Welfare Council. Founded in 1910 and headquartered in New York City, the National Urban League worked to secure economic empowerment, equality, and social justice for African Americans and other underserved communities.

The Madison group had been in existence since 1961. Its 1965 application to become a Red Feather agency led the Community Chest to

appoint a study committee to appraise the request and the broader issue of racial discrimination in Dane County.

“After a year of study,” The Capital Times reported, “the committee recommended that the proposed Madison branch be funded.”

The Community Chest’s admissions and budget committee, however, did not accept the study committee’s recommendation. In June 1966, it noted a possible duplication of services already provided and concern over “political overtones” in the National Urban League’s activities. The Capital Times disclosed that the admissions and budget committee contended it was “highly unlikely that the situation for the Negro in Madison would do anything but improve” due to the “high cultural level of the Madison community and the progress being made by the Negro community on a national level.”

The president of the Madison Friends of the Urban League, Donald R. Murphy, sent a letter to Collins Ferris, then president of the Community Chest and the banking executive who had chaired the first-ever million-dollar fundraising campaign three years earlier. Murphy’s letter asked Ferris to reconsider the Community Chest’s position on the Urban League. In December 1966, Murphy got his answer: they would not reconsider, although the door was left open for further negotiation.

Ferris included a sentence that unintentionally highlighted the risk progressive communities like Madison run when they become too self-congratulatory:

“Discrimination as it is known in other communities,” Ferris wrote, “doesn’t exist in Madison.”

Marshall Colston, an official of the state National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), brought up the original report that had led the study committee to recommend the Urban League's inclusion: "The report does establish a strong case for some type of agency in Madison," Colston said. "It didn't say that the Urban League was the only answer to the problem, but it clearly points out that it is one answer."

It took only a few months for the controversy to be resolved. This time it was a report by the Community Chest's minority studies committee that was delivered to the board of directors in March 1967 and, again, recommended admission for the Urban League. This time, the board agreed.

The National Urban League approved the Madison chapter's charter in February 1968.

Fifty years on, the Wisconsin State Journal ran a story marking the anniversary and noting the initial difficulty experienced by the Madison Friends group in trying to get funding.

"The chapter's first executive director, Nelson Cummings, could have easily shown that the absence of racial discrimination in Madison was a myth," the State Journal remarked. "An Illinois native, he started work in July 1968 but couldn't move to Madison until October of that year because no one would rent or sell him a home."

For his part, Cummings said, "But they didn't think they had a housing discrimination problem."

Dr. Ruben Anthony, president and CEO of the Urban League of Greater

Madison at the time of the 50th anniversary, pronounced that UWDC had itself come a long way from the 1960s, funding numerous Urban League programs.

“United Way gets it today,” Anthony said.



The same year the Urban League officially signed on in Madison (1968) the Community Welfare Council commissioned an evaluation of its programs. A committee was assembled and chaired by Anne Minahan, a newly arrived assistant professor in the UW–Madison Department of Social Work. Minahan had been away from Madison but was actually a city native, born in 1925. By the time of her UW–Madison retirement in 1985, she had an international reputation in the field of social work. In 1973, Minahan co authored, with Allen Pincus, a book titled *Social Work Practice: Model and Method* that, according to her 2005 obituary, “revolutionized the way social work practice is viewed.” It was translated into dozens of languages.

The report the Community Welfare Council committee issued in November 1968 was commonly referred to as the “Minahan Report.” It was released concurrently with the final days of the 1968 United Givers’ Campaign, which—while it raised almost \$1.5 million—was nearly \$500,000 shy of the cumulative total of Red Feather agency budget requests.<sup>3</sup>

The Minahan Report called for a reallocation of Community Chest resources, prioritizing the programs that most benefit people in need. Expanding Madison’s Neighborhood Centers Inc. was strongly

recommended. A State Journal article on the report declared that the centers' "principal services received high priority ratings." The centers should focus their "work on community neighborhood organization, group activities with hard to serve youth, and development of multi-service centers including both public and volunteer agencies."

The Minahan Report expressed the following:

Chest funds are a special kind of money – free of legal requirements and restrictions, donated freely, and directly controlled by citizens. These funds can and should be used to meet current and continuously re-appraised community needs for quality service. The Chest should not and cannot attempt to meet all the needs of the people in Dane County and can and must decide what needs and services it will emphasize. The committee believes the givers to the Chest originally thought they were giving money to people in great need... The committee believes the Chest should return to its original image.

Two weeks later, in early December, the Community Chest's budget committee balanced its budget by reworking agency requests to meet available funds in the amount of \$1.5 million.

The committee asserted the following:

The questions faced include who is to be served with these scarce voluntarily contributed funds and can the Chest deviate significantly from the past in its funding of agencies and still maintain the goal of federation. The budget attempts to maintain the goal of fiscal responsibility to keep spending in line with income; advance the goal of social concern, to move ahead in the extending of vital health, welfare

and recreational services to our community's citizens, particularly those who cannot afford them; and attempts to maintain the goals of volunteerism and federation in the efficient and effective delivery of services.

Change was afoot. On December 11, 1968, a week after the Community Chest budget committee's balancing effort was reported, Madison newspapers carried a story on the resignation of Francis X. Morrissey, executive secretary of both the Madison United Community Chest and the Community Welfare Council. The resignation, effective in January, came six years after Morrissey's arrival in December 1962.

His replacement was announced in March 1969. Amos T. Burrows Jr., director of the Muskegon County United Appeal in Michigan, would take over as executive director of Madison's United Community Chest in April.

Amos Burrows came to Madison with a strong background in social services and fundraising, having held top posts in Boston, Massachusetts; Charlottesville, Virginia; and Ohio prior to his role in Michigan.

In four years in Muskegon, Burrows was charged with improving campaign results, administrative procedures, and financial policies. In the fundraising campaign (i.e., the most easily quantified of those), Burrows shined, increasing giving by 29 percent, \$792,000 to \$1.02 million, without any appreciable employment growth in the city.

The Community Welfare Council, on the other hand, was reorganized in 1969 as the Dane County Social Planning Agency and came into being with \$15,000 from the city, \$15,000 from the county, and \$25,000 from

the Community Chest.

Its first director was Virginia B. Hart, who a few years later was appointed secretary of Regulation and Licensing by Wisconsin Governor Patrick Lucey, making her the first woman to hold a cabinet position in state history. It is also noteworthy that in 1969, UWDC did not set a monetary goal for the annual campaign, amid the war protests and unrest. Yet the campaign, chaired by John C. Weston, of Webcrafters Inc., raised \$1.5 million, a more than 6 percent increase from the previous year.

Simultaneous to the arrival of Burrows in Madison, the United Community Chest asked its long-range planning committee to review and evaluate the recommendations of the Minahan Report. The committee, chaired by Wisconsin Power and Light Co. executive James Underkofler, eventually decided to expand that charter to three goals:

1. Evaluate the future of federated fundraising.
2. Develop some general priorities, guidelines, and recommendations for future expenditures and operations.
3. Make specific responses to recommendations of the Minahan Report.



The long-range planning committee's 18-page report was delivered in April 1970. It included serious recommendations for serious change, enough that it was a full year before the United Community Chest was ready to have the board vote on the proposals in its April 1971 meeting.



The city heard details for the first time at that meeting, the afternoon of April 20 at the downtown library.<sup>4</sup>

The recommendations included reorganizing the Community Chest board by reducing the number of board members from 60 to 30, an effort to achieve more active participation. Meetings would also be held monthly rather than quarterly.

One recommendation that received a lot of positive attention was “encouraging innovation,” a phrase that has been a mantra in Dane County ever since. The report explained that “in recent years the budget procedures of the Chest have operated through the use of the ‘supplemental category.’ This meant that new programs were eligible for funding only after current or ‘basic’ programs were financed. In practice, this gave low priority to innovative and demonstration projects.” The committee recommended eliminating the supplemental category when making allocations and considering new programs on their merits. Eventually, an Innovative Fund was developed, through which 10 new programs were supported in 1971.

A State Journal article the next day noted that one of the liveliest discussions at the board meeting—this was, after all, still the era of Vietnam War protests—was an “endeavor to prevent” giving Community Chest dollars “to further the effort of groups which advocate violence in their efforts to seek change.”

Other recommendations included a new uniform memo of understanding with participating agencies, a commitment to compliance with uniform standards of accounting, an effort to extend services and fundraising county wide, and the creation of a permanent priorities and

planning committee with a broad charter to make recommendations to the board in numerous areas.

Finally, the report recommended that the United Community Chest should establish new bylaws—and a new name for the organization.

The new name? United Way of Dane County.

Eight years earlier, in 1963, more than 30 community funds in southern California consolidated to form the United Way of Greater Los Angeles. A 1971 article in *Community* magazine observed: “Although it is probable that their reasons for merging were mainly financial, they optimistically envisioned this new organization as one which could have an impact on the total industrial force and thereby provide increased leadership as well as dollars for the agencies back home in the suburbs.”

By 1968, a United Community Funds and Councils of America study was recommending the “United Way” name to all its members.

The name United Way of Dane County (UWDC) was officially adopted at a May 10, 1971, meeting at the Atwood Avenue office attended by some 75 people; all contributors were entitled to vote.

In 1971, UWDC served 25 agencies and groups. The fundraising goal for the year<sup>5</sup> was \$1.7 million and stressed workplace giving and the “fair share” of one hour’s pay a month. Among the accomplishments touted around the drive’s October 14 kickoff was the Innovative Fund program that came out of the 1970 study. The innovations receiving funding included mobile meals for the elderly, a drug education project, rural out-reach, and a child daycare initiative.

When the 1971 drive ended in early November, the campaign was 5 percent short of its goal. That was addressed later that month in the first report of the new priorities and planning committee, chaired by Madison attorney Ted Long.

“We do intend to press for better response from the entire community,” the report said. “United Way leadership will be invested in new efforts.”

The primary directive of the report was that UWDC’s central mission should be to help solve the problems of the disadvantaged and dispossessed, in numerous areas from housing to healthcare.

“The scarcity of volunteer dollars will not excuse United Way leadership or our participating agencies from [that] responsibility,” the report continued. “The new thrust of the United Way of Dane County emphasizes the need of its participating agencies to serve the total community, while United Way dollars should be used principally to make services available to those who cannot pay.”

The next year, things got better. UWDC celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1972 with a February luncheon at the Hotel Loraine, during which the Aaron Bohrod painting Blue Elephants was awarded to the local business whose employees had donated the most per capita to the ’71 campaign. Bohrod, artist in residence at UW–Madison, donated the painting to the United Givers’ Fund in 1969, and it served as a UWDC “traveling trophy” for many years.

The fall 1972 campaign was a success, raising a total of \$1,717,000—\$55,000 more than the previous year and just \$13,000 below the stated goal. The Wisconsin State Journal took note of the renewed vigor with

an editorial:

“Undoubtedly [the] response stands as vindication of United Way’s courageous recent decision to confront the difficult issue of community priorities; to modernize its structure and budgeting procedures; to direct its dollars toward the most urgent needs; and to encourage innovative new approaches to new problems.”

However, in the wake of the ’72 campaign, a disturbing newspaper headline appeared in December: “Briarpatch May Close.” The reference was to a center for runaway teenagers that was launched earlier that year with the help of an \$11,000 Innovative Fund grant from UWDC.

Fortunately, as Dane County residents know, Briarpatch did not close. Indeed, it continues, half a century later,<sup>6</sup> to receive assistance from UWDC.

- 
1. Over the next two decades Maraniss would rise to the paper’s top editor position.
  2. President of the Bank of Madison.
  3. That cumulative figure was budgeted down to \$1.7 million.
  4. The full Community Chest membership would then vote in May.
  5. Announced in July by drive chairman Weber Smith, president of First Wisconsin Bank.
  6. As Briarpatch Youth Services led by Gloria Reyes.



## CHAPTER 5

### EQUITY AND GROWTH

**A**s UWDC began its second half century of existence in 1973, it faced another reckoning. In March of that year, Governor Patrick Lucey's Commission on the Status of Women, at a meeting in Janesville, unanimously adopted a resolution urging United Ways across Wisconsin "to examine board memberships and their programs to determine the number of programs directed toward men and boys and girls and women, and then change their policies accordingly."

The resolution further expressed, "It would appear that most United Way boards are made up almost entirely of male members and that the majority of United Way dollars are allocated to programs for men and boys."

When a Capital Times reporter reached out to UWDC executive director

Amos Burrows, he said he had not seen the report.

“If we are failing to meet somebody’s standards,” Burrows said, “what are those standards?”

The numbers did not look good. As the newspaper noted, UWDC had three decision-making entities: its board of directors; its budget committee, and its priorities and planning committee. The gender breakdown was as follows: Of the 28 members of the board of directors, four were women. Of the 41 members of the budget committee, six were women. Of the 16 members of the priorities and planning committee, four were women.

Marian Thompson, a member of the governor’s commission, said, “There you have it. The population is 53 percent women. I don’t want to see United Way damaged in any way. They have a rough time raising money. This isn’t any condemnation of what they do or their programs, we just want them to look and see how sexist they are.”

Maureen Arcand, another member of the governor’s commission, had been a member of UWDC’s priorities and planning committee and served in a leadership capacity with the Dane County Social Planning Agency. Arcand voted for the resolution but told The Capital Times that her past efforts to recruit low-income women to UWDC had been unsuccessful:

If United Way of Dane County feels it has to recruit women, then we’re back to the problem that women are reluctant to go into these things. I recently submitted the names of nine low-income women for the priorities and planning committee. They all turned it down because

meetings are held in the afternoon and they couldn't afford the time commitment. Low-income women are in job situations in which they can't ask for that kind of consideration from their employers. Men, however, are in positions where they can decide for themselves to take time off.

It wouldn't happen immediately, but before the decade was out, UWDC had its first female board president:<sup>1</sup> Gene F. Glover, who assumed the post in 1979, having also served as chief volunteer officer and interim executive director.

Glover was a 1939 graduate of Northwestern University. She worked with at-risk children in New York City, and in 1947, she moved to Madison with her husband, Benjamin Howell Glover, an associate professor of psychiatry at the University of Wisconsin Medical School. She was a consummate volunteer even beyond her UWDC service, having spent a decade as coordinator of the Friends of the Arboretum and coauthored a book, *Volunteerism: How to Build or Improve a Volunteer Program*.

Back in 1973, the governor's commission resolution prompted a look at UWDC funding allocations regarding gender. In 1973, the Boy Scouts received \$105,000 and the YMCA \$120,000, while the Girl Scouts received \$82,000 and the downtown YWCA \$62,000.



*Gene Glover, 1979, first female board president. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

The executive director of the Girl Scouts of Black Hawk Council told The Capital Times, “If it weren’t for the cookie drive, we would have gone down the drain a long time ago.”



The YWCA figured prominently in another controversy later in 1973. It went public with a topline headline in The Capital Times on September 1: “United Way Chief Pressures ‘Y’ on Gun Control.”

In August, Amos Burrows, UWDC executive director, sent a letter on



United Way letterhead to Gertrude Ramey, director of the Madison YWCA, suggesting it might be wise to “disassociate” the Madison Y from a position adopted by the national YWCA. At its annual convention, the national Y had passed a resolution in support of federal gun control legislation.

Burrows was a member of the National Rifle Association (NRA), and critics concluded he was, at least implicitly, threatening UWDC funding of the Madison YWCA if it didn’t distance itself from the gun control issue.

“While the Burrows letter is couched in polite terms,” a Capital Times editorial declared, “it is nonetheless typical of the heavy-handed pressure exerted on anyone who dares to differ from the powerful NRA’s militant stance against gun control.”

The Capital Times continued to report on the controversy—while the Wisconsin State Journal was largely absent—and months later, in May 1974, Capital Times editor and publisher Miles McMillin wrote a scathing front-page column criticizing UWDC for not demanding an explanation from Burrows regarding the letter.

“I have decided,” McMillin wrote, “to withhold any personal support from the United Way... Furthermore, as the editor and publisher of The Capital Times, I intend to withhold the support of this newspaper from the campaign of United Way.”

The issue seems to have faded with time. In fall 1974, The Capital Times did report on the United Way campaign, which raised \$1.8 million under the chairmanship of W. Jerome “Jerry” Frautschi, the latest of that

distinguished Madison family to devote his time and talent to UWDC. Frautschi would chair the UWDC board in 1977, a year after he married Madison entrepreneur Pleasant Rowland, a union that had a profound impact on the future of Dane County. The couple were dedicated philanthropists, and in the late 1990s, after Jerry retired from Webcrafters Inc. and Pleasant sold her highly successful company (American Girl®) to Mattel™, they donated hundreds of millions of dollars to launch a cultural arts district in downtown Madison.

One significant development that occurred during Jerry Frautschi's board chairmanship in 1977 was a reshaping of the Madison Community Trust Fund.<sup>2</sup> The change grew from a UWDC board meeting in May 1975 in which the board voted to develop a deferred giving program in cooperation with the Madison Community Trust Fund. A year later, in May 1976, a joint committee of the two organizations was formed to consider how a new relationship might best be structured. They'd had a close relationship since the trust's 1942 inception.<sup>3</sup>

The change was discussed and tentatively approved at UWDC board meetings in November and December 1976. UWDC board member Ted Long pointed out that it was “a matter of faith that United Way and its agencies will get at least a fair share of the allocations made by an expanded trust fund.” The suggested new name—United Madison Community Foundation—reinforced the ties.

The UWDC board passed a resolution in support of the change in May 1977.<sup>4</sup>



*W. Jerome Frautschi & Pleasant Rowland Frautshi. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

The year 1977 proved to be a banner year for the annual UWDC fundraising campaign as well. The campaign chair was Reed Coleman, president of the Madison-Kipp Corporation and son of Thomas Coleman, who, like Reed, had been president of Madison-Kipp and involved with the Madison Community Union dating to the 1920s.

Reed Coleman ran the '77 campaign aggressively. While it technically operated from September 19 to November 4, Coleman and his team—called “Coleman’s Crew” in minutes from a March 1977 UWDC board meeting—began soliciting corporate dollars in June, at the same time identifying public employees and Dane County communities outside of Madison as areas where giving could be improved. Coleman had an eye

for public relations. A documentary on UWDC aired on all three Madison commercial television stations in September, and Coleman announced he would kick off the official campaign by launching himself from downtown Madison in a hot-air balloon at noon on September 19. Alas, high winds kept the balloon grounded.

The campaign itself soared. On November 5, 1977, the day after the campaign ended, Coleman hosted what he called a “victory luncheon” for 600 people at the Park Motor Inn on Madison’s Capitol Square. UWDC’s 28 member agencies would benefit from a campaign that raised \$2.28 million, some \$30,000 more than the campaign goal and a 13 percent increase from the 1976 drive.

News accounts reported that the luncheon turned into an impromptu roast of Coleman. Among those throwing good-natured barbs at Coleman was Ralph Dickerson, the associate executive director of UWDC. Dickerson had arrived in Madison a year and a half earlier at the age of 29, joining UWDC as campaign director, having previously been assistant campaign director at the United Way of Greater St. Louis.



*Reed Coleman (circa 1962). Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

By the time of the Park Motor Inn luncheon, Dickerson had been promoted to associate executive director and was on the verge of being named UWDC executive director. Amos Burrows stepped down from that post in November 1977. Burrows had been doing two jobs since February 1975, when UWDC planning director Lowell Wright died of a heart attack. Burrows took over his duties as well as his own as director. When he stepped away as executive director in November 1977, he remained briefly as planning director.

Dickerson was one of three candidates for the top job; the others were men from Green Bay and Flint, Michigan. The board decided to offer

Dickerson the job at its December 1977 board meeting, and in January, he became one of the first—if not, the first—African American persons to lead a United Way in the United States.<sup>5</sup>

As the 1970s grew to a close, both the county and the organization were in good shape, facing challenges, certainly, but well prepared to meet them. UWDC's 1979 annual report was titled, "Synergy: A People Resource for the 80's."

Executive Director Ralph Dickerson explained the synergy as follows:

I see the synergistic idea as a recognition by the non-profit sector that people are a resource. There is a wholeness to volunteerism... that we have never seen before. People will volunteer to make sure their community needs are being met, and they will also volunteer because, in the end, they will gain experience. They will gain a better understanding and personal satisfaction that will relate to tangible things... that they can stand up and be accounted for. We will encourage people to become more actively involved by serving on boards and committees, task groups, etc.

United Way must play a major role in reinstating the confidence of people in the American system. There is a great opportunity for the United Way system in the 80's. You can count on United Way to provide leadership, enthusiasm, commitment and measurable results.

Accomplishments in 1979 included: the development of a system for updating and ranking human services priority classifications; meeting the campaign goal of \$2.6 million; and instituting a year-round public relations program, chaired by Ron Bornstein, general manager of WHA

radio and television (and eventually acting president of National Public Radio [NPR]).

**You can count on United Way to provide leadership, enthusiasm, commitment and measurable results.**

Bornstein expounded on communications and United Way:

Communications are absolutely essential. One of the many things we have found out at WHA as we go out and try to determine community needs, interest and problems is that people are not as aware of their community as one would think. A common statement often made by our community leaders is that many people do not realize that there are services available to help them with their needs. They don't know who to contact or where the services are. The mission of communications within United Way is to indicate readily to people that when they need help it is there.

Two agencies were admitted for the first time into the UWDC fold in 1979:<sup>6</sup> the Dane County Advocates for Battered Women and the Adult Day Care Center.

Nancy Barlow, who had been on the Dane County Advocates for Battered Women's advisory council since 1977, spoke about how the process worked.

"Once on the committee, I began to help establish a formal structure,"

Barlow said. “When this was completed we applied for United Way innovative funding with Family Services [a United Way agency that conducted extensive family education programs] as our sponsor. To receive innovative funding, we had to document the need and we came up with some alarming figures.”

Barlow said there were around 4,000 cases of domestic abuse against women annually in Dane County.

The agency applied to the UWDC admissions committee and was accepted. The agency provided a shelter for women and children in need of a safe place to stay, counseling and job assistance, and a 24-hour crisis telephone line.

“If it hadn’t been for United Way,” Barlow said, “this agency would never have gotten off the ground.”

The US economy was in tough shape in 1980<sup>7</sup> but incoming UWDC campaign chairman W. Robert Koch, president of American Family Insurance®, sounded an optimistic note before it began: “I’m confident we’re going to have the strongest campaign ever. Fortunately, the statistics prove that Dane County is one of the areas least affected by the recession because of the stable employment here.”

On his own involvement, Koch said, “It takes a considerable amount of time, but I feel that I have a personal obligation to the community and also to represent American Family Insurance® because we’re the second largest private employer in this community. We have an obligation to Dane County.”

Koch was right to be confident. UWDC set a lofty \$3 million target goal



for the 1980 campaign, and the final total nudged just above it—  
\$3,006,065.

**If you  
can read  
this...**

Believe it or not, some people have trouble reading—even here in Dane County. Some have learning disabilities. Some are learning English as a second language. And some have high school and college educations, yet still read at a grade school level.

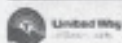
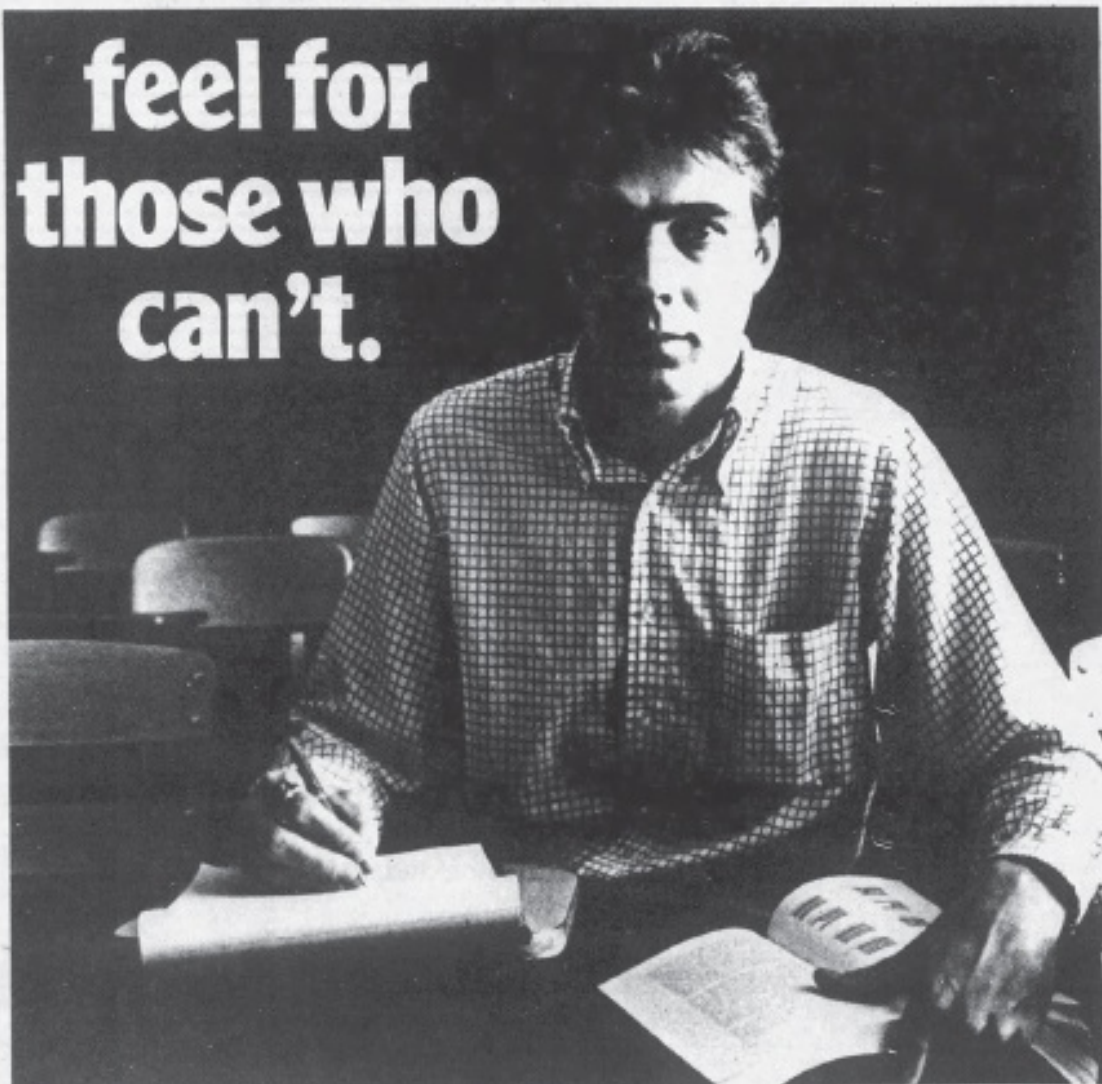
Whatever the problem, now there is a place to go for help...the Madison Literacy Council. They help bring to others the ability you take for granted as you read these words. The Madison Literacy Council is just one of the many human service agencies funded by United Way.

If you can read this,

If you care,

Give to the United Way of Dane County.

**feel for  
those who  
can't.**



It works best when we work together...

**United**  
*the Dane County*  
**Way**



*1980 Campaign Ad. Newspaper clipping from Wisconsin State Journal, 7 Oct 1980, Tue.*

“Once again,” Chairman Koch said, “the people of Dane County responded in their usual generous way and made the 1980 campaign our most successful campaign ever.”

Employment may have been stable in Dane County, but UWDC soon had a significant position to fill. In March 1981, Executive Director Ralph Dickerson submitted his letter of resignation to become associate executive director of United Way of Greater Cleveland in Ohio.<sup>8</sup>

Madison and UWDC gave Dickerson and his wife, Gloria, a rousing send-off in May. He was honored at the 12th annual Urban League of Greater Madison dinner, attended by 550 people.

“Dane County is unique,” Dickerson said. “It’s unique because of the vast human resources, talented individuals, the willingness and desire to take advantage of the fullness of what this community offers.”

While a national search was conducted for Dickerson’s successor, Gene Glover stepped in as acting director of UWDC. Glover had served as board chair two years earlier and continued as chair of UWDC’s Volunteer Services Bureau, a kind of community volunteer clearinghouse, bringing together prospective volunteers with the various agencies in need of their service.

The year 1981 introduced a concept that would remain of surpassing importance to UWDC for the next four decades: leadership giving.

The United Way history book *Grassroots Initiatives* traces “the first

leadership giving society” to 1936 in Yonkers, New York, quoting an article from the national Community Chests and Councils’ news bulletin: “Everybody who gives more to the Yonkers Community Chest campaign than last year is entitled to membership in the mythical ‘Legion of the Plus.’” The campaign slogan was “Give plus, Neighbor!” and encouraged the residents of Yonkers to “do more than duty and to give more than the minimum required for respectability.”

Grassroots Initiatives asserted the following:

Leaders in the Yonkers campaign had hit upon an idea that was destined to be tried in hundreds of communities in almost as many variations. Early symbols of leadership giving reflected local culture and values. Yonkers’ “mythical legion” wouldn’t work in Youngstown, Ohio, a city with great pride in its public schools. There, the Community Fund established a giving “honor roll” for people who increased their annual campaign gifts. Birmingham, Alabama, witnessing a growing steel manufacturing industry, encouraged donors to become part of the community “girders club,” while Little Rock, Arkansas, sought members of a group whose generosity reflected the architecture of its ante bellum homes, the Community Chest “pillars society.”

In Madison in 1981, the yearly fund drive chairman—Robert Curry, president and CEO of CUNA Mutual Group—came up with a leadership giving initiative UWDC called the “Chairman’s Key Club,” later shortened to simply the Key Club. It was an informal organization designed to encourage individual leadership giving and recognize those who gave at generous levels. In 1981, the Key Club attracted 172 charter members at the Gold Key (a contribution of \$2,000 or more), Silver Key (\$1,000– \$1,999), and Bronze Key (\$500–\$999) levels.<sup>9</sup>

Nearly a decade on, in 1992, UWDC's Key Club boasted more than 1,400 members, including a top Platinum Key contribution of \$5,000–\$9,999, with Key Club members contributing a total of more than \$1 million.

On June 27, 1981, Madison newspapers ran stories announcing Ralph Dickerson's successor for UWDC executive director. John Jaco, associate executive director and campaign director for Orange County United Way in California, was the selection. Jaco, a graduate of the University of California, Northridge, had been with the Orange County organization since 1974 and was known as a particularly effective fundraiser.

Earlier in 1981, a woman who would have a profound impact on UWDC going forward—indeed, she would succeed Jaco and remain in the top job more than 25 years—was hired as director of UWDC's Volunteer Services Bureau.

Leslie Ann Howard grew up in Pennsylvania and got started at the early age of 14 in social service work, assisting people with developmental disabilities. Howard came to Madison to get a master's degree, which she received in 1979. It was a tough job market, and Howard juggled several part-time positions for a couple of years, including working for the Madison Public Library's INFO program, which referred people in need of assistance to the appropriate social service agency.

"It was in a little box on the first floor of the City-County Building," Howard said, recalling the INFO office. "There were like five of us in the there. People would call and we would answer questions they had about anything—mostly human service related. Guys getting out of jail would come and ask us for help. It was really interesting."

And, not to mention, a valuable experience. “I learned a lot about the needs in the community,” Howard said. “A lot of the gentlemen who were homeless on the street would come by. We’d get to know them and give them referrals to food pantries and things like that. I got to know the community and people in need quite well, along with the services of the community.”

Howard’s hiring at UWDC was followed shortly after by budget cuts at the Madison Public Library that threatened the INFO program. Howard approached UWDC leadership with the idea of acquiring INFO, and late in 1981, that happened. The new UWDC service was called First Call for Help (FCFH), and news reports mentioned that its referrals would go to all Dane County agencies and not just those affiliated with UWDC.

UWDC Board Chairman Michael Larson told the Wisconsin State Journal, “FCFH provides us with another way to meet the needs of the community. One of the first steps in being able to get help is in knowing where to go.”

The 1981 UWDC annual report noted that 70–85 residents called FCFH daily for information. Another important entity, the Volunteer Services Bureau<sup>10</sup> catalogued 200 Dane County organizations that sought volunteers for some 400 jobs.

“We’d hear from Girls Scouts or the YWCA or a food pantry or homeless shelter,” Howard recalled. “It was the job of the Volunteer Services Bureau to find out what kind of volunteers they needed and then drum up business so people would come in and volunteer. By the same token, if people wanted to volunteer but didn’t know what they wanted to do, we would find them a place to volunteer.”

In 1982, a special kind of UWDC volunteer program underwent a significant upgrade. UWDC had for many years drawn on part-time “loaned executives” from area businesses to help with its annual fundraising drive. But in 1982, for the first time, nine executives were loaned full-time to UWDC for 10 weeks. It was the result of a major push by UWDC executive director John Jaco, who had worked successfully with full-time loaned executives in California.

“It made it possible for UWDC to reach and educate more people than ever before in the 1982 campaign,” the annual report remarked.



If it was good for UWDC, it was also a valuable experience for the loaned executives themselves. One member of that first full-time class was Londa Dewey—Londa Jorgensen in 1982—who was only one month into her management training at First Wisconsin National Bank of Madison when the bank assigned her to be a full-time loaned executive at UWDC.



*The first Loaned Executive team in 1982. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection housed at the Wisconsin Historical Society.*

Dewey was a recent graduate of the University of Illinois. She was aware of United Way: her father, a bank president in Champaign, Illinois, had chaired a campaign, and Londa had volunteered through some student organizations at the university.

Dewey and the other eight full-time loaned executives first got 40 hours of training about UWDC and marketing and public speaking advice from local professionals. Each of the loaned executives had three part-time loaned executives to assist them, and each team was responsible for 75–80 Dane County businesses.

Dewey recalled going to speak to local firms and learning so much along the way:

It would be an employee meeting where typically the leader of the



company, the CEO, would talk about United Way and why he or she believed that it was good for business and good for the community. Then the loaned executive would share the [UWDC] story and show a film. I remember carrying a movie projector with me into all my rallies.<sup>11</sup>

I learned so much about United Way. It was doing much the same work as today—being a community convener. United Way was never trying to put a Band-Aid on anything. They were trying to get to the root cause of challenges so they could fund programs to make a difference and impact that root cause, improving the human condition in our community.

We had an opportunity to meet with the different agencies that were delivering programs. I remember going to Operation Fresh Start and meeting some of the participants, learning their stories. It motivated me to raise as much money as I possibly could.<sup>12</sup>

When her time as a loaned executive was finished, Dewey wrote First Wisconsin National Bank President John Becker a memo:

“I told him what I learned from the experience, how it was an incredible opportunity, and that the bank should always provide a loaned executive.”

Dewey eventually rose to the bank presidency herself, and her devotion to UWDC has never wavered. She chaired the 1999 annual campaign that raised a record \$11 million and later served as chairwoman of both UWDC and the UWDC Foundation boards. She is also currently UWDC’s centennial chair.<sup>13</sup>



The 1982 annual campaign raised more than \$3.1 million. Allocating the funds to the 30 agencies served by UWDC (along with 11 innovative projects) was a coordinated process between the city, county, and five UWDC allocation panels made up of Dane County volunteers from a cross section of the community. The panels were each responsible for a certain number of agencies, studying their budgets and asking questions in an effort to make fair and informed decisions on funding.

Leslie Ann Howard staffed one of the panels when she first started at UWDC; before too long, with the departure of UWDC allocations director Michele Mickelson, Howard added that post to her duties. The panels were loosely organized by workload (i.e., size) and area of need (i.e., seniors, children, health, and employment). Decisions on allocations were never easy; with government cutbacks in the first years of the Reagan administration, it was harder still, so prioritizing became important.

“We were just getting started talking about needs assessment,” Howard said.

One of the 11 innovative projects funded by UWDC for 1983 deserves special mention: Centro Hispano, a new center for Dane County’s Latino community, was launched with \$14,018 from UWDC. The grand opening was March 18, 1983, and included remarks from Wisconsin Governor Anthony Earl.

The center was housed in the Madison Community Foundation center on North Fairchild Street, and its first director was Ilda Thomas, who had been trained as a nurse in her native Paraguay and said she saw the center as “a clearinghouse to assess needs and then find the best place

where we can get help for their needs.” The most pressing concern at the outset was helping assimilate Cuban refugees from the Mariel boatlift. Teaching English was a priority.

Later, Thomas saw her role as attempting “to maintain the flavor of the Third World in the midst of the First World,” with an “emphasis on personal relationships.” Ilda Thomas suffered a fatal heart attack in 1994, but her name lives on, as does Centro Hispano of Dane County. The Ilda C. Thomas Award is presented annually to someone who, with humility, ensures a strong Latino community voice. By 2020, the organization itself had 20 full-time staff and an annual budget of \$2.5 million.

# Hispanic center grand opening set March 18

By **DAN ALLEGRETTI**

Capital Times Staff Writer

Centro Hispano, a new center for Dane County's Hispanic community, will officially open its doors Friday, March 18 with a public reception that will include a personal greeting by Gov. Anthony Earl.

The center actually has been operating since January with a program in connection with the Madison Literacy Council to help Hispanics learn English. With the official opening, Hispanics will have a place to go for assistance with other problems besides language, referrals to appropriate existing programs, and other services including community outreach.

**Centro Hispano is located in the Madison Community Center, 112 N. Fairchild St.**

Ilda Thomas, founder and executive director of the center, describes it as a "clearing house to assess needs and then find the best place where we can get help for their needs." The No. 1 priority in assisting Hispanics is teaching them English, she said.

*Announcement about the opening of the Centro Hispano center. Newspaper clipping from The Capital Times, 10 Mar 1983, Thu.*

The year 1983 also saw a furthering of the partnership between UWDC and the United Madison Community Foundation.

A year earlier, UWDC had sent a survey to its board members, as well as other key community leaders, posing the question of how an endowment to UWDC of \$518,000 from Norman Bassett, who died in 1980, should best be utilized.

Most respondents felt the interest income should be used for current UWDC needs. It was not an insignificant amount: three to six-month certificates of deposit (CDs) were yielding around 9 percent interest at that time. But the board felt the principal should be established as a permanent reserve.

Around the same time, the United Madison Community Foundation expressed interest in an endowment and/or deferred giving program joint venture with UWDC. A task force was formed to vet the idea; members included prominent UWDC volunteers Bill Walker and Michael Larson, as well as community leaders such as Dane County executive Jonathan Barry and Ruth Doyle, the first woman from Dane County elected to the Wisconsin State Assembly and mother of a future governor.

Announced to the public in December 1983, the resulting UWDC–Community Foundation collaboration involved a pooling of funds that established the approximately \$1 million United Way Endowment Fund.<sup>14</sup> Allocation of the income from the fund for the first three years

included \$100,000 annually for UWDC emergency or innovative funding (in addition to the innovative funding program already budgeted) and for United Community Foundation venture grants to local organizations and, eventually, the hiring of a full-time director for the foundation.

In March 1986, Jane Coleman was hired in that role. As executive director of the Madison Community Foundation (MCF), as it came to be called, for the next decade, Coleman appreciably grew both its endowment and its community impact.<sup>15</sup>



By 1984, UWDC—like other United Ways statewide—was in the nascent stages of taking a more proactive role in solving community problems—not just raising and allocating money, but creating identifiable positive change.

In May 1984, United Way Associates of Wisconsin sponsored a conference in Stevens Point named Transferring Community Needs to Action.

José Peña, vice president of planning and allocations for United Way of America, spoke on United Way's role in community problem solving.

Veteran UWDC volunteer and chair of its planning committee Stanley York spoke on models for community problem solving.

Before the year was out, York, whose day job was executive director of the League of Wisconsin Municipalities, led a UWDC task force with a charter to make the organization more needs focused, beginning with

developing a more systematic mechanism for identifying need in Dane County.

Out of York's task force came a UWDC committee to assess needs, chaired by Jean Davis and staffed by Leslie Ann Howard, UWDC vice president for planning and allocations. The committee formed work groups to assess unmet needs for seniors, children, employment, health, basic resources, and people with disabilities. The work groups totaled 75 volunteers; they distributed surveys to more than 1,000 people and conducted more than 20 public forums.

The committee's work was accomplished in collaboration with the Dane County Coordinating Council.<sup>16</sup> The committee also met with the funding recipients—that is the county's human service agencies, all of which faced some adjustments due to the UWDC focus shift to needs.

“Before they were coming to us individually,” Leslie Ann Howard said. “Now we were all sharing information and we moved to a joint proposal form and innovative funding.”

In a Wisconsin State Journal interview, Stanley York revealed that in the past agency funding had been an “all or nothing” proposition. “Either you were in or you weren't in,” York said. “Now, we have five categories of participation. An agency can be a full participant, as in the past. [Or] It can ask us for support for a specific program.”

Howard observed the following:

We knew the work they were doing, which was good work. I don't want to make it sound like there was no accountability – there was. But this moved to more program funding and United Way began to have more

of a point of view, rather than our point of view being shaped and formed by the agencies.

Before, you came in and made your presentation. We'd look at all that. Who was the most worthy? Who did the best presentation? The change was, now we're looking at what the needs are and we want to prioritize some of these things. You [an agency] might be doing some great things but it might not fit the priorities we've identified.

The passion behind it was it's always good to be raising money and helping charities. That's a wonderful thing. But what are the [community's] crying needs? We used two criteria: The incidence and severity of problems. If something is extremely severe like child abuse, you need to pay attention to it. By the same token, if you have something that is pervasive, the incidence of it is great – say poverty – we'd say we have to pay attention to that too. We'd apply those two criteria, and a lot of others, to say how do we prioritize what the community needs?

The Davis committee's 175-page report was released in summer 1986.

"It's a major step," Howard said of the report, in an interview with the State Journal in July 1986. "The major funding agencies have agreed that these are the problems; now we will determine how to meet them."

In fall 1986, UWDC—assisted by the advertising agency Waldbillig & Besteman—created a compelling series of public service advertisements that ran in the Wisconsin State Journal, Capital Times, and Madison Magazine. The ads focused on how United Way and its agencies help children, families, and adults.

The ad addressing children was headlined, "THERE'S A WAY TO



IMPROVE THE BEST YEARS OF THEIR LIVES.”

The ad copy was blunt: “Let’s destroy a myth – instead of our children. Life is far from rosy for many Dane County young people. Times change. Child abuse reports have more than quadrupled in the past three years. In 1985, 3,000 youths reported serious suicidal feelings. Over 22,600 pre-teen children need – but aren’t receiving – regulated day care. Nearly a fourth of all children under 18 are living in poverty. United Way helps agencies that help children. Rose-colored glasses and outdated clichés won’t do any good. Your contribution to United Way will.”



# THERE'S A WAY TO IMPROVE "THE BEST YEARS OF THEIR LIVES"

## THE UNITED WAY

Let's destroy a myth—instead of our children. Life is far from rosy for many Dane County young people. Times change. Child abuse reports have more than quadrupled in the past three years. In 1985, 3,000 youths reported serious suicidal feelings. Over 22,600 pre-teen children need—but aren't receiving—regulated day care. Nearly a fourth of all children under 18 are living in poverty.

United Way helps agencies that help children. Rose-colored glasses and outdated clichés won't do any good. Your contribution to United Way will. For more information, call 246-4350.

**WHERE  
THERE'S A  
NEED, THERE'S  
A WAY**



**United Way**  
of Dane County

Produced as a public service by  
Waldhillig & Besteman, Inc.  
The Capital Times  
Wisconsin State Journal

*“Where There’s A Need, There’s A Way” ad campaign. Newspaper clipping from The Capital Times, 10 Nov 1986, Mon.*

The ad concluded with the UWDC logo and slogan: “Where there’s a need, there’s a way.”

Another ad— “THERE’S A WAY TO HELP MORE FAMILIES FROM BEING TORN APART”— focused on agencies like the Parental Stress Center, The Respite Center, Family Service Madison, and more. A third — “THERE’S A WAY TO GIVE HER A HELPING HAND INSTEAD OF A COLD SHOULDER”—concerned the elderly and pointed to the United Way agencies that help them, including Independent Living, the Visiting Nurse Service, and the Salvation Army.

The 1987 annual fundraising effort was called “the first needs driven campaign” by UWDC executive director John Jaco. It was a success. At the UWDC annual meeting in February 1988 at the Inn on the Park, Jaco reviewed some highlights from the previous year, including exceeding the campaign goal of \$4.8 million, a 10 percent increase from 1986. He noted that 1987 brought an affiliation with the American Heart Association under an agreement that would direct United Way funds to the agency in return for it not fundraising independently during the UWDC annual drive.

The same sentiment was at work the following year when UWDC joined forces with the Combined Health Appeal (CHA), which raised funds for charities like Easter Seal Society and Muscular Dystrophy Association.

“It was creating a bit of a conflict,” Leslie Ann Howard said, adding that Dane County businesses didn’t appreciate multiple charity asks. “We’d

go in the door and then they'd go in the door," Howard lamented. Earlier talks about combining had failed; in 1988, Howard and Stan York met several times with Combined Health Appeal executive director Thomas Heine and CHA board member Roy Campbell and worked out a deal, adding 19 agencies to the UWDC roster.

"The contract was different," Howard said. "They didn't go through the allocation process. They got a defined amount based on the campaign results."

The 1988 UWDC campaign got a touching kickoff in February when a six-year-old Madison boy named Eric took the \$5 he'd received from his grandparents for Valentine's Day and earmarked it for UWDC. The year's campaign chairman, Jack Spohn, was impressed enough to suggest a meeting with Eric at The Respite Center, a UWDC agency that provided care for children in stressful or crisis situations. Eric got a tour of the center, and Spohn told him how the letter he'd sent to UWDC along with his \$5 had energized the staff.

Eric wrote, "I would like to give this money to a poor boy or girl. My mom said that you do good things, so I decided to send it to you."

- 
1. The title would eventually change to board chair.
  2. The trust, established in 1942, with reserve funds from the vastly successful War Chest year drives.
  3. When UWDC's predecessor bought the Atwood Avenue building in 1954, the trust financed the purchase.
  4. Six years later, in 1983, the relationship was adjusted again when UWDC and the foundation pooled their trust funds to form the \$1 million United Way Endowment Fund.
  5. Indeed, in 1984, when Dickerson accepted the top job at the Pittsburgh area United Way, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette began its story with this: "Ralph Dickerson Jr. will become the first

black to head a major United Way organization in the country.” Presumably, Pittsburgh didn’t view Dane County as “major.” The citizenry and its United Way would have disagreed.

6. For funding in 1980.
7. Unemployment was up and so was, counterintuitively, inflation.
8. Of the 2,200 United Ways in the country, Cleveland had the highest per capita giving at the time.
9. The Gold Key contributors that first year were Mrs. Norman Bassett, Mr. and Mrs. P. Goff Beach, Mrs. Eugenia Mayer Bolz, Deirdre Wilson Garton, Doug and Norma Madsen, Jean Manchester, and Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Mayer.
10. Acquired by UWDC when it lost funding in the ‘70s.
11. In 1982, for the first time, UWDC produced its own campaign film.
12. Operation Fresh Start is another agency that got its start thanks to UWDC.
13. One of Dewey’s favorite UWDC memories is chairing the Key Club and organizing an event at Olbrich Botanical Gardens in 1996, which had music by Ben and Leo Sidran and a keynote address by the legendary Marquette University basketball coach and commentator Al McGuire. McGuire offered some predictions for what basketball in 2020 would be like: He believed the hoop would be smaller (the players having become too big and too skilled) and that there would be a referee positioned atop each basket. He was a better speaker than prognosticator.
14. According to UWDC board minutes, United Way’s contribution was \$400,000, including \$354,770 from the Norman Bassett gift and portions of gifts from three others.
15. In 1993, leadership volunteers would encourage UWDC to incorporate its own United Way of Dane County Foundation. Current MCF leader Bob Sorge and Renee Moe co authored a white paper in 2019 to help the community understand the unique, complimentary, and ongoing positive relationship between the two organizations.
16. An umbrella group including representatives from the city, county and other organizations.



## CHAPTER 6

# NEW LEADERSHIP, LAUNCHING TOCQUEVILLE, NATIONAL TURMOIL, AND SCHOOLS OF HOPE

In January 1989, Wisconsin State Journal reporter Bill Wineke delivered a scoop. His story was headlined, “Jaco reportedly leaving post as county United Way chief.”

Jaco was indeed leaving to lead the well-respected United Way in Denver, Colorado. His legacy in Madison<sup>1</sup> included increasing annual contributions from about \$3 million to more than \$5 million. The number of agencies supported by UWDC increased from 30 to more than 50, more yet if the 19 member agencies of the CHA were included.

And while Jaco is best remembered for his fundraising, he recognized, before leaving Madison, the evolving, more hands-on role of UWDC,

telling a reporter in 1988, “The United Way has to look at its posture in the community as a community problem-solver, not just a fundraiser. We have to look at what the needs of the community are today and what they are going to be for the next five years.”

**The United Way has to look at its posture in the community as a community problem-solver, not just a fundraiser.**

There were more than 200 applicants from across the United States to replace Jaco as UWDC president. A 12-member search committee headed by GTE executive James Blanchard, 1988 UWDC board chairman, narrowed the search to three finalists, two of whom were leading United Ways in smaller cities. The third finalist was Leslie Ann Howard.

“It was kind of unusual at that time for a United Way to consider someone from the staff,” Howard recalled.

Three decades on, she still remembers how she learned she’d been selected. The 1989 UWDC board chairman, Jim Holt, made an appointment to see her in her UWDC office.

“I even remember what I was wearing,” Howard said. She’d had an inkling what the appointment was about. “I wore this dress my mother gave me. When he told me, I remember putting my head down on the table because I think I almost fainted. It was pretty exciting.”

Blanchard, the search committee chair, said the committee “was tremendously impressed by Leslie Howard’s professional credentials, her in-depth understanding of United Way issues at the local and national level, and her sensitivity and commitment to responding to human service needs.



*Leslie Ann Howard. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

Our committee’s unanimous recommendation offers clear evidence of the confidence that we have in her ability to assume the United Way’s top professional position.”

These years later, Howard admits to having some nervous moments in



her early days at the helm, particularly as the 1989 fund drive approached.

“I had a lot to learn,” she said, allowing that her expertise was in recognizing need in the community and matching allocations to that need. Raising money was something else.

“It was nerve-wracking because we’d had so much success raising money and needed to keep that going,” Howard added. “The good thing was we always had great volunteers, people we recruited three to five years out to work on the campaigns.”



*Mary Ann Shaw, first female UWDC campaign chairperson. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

In 1989, Mary Ann Shaw, wife of UW System president Kenneth “Buzz”

Shaw and a consummate volunteer for charity, chaired the annual UWDC drive, the first woman ever to lead the Dane County campaign.

It was a smashing success, raising just over \$6 million, a 10 percent increase over the 1988 total.

In January 1990, it was announced that UWDC's 1989 fund drive had won the United Way of America's Second Century Initiative Award for its "overall excellent, innovative and creative campaign," besting some 800 other United Ways for the honor.

Asked for comment, Howard said, "We are extremely pleased and proud that our organization was selected. It is exciting for our volunteers and staff. We have been working and planning for several years to develop a more effective volunteer base, to target new and untapped markets and to be more responsive to the needs of our community and more sensitive to our contributors."

United Way of America cited UWDC's "research-based strategy and use of needs assessment to link the money that is raised with meeting the needs that exist in the community."

Mary Ann Shaw, who chaired the successful 1989 annual drive, spoke with Howard and expressed interest in coming on board in a professional capacity. In summer 1990, Shaw became vice president of fund development for UWDC.<sup>2</sup>

Shaw and Howard teamed together in 1990 to launch a program that looms large in the history of UWDC.

**“Feelings and ideas are renewed,”  
Tocqueville wrote, “the heart enlarged,  
and the understanding developed only by  
reciprocal action of men one upon the  
other.”**

Speaking of Shaw, Howard said, “She helped me approach Mr. Oscar Mayer to see if he would be the first person in our Tocqueville Society.”

Back in 1972, United Way of America began its Alexis de Tocqueville Society. Tocqueville was a Frenchman who came to the United States in 1831 and wrote a book, *Democracy in America*, highly praised for its lens on American society and politics. United Way of America chose his name for its society because of Tocqueville’s belief in the spirit of volunteering for the common good.

“Feelings and ideas are renewed,” Tocqueville wrote, “the heart enlarged, and the understanding developed only by reciprocal action of men one upon the other.”

In March 1984, United Way of America established the Tocqueville Society program to encourage and assist local United Way organizations in forming their own Tocqueville Societies to honor individuals of exemplary volunteer service and personal giving. The individual annual donation figure for Tocqueville membership was set at \$10,000.

Howard recalled, “People said, ‘No one is ever going to give \$10,000 in

Madison. It's not going to happen.' But it did."

Howard and Shaw recruited Oscar Mayer™ president Jerry Hiegel<sup>3</sup> and they, in turn, spoke with retired Oscar Mayer™ executive Oscar G. Mayer—grandson of the company founder—who, with his wife, Rosalie, agreed to be Tocqueville Society pioneers. A luncheon was held at the Governor's Mansion in Maple Bluff to introduce select members of the Dane County community to the Tocqueville program. The first year's founding members, in addition to the Mayers, included Hiegel and his wife, Dorothy; the Eugenie Mayer Bolz Family Foundation; Thomas and Judy Pyle; Irwin and Robert Goodman; and one individual who wished to remain anonymous.

Speaking in 2020 of the society's impact on UWDC, Howard said, "Tocqueville was the growth engine of the last 30 years, along with Key Club. Leadership giving is what has allowed us to grow and be as successful as we have been." By 2020, Tocqueville had grown to 245 members, donating \$4.4 million representing nearly 24 percent of the campaign.

In 1991, the Jack DeLoss Taylor Charitable Trust made a gift of \$50,000 to UWDC in the form of a matching grant. For every new Tocqueville Society member at the \$10,000 level, the Taylor funds would be used to make a \$5,000 additional donation.

Jack Taylor died in 1989, and his daughter, Catherine, a trustee, came to Madison in 1991 to present the gift at a donor recognition dinner. Columnist Bill Wineke profiled Jack Taylor in the Wisconsin State Journal, noting that Taylor had lived quietly and frugally while building a successful business owning and operating numerous white stucco gas

stations in the Madison area.<sup>4</sup>

Humble and frugal also described Tocqueville founding members Irwin and Bob Goodman, brothers from the Twin Cities who operated a successful jewelry store on State Street in Madison for several decades. Their quiet philanthropy across the city became legendary.

“They really didn’t want a lot of recognition,” Howard said, when interviewed for a biography of the brothers published in 2014. “If they did want it, it was more as a way to stimulate others to give. ‘We’re at this level, now other people should be at this level.’”

Howard recalled that when she was hired to lead UWDC she got a call from Irwin Goodman, inviting her to the small apartment the brothers shared near Madison’s Capitol Square.

“They wanted to impress upon me that they were very committed to the community,” Howard recalled, “and that we would be actively involved together doing work in the community. That certainly proved to be the case. I don’t think they ever said no to me. Anything that we asked for, they found a way to say yes. Which is pretty amazing.”

It didn’t take long for UWDC’s Tocqueville Society to take off. In 1992, Jerry Frautschi and Pleasant Rowland hosted a dinner for prospective members at the Pleasant Company—the guest speaker was Fortune magazine publisher John B. Hayes. By 1994—just four years after its formation—Tocqueville membership had increased to 28 individuals donating \$375,000 to United Way and an additional \$275,000 to the UWDC Foundation.

In Dane County, like most everywhere else, there was a serious need for

those dollars, and UWDC's needs assessment work had identified children's services—in particular, early childhood—as an area in need of immediate attention.

Erroll Davis Jr.— the first African American president of Wisconsin Power and Light Co. and in line to chair the 1992 UWDC annual fund drive—gave the keynote speech at the 1991 UWDC annual meeting. His topic was *Our Children Are Our Future*.

He had a receptive audience. Mayor Paul Soglin and Dane County executive Rick Phelps had targeted early childhood concerns as a priority, and a year earlier, a Madison civic leader, Hannah Rosenthal, executive director of the Wisconsin Women's Council, put it succinctly: “We live in a society where leaders have been paying attention to who's in charge, but have lost sight of who's in trouble. That's what this is all about. We have to force the leaders of the world to remember the children.”

**ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE SOCIETY GROWS.**  
**\$50,000 TAYLOR GRANT BOOSTS MEMBERSHIP.**



Eight new Alexis de Tocqueville members each giving at least \$10,000 have increased total membership to 14 and total dollars raised to \$190,000. These more than 100% increases were boosted by a challenge grant made by the Jack DeLoss Taylor Foundation. For every new member of the society, the foundation would give \$5000 until it totaled a \$50,000 gift. Dr. Catherine Taylor, daughter of Jack Taylor and a trustee of the foundation, made the presentation to Jerry M. Hiegel, 1991 campaign chairman, at a special program held to give recognition to the high level givers.



John H. Bryan, chairman of the board and chief executive officer of Sara Lee Corporation, was guest speaker for the event. Bryan is one of the founding members of the Alexis de Tocqueville Society in Chicago. He is also a member of the board of directors and was campaign chairman for United Way in Chicago.

*Erroll B. Davis, Jr., John H. Bryan and Jerry M. Hiegel*

*Dr. Catherine Taylor and her son, Philip Taylor*

*Alexis de Tocqueville Society Dinner, Winter 1992. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

Early in his 1991 UWDC keynote, Davis said, “America is not taking care of its children.” He ticked off warning signs: low immunization rates, high child poverty rates, and high teen pregnancy rates.

Pointing ahead a decade, Davis said the following:

If you want to see the year 2000, don’t look at your office; don’t look at your co-workers; look in the third grade. Look here in Madison. Today, the Dane County population is about 5.4 percent minority. Twenty-one percent of the children in the Madison Metropolitan School District are minority. This will be 30-40 percent by the year 2000.<sup>5</sup>

I believe there is no single entity in our community better positioned and better poised to become the major community problem solver than United Way. United Way is already spending about \$1.4 million or 31 percent of its allocation to support and strengthen services to children and families.

Davis noted that in November 1990—with a particular push from Madison Mayor Paul Soglin, who felt social services for children in the city were too fragmented—a Start Smart Dane County initiative was launched.

By May 1991, two months after Davis’s UWDC address, the initiative had an executive committee: Davis himself, Leslie Ann Howard, Mayor Soglin, Rick Phelps, UW–Madison Chancellor Donna Shalala, Madison schools Superintendent James Travis, and Madison Area Technical College (MATC) Director Beverly Simone.

At a committee meeting on May 20, UWDC’s Nan Cnare, now vice president of community initiatives, spoke of the need for collaboration.

“None of our institutions, alone, can really respond” to the early childhood challenges, Cnare said.

That September, UWDC announced a series of public forums to both gather input and provide information about the new collaboration and services available. A total of 40 public meetings that attracted more than 700 people were held. An ambitious agenda was outlined that included assuring healthy births, making early childhood care and education more accessible to all who need it, and preventing child abuse and teen pregnancies.<sup>6</sup> Numerous donors stepped up to support, including the Jack DeLoss Taylor Charitable Trust.



*Nan Cnare, VP of Community Initiatives. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

UWDC’s recent successes and upbeat future—including a 70th anniversary celebration planned for March 1992—received a jolt in mid-



February 1992 when the Washington Post reported on the high salary (\$463,000, including benefits) and lavish lifestyle of William Aramony, the top executive at United Way of America since 1970. The scandal—and it did become a full-blown scandal, with a federal investigation that resulted in a prison sentence for Aramony—rocked local United Ways across the country.

“I was still wet behind the ears,” Howard, then in just her third year as UWDC president, recalled.

Howard’s memories of the crisis are vivid. A UWDC board member, Bob Walton, head of American Breeders Service, sent Howard a newspaper story containing the allegations.

“Then all of the sudden the dam broke,” Howard said. Aramony resigned as more details were revealed, and local reporters began contacting Howard for a reaction.

“I had a reporter come into my living room and interview me,” Howard said. “I was very open about everything.”

She was able to say UWDC was moving quickly to assure Dane County residents that problems with the national organization need not—and did not—translate to UWDC.

Howard recalled, “I got together with the other [local United Way CEOs] in the state and we had a conversation about what was going on. We created a list—you could call them demands—where we said all of us were going to withhold our dues until these issues were met. I requested the board minutes from United Way of America for the past five years.”

Howard was troubled by the clear lack of oversight of the national organization.

“We had this august, austere board at United Way of America,” she said. “Weren’t they watching the ship?”

On March 24, 1992, UWDC appointed an ad hoc committee, chaired by the UWDC vice chairman, labor leader Jim Cavanaugh, to study the controversy, its impact, and the future of UWDC’s relationship with United Way of America.

While UWDC’s board did endorse the need for a national network of local United Ways, UWDC followed through on its plan to withhold 1992 dues totaling about \$67,000. Not every local organization did.

“I remember being at a meeting and some people wouldn’t talk to me because we were withholding our dues,” Howard said. “That was too bad, but our priority was our community.”

While the crisis was roiling, on March 5, less than a month after the Aramony scandal broke, UWDC celebrated its 70th anniversary at its annual meeting at the Edgewater Hotel.

Despite the national storm clouds, the mood at the Edgewater was celebratory. Esteemed Madison historian David Mollenhoff gave the keynote address highlighting the national and local history of the United Way movement. A video noting key historical moments was shown, and the volunteers who led the organization through the decades were recognized. Lowell Frautschi was honorary chairman of the event, and his 1946 credo, about the responsibilities of UWDC’s predecessor, the Community Union, was reprinted in the program.

The names of longstanding volunteers were read aloud. They stood, and then as years of service were announced—5, 10, 15—they took their seats. One man, Madison attorney Tom Ragatz, kept standing. Leslie Ann Howard would later laugh recalling how she mistakenly thought Ragatz was still standing because he was at the buffet line. In fact, by 1992, he already had 31 years of service to UWDC!

He started just out of law school in 1961. “A friend of mine assigned me [to solicit donations on] Williamson Street,” Ragatz remembered. He dutifully called on businesses up and down the street. Most people were cordial, whether they donated or not, but then Ragatz came upon an automotive repairman who was running a loud engine as Tom approached. The man shut off the car. When Ragatz stated his purpose, the man said nothing, then restarted the engine. Tom took the hint.

A few years later, Ragatz was at a meeting for the annual campaign at the Park Hotel downtown. A large red feather—signifying Red Feather agencies, as United Way agencies were then known—hung on the wall.

“The chairman was giving a big build up about the annual campaign,” Ragatz recalled. “When he announced the goal, which was a very large number, the red feather fell off the wall.”

Omens aside, Ragatz’s commitment over the years never wavered. His wife Karen taught in the Madison public schools, and Ragatz served on the advisory committee for the pioneering UWDC Schools of Hope project in the 1990s. He chaired the Tocqueville Society board in 1999 and recruited some two dozen new members to the society. “Attorney friends, clients, businessmen,” he recalled. “People I thought should be supporting Tocqueville.”

In 2003, Tom Ragatz was recognized for his four decades of service with the Volunteer of the Year Award from the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) Greater Madison.

Longtime donor and volunteer Jeff Levy whose family owns Phillips Distributing Corporation, their family's philanthropy (brothers Marv, Phil and Jeff and parents Irving and Dorothy) was recognized in 2010 with the Tocqueville Society Award and later by AFP for lifetime achievement, remembers from that United Way party, "Tom was the last man standing with decades of service! What an impressive legacy and model for all of us to follow."

At the Edgewater 70th anniversary event in March 1992, UWDC board chairman John Robison addressed the Aramony issue, reiterating the plan to withhold dues and stressing the independence of UWDC and its long reputation for integrity.

By the end of 1992, United Way of America had agreed to downsize, reducing its annual budget by \$6 million and adding 15 people from local organizations to the national board, which would total 45 members.

In January 1993, Leslie Ann Howard and Jim Cavanaugh met with the incoming United Way of America president, Elaine Chao, who would later hold cabinet posts in two Republican presidential administrations. Chao outlined an elaborate plan to rehabilitate United Way of America's reputation, and UWDC agreed to again begin paying dues at a reduced base level of \$38,000.

"What it caused me to do," Howard said of the controversy, "was really articulate what the benefits are of being part of United Way of America.

When we looked at the money we would get from FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency]—which they negotiated—and the advertising they did, the research and training, it was well worth what we paid in. Even more than dollar for dollar. But we kept an eye on it after that.”

Significantly, UWDC had a successful 1992 annual fund drive, one of only a handful of United Ways across the country to reach or exceed its goal in that troubled year. In the case of UWDC, the amount raised was \$7.2 million. Erroll Davis chaired the campaign, and he and Howard made sure everyone involved “didn’t hide from the [national turmoil],” Howard said. “We coached the loaned executives and the staff to bring it up.”

That transparency and UWDC’s solid reputation carried the day, not just in 1992 but in the ensuing years. In 1996, the New York Times did an analysis and found that in the years since the Aramony scandal, donations to United Ways across the country had declined in many areas—but not in Dane County. UWDC ranked fourth in the United States over that period with an increase in donations of 25 percent.

The year 1993 brought the first public notice of what would become a significant new entity within UWDC: the United Way of Dane County Foundation, Inc., more commonly referred to as the United Way Foundation.



A decade earlier, in the 1980s, UWDC, utilizing assets from the Bassett Memorial Fund, established the United Way Endowment Fund within

the Madison Community Foundation (MCF).

That arrangement was in many ways successful, especially in that it led the MCF to hire Jane Coleman as director, and Coleman exponentially raised its profile. It also brought innovative funding grants to UWDC. The UWDC endowment itself, however, did not catch fire.

“Our volunteers determined it would be good for us to have our own foundation,” Howard said, while retaining their fund within the MCF.

A May 1993 Wisconsin State Journal article opened with this: “Madison jewelers Robert and Irwin Goodman have contributed \$100,000 to help the United Way of Dane County start a foundation.”

Irwin was quoted saying the interest earned would “provide for the emergency and ongoing needs of individuals and families who lack minimal basic material resources for food and shelter; for the physical, emotional, and crisis needs of children” and to assist the “elderly to remain independent.”

Three decades on, the foundation started with the Goodmans’ generous gift has assets in excess of \$15 million and expectancies over \$10 million.

On Sunday, October 18, 1992, the Wisconsin State Journal ran on its front page the first of what would be a series of articles in a project the paper called City of Hope. The series, which continued into 1994, examined the social, economic, and human issues involved with Madison’s evolution as a city and, crucially, what might be done to make life in the city better for all.

While the City of Hope project did impact UWDC<sup>7</sup> what City of Hope

really did was set the stage for a second “Hope” project, this one involving the Madison public schools. It proved a game changer for UWDC and, it’s fair to say, United Ways across the country. Schools of Hope, as the second project was called, became the gold standard for how a United Way can positively impact its community.

The genesis was the earlier City of Hope project. The man responsible for its launch was Frank Denton, editor of the Wisconsin State Journal, the dominant newspaper in Dane County at a time when newspapers still had enormous influence.

Denton arrived as editor in Madison in 1986, when some newspaper editors and publishers across the country were rethinking the mission of local journalism.<sup>8</sup>

“About the time I got to Madison,” Denton said, “a group of 10 or 12 of us [editors and publishers] met in St. Louis to talk about starting an organization for innovation in journalism.”

They launched an organization called New Directions for News, based at the Missouri School of Journalism at the University of Missouri.

“It coincided with the public journalism movement,” Denton said. “I was not one of the starters of that, but I was an early adherent. I called it civic journalism.”

Denton defined civic journalism as “journalists, instead of just reporting facts, take some responsibility for what happens as a result of reporting it. It doesn’t mean advocacy. But it could mean mobilizing the community to take action on what you’re reporting on. Or calling people to account. But it doesn’t step beyond that.”

Within the profession, civic journalism was not without controversy.

“A lot of traditional journalists didn’t like it and thought it was too activist,” Denton said. “Unethical.”

By the end of March 1994, the State Journal had published nine articles in its City of Hope series. The October 1992 opener set the stage by saying Madison was experiencing dramatic increases in violent crime and poverty and positing whether the city was in danger of losing its reputation for having a high quality of life. An ad for the series evoked the famous 1948 Life magazine cover story that called Madison the best place to live in the country.

Subsequent articles included examinations of the following:

- The explosion in juvenile crime
- The racism that lurked beneath Madison’s liberal image
- A social services system judged too fragmented
- Recidivism’s impact on the high crime rate
- Drug infestation and other problems in the east side Worthington Park neighborhood
- The link between crime and high unemployment
- How the lack of a comprehensive economic development strategy in the county was responsible for “pushing poor residents into a swelling number of low-paying, dead-end jobs... most newly created jobs don’t pay enough for poor



families to climb out of poverty.”

As it has done throughout its history, UWDC listened to the community.

The March 30, 1994, State Journal article referenced earlier about UWDC changing “focus” noted that UWDC “officials said that by setting standards for agencies receiving donations, they want to take a larger role in determining how the community attacks its biggest problems. Among their concerns: increases in the number of impoverished families; youths lacking job skills; and serious crimes involving juveniles.”

The State Journal’s report mentioned that UWDC’s 35-member board had unanimously adopted a five-point agenda, with the following areas of concentration:

- Identifying the root causes and solving problems instead of reacting to crises
- Strengthening services for both early childhood and employment-age teens
- Creating an atmosphere of pride and belonging that translates into everyone feeling they have a stake in making things better
- Encouraging recipients of program assistance to develop strategies to help themselves
- Taking special notice of the quality of life of the most vulnerable: elderly, disabled, and rural residents, as well as people with special needs

UWDC vice president Nan Cnare told the State Journal, “As much as this is an agenda for United Way, I believe this is an agenda for our community.” Seven panels of volunteers were established to hear and make decisions on funding requests.

UWDC president and CEO Leslie Ann Howard remembered being both pleased and a bit relieved as the State Journal’s City of Hope project concluded. The newspaper’s scrutiny not only helped move things along but also increased the pressure for results. “I remember thinking, ‘Well, that’s over,’” she said. “It wasn’t easy. Some good things came out of it, but it wasn’t earth shattering.”

The project’s arc—solving crime, race, and poverty issues citywide— was always too lofty for any kind of immediate resolution.

But the following summer, Howard received a phone call from Frank Denton saying he had a more focused, if still ambitious, civic journalism project in mind, and he needed her help. The project the editor had in mind was called Schools of Hope.

Howard recalled her thinking when Denton asked if UWDC would partner with them in the City of Hope civic journalism project: “I didn’t know what he was talking about [regarding civic journalism], but I wasn’t going to say no to the editor of the Wisconsin State Journal.” That mindset still held.

Denton said Schools of Hope was intended, at the outset, to help Madison residents define what they expected from the public schools and give them a voice in influencing policy. The project had three important components. One, his reporters would gather facts and data

about how the schools and the students enrolled were doing; second, they'd involve the public, with town halls, and increase the space provided to letters from readers.

It was the third component that was most daunting.

“The most radical and controversial, especially inside the [journalism] profession,” Denton said, “was organizing and mobilizing community leadership to take action, based on our reporting and public involvement.”

In other words, Denton needed buy-in from school administrators, teachers, elected officials, and more—people who often, and with reason, are leery of the media.

With that in mind, Denton called Howard at UWDC and said, “I know what I’m doing on the journalism side. I need an action arm.”

“When Frank called me,” Howard recalled, “it was to try to pull this group together. There wasn’t trust among the leaders—the county executive, mayor, superintendent of schools—to be summoned by the editor of the paper. They were nervous as heck any time the media called.”

Denton asked Howard, “Can we get them around the table?”

It was a savvy move by the editor. By 1995, UWDC had established a deep well of goodwill across Dane County. Howard made the calls.

“They said, ‘We don’t like this, but we will come because it’s you,’” Howard recalled. “They trusted us. It’s not a small thing to say, ‘I’m

going to sit around a table and do the work while the media watches and records everything we're doing.' They're worried someone might take out after them."

The first Schools of Hope meeting was at the Fish Hatchery Road offices of the State Journal on August 25, 1995. All the major players who would eventually be involved were not yet on board. Eight people sat around a large table in a conference room. They included Ray Allen, an African American member of the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) Board of Education; Cheryl Wilhoyte, superintendent of the Madison public schools; John Matthews, executive director of Madison Teachers Inc., the teachers' union; school board member Carol Carstensen; Leslie Ann Howard; Neil Heinen and Tom Bier from WISC-TV/Channel 3, a journalism partner in the project; and Frank Denton. Several State Journal reporters, including Andy Hall, the reporting lead on the schools project, were seated in chairs along the wall.

A State Journal article two days later detailed the following: "Friday's kickoff of the project illustrated some of the difficulties that accompany a change in the relationship between journalists and the public officials they scrutinize." Wilhoyte told the paper she was entering the project with "a mixture of excitement and trepidation." The paper even reported, "She said she was uncertain how the school district, which at times has had an adversarial relationship with the State Journal, would manage to forge a cooperative relationship."

Carstensen, too, was skeptical, saying "I have hesitations."

It was uncharted waters, and Howard faced at least some skepticism from the UWDC board when she talked about involving United Way in

the Schools of Hope project.

“I’d go to the board and tell them about what we were doing,” Howard recalled. “They looked at me with a mix of surprise and confusion. You could hear a pin drop. It wasn’t what we did. This was a change in the United Way model. They would have been comfortable funding something like this. Recognizing a need and finding an agency to address it. But to take something on and try to figure out how to address it at the community scale was not something we did.”

Denton and the State Journal provided a lift in September 1995 with an editorial timed to the start of UWDC’s annual fund drive. The column noted that the 1995 goal was \$8.14 million, an increase from the 1994 goal of \$7.85 million, adding, “United Way will support 96 agencies this year, not only with money but with technical assistance, logistical support and referral services.”

The editorial concluded with a salute to UWDC’s willingness to lead in tackling thorny community problems:

United Way of Dane County is more than a pass-through agency – it provides much needed leadership in the community. In Dane County, where politics is practically a blood sport, there’s a need for non-partisan brokers who can make things happen. United Way is increasingly filling that role...

United Way of Dane County workers and volunteers live and work here. They want this to become a better place to live. So they have gone beyond the necessary function of raising money to lend a hand in ways that cannot be measured on a spread sheet.

By spring 1996, Schools of Hope project leaders had uncovered a glaring problem area, one with a narrow enough focus to make tangible, measurable results possible.

That spring, the State Journal reported on its “analysis of publicly available data” on student achievement in Madison and Wisconsin public schools from the first half of the decade of the 1990s. The analysis revealed a striking disparity between white and minority students, in particular African American students—a circumstance that would become known as the racial achievement gap. Perhaps nowhere was it more troubling than in the early academic years, which set students up for success or failure going forward. The State Journal disclosed the following:

# MENTORS MAKE *a* DIFFERENCE



State Journal photo/CAROLYN PFISTERER

Adam Smith, a member of the Madison advocacy group 100 Black Men, visits with Mendota Elementary School students as part of a mentoring program. Teacher Amy Horton is the other adult with the students.

## The benefits of long-term mentoring are documented locally, nationwide

By Andy Hall  
Wisconsin State Journal

This is what it's like to be a mentor.  
There is a power here, a power to attack



*Front Page article about Schools of Hope. Newspaper clipping from Wisconsin State Journal, 8 May 1996, Wed.*

Scores on an early, crucial measure of academic performance, the state Third Graded Reading Test, reflected a sharp racial disparity. While the percentage of whites displaying at least marginal reading skills grew by 2 points [in the first half of the decade], the portion of African Americans meeting the standard fell 3 percentage points.

Nine in 10 Madison [91 percent] whites meet the reading standards; slightly more than half of blacks [55 percent] do. That disparity is far larger than the gap at any of the other eight Wisconsin school districts that include substantial numbers of blacks. The portion of blacks reaching the standard in Madison ranks last among those districts.

Howard recalled a Schools of Hope leadership team meeting around this time. The group had grown: county executive Rick Phelps and Madison Mayor Paul Soglin attended when their schedules permitted, as did their top aides.

At the spring 1996 meeting, reporter Andy Hall stood at the front of the room pointing at a chart that cataloged the woeful racial gap in third-grade reading skills in Madison. Howard, chairing the meeting, was seated next to Enis Ragland, an assistant to Mayor Paul Soglin and the founding president of 100 Black Men of Madison.

“I remember looking at the breakout of the third-grade achievement gap,” Howard said. It was certainly alarming. “But it was a relatively small number of kids. I thought, ‘If we can’t do something about this, we should fold up shop and go home.’”

Howard leaned over to Ragland. “Enis,” she said quietly. “If I raise my hand and say United Way will jump on this to work for a solution, will 100 Black Men join us?”

Ragland didn’t hesitate. “Absolutely.”

“I thought, ‘This is a chance for 100 Black Men to step up and help change what is wrong with the education system,’” Ragland recalled. “I was a bit afraid. I knew it would be a huge undertaking... We were



bringing together many disparate groups. It was incredible to get the community involved, politicians, school districts, unions, the business community. We had to get everyone together to make it happen.”

Howard and Ragland agreed to lead a minority student achievement subcommittee. High among its goals was reducing the racial achievement gap in third-grade reading. “It was a big risk,” Howard said. “It kind of put a target on us.”

Frank Denton later praised Howard, saying, “Leslie emerged as a great leader.”

“Developing trust was important,” Ragland said. “The ability to deal with all opinions and thoughts.”

It energized UWDC, and the fact that so much column space in the State Journal was devoted to the project meant the public could see the effort involved and the results, when and if they came.

That included the initially wary UWDC board members.

“As we started working on it,” Howard said, “they got engaged. Like our donors, they’d been saying, ‘Get at the underlying causes.’”

Making sure young African American students could read was a first step toward progress on any number of problems.

“The board became very supportive,” Howard said. “But we were making it up as we went along. There was no model.”

On July 17, 1996, UWDC convened a meeting of nearly 250 teachers,

parents, students, and community leaders—including professors from the UW–Madison School of Education—at Olbrich Botanical Gardens to discuss strategies for improving minority student achievement.

The strategy of what came to be called the Schools of Hope Literacy Project evolved with time, but the key recommendations included class size reduction, teacher training, a consistent curriculum, and trained tutors. The most important component, it turned out, was in-class tutoring. Out of school mentoring helped, too, but for producing results, having tutors in class made the real difference.

“The research,” Howard said, “told us that if your strategy doesn’t have an academic component, it won’t impact academics.”

Howard went on, saying, “I became rabid about the academics and trained tutors.” MMSD psychologist Barbara Marwell told her about a successful pilot program in New York State. “It was an eight-week program. They had trained tutors working in the classroom with the curriculum and the teacher. In eight weeks, they were seeing an impact on children’s reading ability.”

As Howard declared, UWDC “jumped on that.”

They obtained a sizable federal AmeriCorps VISTA grant of \$217,000 and developed a plan that included having experts teach volunteers how to be effective tutors. It was a preemptive strike to assure teachers—who were doubtful of well-meaning but ineffective tutors—that the program would operate at a high level.

“The School of Education volunteered to train the tutors,” Denton said. “We had full professors at UW giving up their Saturdays to train the

tutors.”

Howard noted that Art Rainwater becoming the Madison schools superintendent in spring 1998 also contributed greatly to the success of the initiative. He championed Schools of Hope, welcoming tutors in the classrooms. “We wouldn’t have succeeded without Art’s support,” Howard affirmed.

On September 13, 1998, a front-page headline in the State Journal read, “400 tutors sought to teach kids reading,” with the subheading “Schools of Hope sets a goal no urban school district has ever reached: shrinking the racial achievement gap.”

The ensuing article called the outreach for tutors “the largest volunteer-recruitment drive in the 161-year history of public education in Madison.”

Howard was quoted as well: “The most important thing we can do is to believe that our [African American, Latino, Southeast Asian and Native American] kids can succeed in our schools. And the way that we can show that is by stepping up to volunteer.” While the focus was on minority students, Howard added, “Every child who needs help reading, we’re going to make a tutor available to them.”

The public reaction to the State Journal Sunday story was everything the project leaders could have hoped.

“When we got to the [UWDC] office on Monday,” Howard recounted, “there were 70 calls on our voicemail, people wanting to tutor.”

By the end of the week, the number had grown to 500.

At this point, the students and tutors were all servicing K–3 grades in MMSD and entirely in reading. As of 2020, Schools of Hope expanded to include all elementary, middle, and high school grades, other districts, and math, as well as other subjects. Since 1998, a staggering 88,772 students received tutoring from 13,665 trained tutors working in concert with classroom teachers.

Tutoring—combined with the many other components of the Schools of Hope project—worked. In September 2004—nearly a decade after the launching of Schools of Hope—a front-page State Journal headline trumpeted the success of its third-grade reading initiative.

The headline read, “One racial gap has closed up,” with the subheading “Black third-graders register major gains in reading.”

The story began, “The percentage of Madison public school third-graders reading at the state’s lowest proficiency level has shrunk dramatically in the last 10 years... So many students have been lifted out of this bottom category that the racial achievement gap essentially has been eliminated in this one category at this one grade level.”

The story continued, “In 1995, 28.5 percent of black third-graders were reading at a minimal level... This year, the percentage has dropped to 5.1 percent.”

Latino and Southeast Asian students showed gains as well. Partners were crucial to the success of the endeavor; Centro Hispano and the Urban League once again stepped up to the plate to help provide tutor recruitment, training, and management.

The success of Schools of Hope had a profound effect on UWDC going

forward, validating the organization's pivot to a goal of community impact. Raising money would always be vitally important, but identifying the most serious problems in Madison and Dane County and helping solve them was now paramount.

"The one thing that has stood out to me is that United Way was the only organization, year in and year out, that was focusing on poverty and school children," said Dr. Floyd Rose, 100 Black Men president in 2021. "Schools of Hope was a segment of the master plan [Agenda for Change] that was addressing education, health, economic stability, and early childhood. It's all interrelated."

For the individuals involved, also, Schools of Hope continued to loom large.

"It was a great learning experience," Ragland said. "Something I'll never forget. We made a difference and showed it could be done."

"The project was one of the proudest moments of my entire career," Frank Denton said.

"Frank bringing his brand of civic journalism to Madison was a huge leverage point for us," Howard said. "Using data, research and best practices as well as the 'power of the pen' to work on the most pressing social justice issue of our time."

**You should know we have reorganized our United Way around the Dane County model.**

Howard concluded, “It completely changed us.”

Denton left Madison in late 2003, soon joining Georgia-based Morris Communications in an executive role. But he found he missed the newsroom. In 2008, when the Florida Times-Union in Jacksonville, a Morris paper, needed an editor, Denton took the job while retaining his executive duties.

Not long after he arrived in Jacksonville, Denton was introduced to Connie Hodges, the president of the United Way of Northeast Florida.

She immediately embraced him in a hug. Noticing Denton’s surprise, Hodges smiled and simply said, “Schools of Hope.”

Denton quoted her evocative next words: “You should know we have reorganized our United Way around the Dane County model.”

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1. He was with UWDC just under eight years.
  2. A year earlier, another key staff position was filled when Nan Cnare moved from Dane County Social Services into Howard’s previous role as vice president of planning, fund distribution, and agency services for UWDC.
  3. Who would chair the 1991 annual UWDC fund drive.
  4. His trust continued to support Tocqueville with annual gifts and matching grant funds and in 2020 made a \$1 million donation to the UWDC Foundation.
  5. In 2019, the Dane County population was 20.8 percent people of color, and Madison Metropolitan School District students of color comprised 57.8 percent of the total student population.
  6. By 1993, a Wisconsin State Journal story on the Start Smart initiative began with this lead: “Start Smart Dane County is often held up as a model of the new thinking now sweeping human services providers in Dane County.”
  7. A March 1994 State Journal headline read, “United Way changing its focus,” with priorities adjusted to address the identified problem areas

8. Since the invention of the printing press, local journalism had seen itself as reporting the news, raising a ruckus when necessary, but always above or at least to the side of the fray—observers, not participants.



## CHAPTER 7

# OLD FRIENDS, FRESH FACES, NEW CHALLENGES, AND A MODERN BUILDING

**UWDC** observed its 75th anniversary in 1997, and the celebration included the production of a 24-by-36-inch poster featuring the photographs of 75 individuals involved in all aspects of United Way: volunteers, donors, and those who were helped by UWDC agencies.

The chair of the anniversary committee was Specialty Cheese Co. owner Vicki Semo Scharfman. Pulling the poster together reflected the pro bono generosity of a variety of Dane County businesses when it came to United Way: Oscar Mayer™ lent photographers, Stephan & Brady did design and layout, and Litho Productions did the printing. Three thousand of the posters were produced. It had its public debut at the grand opening of the Monona Terrace Community and Convention



Center in July 1997.

Among those pictured on the poster was Lowell Frautschi, longtime volunteer and donor, who was quoted in a Capital Times article on the poster.

“I’ve spent a great many years with United Way,” Frautschi said. “I started in 1938 on the Budget Committee, and was instrumental in setting up the Health Planning Council. In 1966, the council raised \$3.4 million that gave the hospitals here the leverage they needed... That turned Madison into a first-rate medical community.”

UWDC vice president of community initiatives Nan Cnare said this of the 75th anniversary poster:

“We’re hoping it puts a historical face on what makes United Way so special—seeing all these people who have put time and energy into making this community a better place.

“It’s a way of celebrating diversity,” Cnare continued, “and the broad range of support for what United Way stands for and believes in... It puts a face on it—75, as a matter of fact.”

One of those pictured was 26-year-old Edgewood College senior Jeffrey Erlanger, who was born with a tumor on his spine and had been paraplegic since he was 7 months old. At 19, he received a golden retriever named Corduroy from a United Way agency—Wisconsin Academy of Graduate Service Dogs (WAGS).

“He can pick up pencils for me and turn on the lights, but now he’s basically a social companion,” Jeff said. “And he’s an ice-breaker. Some

people may feel uncomfortable when they see me, but then they see him and come over to talk. Corduroy and I are very honored to be on the poster.”<sup>1</sup>

In September 1997, in a ceremony at the Executive Residence in Maple Bluff, UWDC honored Erroll and Elaine Davis with its Alexis de Tocqueville Award for exceptional volunteer service and commitment.

Erroll was a longtime Wisconsin Power and Light Co. executive who both chaired the UWDC board (in 1987) and its annual campaign (in 1992). He was a leader in launching the Start Smart Dane County program in the year of his chairmanship and the early childhood initiatives he championed would continue into the new century. Elaine was a UWDC board member and helped revitalize its volunteer center as co chair and agency services chair. She was also a champion for diversity among volunteers and agencies.

# United Way honors Erroll, Elaine Davis

WPL Holdings President Erroll Davis and his wife Elaine have been chosen to receive the 1997 Alexis de Tocqueville Award presented annually by United Way of Dane County.

The award, named after the Frenchman who visited America shortly after the nation's independence and was impressed by American ingenuity, annually rec-



**Erroll and Elaine Davis**

*The Capital Times announces honor given to Erroll & Elaine Davis. Newspaper clipping from The Capital Times, 25 Sep 1997, Thu.*

UWDC was on track to come up just shy of its 1997 fundraising goal of \$9.3 million as December wound down. At which point, as they had in the past, Irwin and Bob Goodman stepped up. The jeweler brothers had planned a \$100,000 donation, but when informed of the potential shortfall, they increased it to \$180,000—"the largest single gift" in UWDC history, according to a State Journal article in early January 1998.

By that time, a longtime UWDC employee, Kathy Hubbard, was working closely with the Goodmans, in part helping them sort through the myriad requests for financial help their philanthropy inevitably generated. They wanted to be strategic in what they supported. "But they felt so blessed," Hubbard said, "they wanted to make sure this

community had what it needed.”

When the brothers learned Hubbard’s mother had died, they made a \$5,000 donation in her honor to the United Way Foundation. “That’s how they were,” Hubbard said. “They did that all the time.”

When Irwin and Bob stepped up at the end of 1997 to make sure the annual campaign met its goal, Hubbard said, “They really appreciated that we asked them, and that they could come in and support the campaign that way.”



*Brothers Irwin & Bob Goodman. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

A year later, the UWDC annual campaign chair was Tom Zimbrick, a

second-generation member of the longtime Madison auto dealership family.

The 1998 campaign was historic: Its goal of \$9.88 million was ambitious, but in the end, more than \$10 million was raised, the first time UWDC reached an eight-digit figure.

Asked the secret, Zimbrick said, “It was nothing, and it was everything. There wasn’t a single big event or gift or technique that put this year’s fundraising over the top. It was just a good team working together and a good community supporting those efforts.” The UWDC team still calls Zimbrick “The Ten Million Dollar Man.”

Howard felt the high visibility of UWDC within the Schools of Hope project also spurred donations:

There’s no question in my mind. It’s what people wanted. We always did good things—helping people in need, raising money and giving it to programs. A lot of good was done. But when you asked people, donors, and others, about United Way, they’d say, ‘I know it’s good, but I don’t know much beyond that.’ The focus and visibility [of Schools of Hope] opened up for the community an understanding of the scope of the need—and here was United Way, along with these other partners, tackling it. It made us more relevant. That relevance spoke to donors. We had a transformational story relevant to the community.

A key component, for the annual campaign and beyond, was, as always, UWDC volunteers.

“We did have great staff and volunteers in the fundraising area,” Howard said.

In 1998, some 433 volunteers—working closely with UWDC marketing, fund distribution, and other committees—donated an estimated 34,149 hours of their time. The number of loaned executives also increased. Additional volunteers served as campaign coordinators. On UWDC's Day of Caring, more than 1,000 volunteers donated half a workday helping UWDC agencies by cleaning food pantries, painting community centers, planting trees and gardens, and more. UWDC's volunteer center referred 2,820 people to 225 nonprofit agencies that needed help.

By comparison, in 2018, 40,555 volunteers provided 661,970 hours of service at 55 partner agencies, and more than 1,800 volunteers from 65 companies participated in Seasons of Caring (formerly known as Days of Caring) at 103 nonprofit agency projects. The number of projects listed on UWDC's VolunteerYourTime.org portal numbers 360 agencies and more than 600 volunteer opportunities.

Kathy Martinson led volunteerism efforts at UWDC for 35 years before her retirement in 2019. In addition to establishing Day of Caring (later Days of Caring and then Seasons of Caring), she oversaw the creation and growth of the Business Volunteer Network (BVN), Community Volunteer Awards, and READI (Retired Employees Are Dedicated Individuals), now UWDC's retiree volunteerism initiative.

Martinson expounded on the importance of volunteerism:

Everyone has a passion for some issue or cause. And volunteering is the best way we can make an impact on what is passionate to us personally. Although an issue/cause may seem too big, when each of us does our part, collectively the impact is incredible. Volunteering brings people together who typically may not have the opportunity for interactions.

But when we work together on a cause, barriers come down, relationships and mutual respect develop, and, a real bonus, volunteering has proven to be good for our mental and physical health! Now more than ever, we need people to come together, work together, care together and find joy and celebrate what we can all accomplish together.

Volunteerism continues to be an important way UWDC mobilizes the community's caring power. Today, on-site volunteer projects are brought to companies and organizations to aid in employee engagement and nonprofit support, and UWDC has a van to transport supplies and in-kind contributions. UWDC even innovated at-home volunteer projects during the pandemic.

The summer of '98 also signaled the arrival of a new intern to UWDC. Renee Moe was a student at UW–Madison studying journalism and Mandarin Chinese. A class project resulted in her meeting UWDC director of marketing Meg Van Gompel, which in turn led to the internship offer.

**Everyone has a passion for some issue or cause. And volunteering is the best way we can make an impact on what is passionate to us personally.**

Moe grew up a military kid. Her parents met when her father, an officer in the US Air Force, was stationed in Taipei, Taiwan, where her mother



was raised. Moe lived briefly in Tampa, Florida, then Kaiserslautern, Germany, and finally Okinawa, Japan, after which the family returned to her dad's Wisconsin farming roots upon his retirement.

"I grew up in a household with two parents of different races, on three continents, in what is probably the most diverse work force in the world," Moe said. Yet as a teen in rural Wisconsin, she baled hay each summer and ate lefse in the basement of the Lutheran Church.



*Kathy Martinson (center), Martha Cranley (left) and other Day of Caring Volunteers. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

Moe's internship with UWDC began what she would later call "my personal journey with United Way"— an amalgamation of her



background, values, and goals—that culminated in Moe being named UWDC president and CEO in 2015.

Of course, that was far off when the college student showed up in summer 1998 to help with photography, write newsletters, and do some marketing for UWDC’s nascent BVN.

What really caught Moe’s attention early in her tenure was the ascendant Schools of Hope project. If she had any doubts about UWDC, that erased them.

“I thought, ‘Wow, this is a way to really get something done,’” Moe recalled. “How do you get a community coalesced around a vision, mobilize people and measure results over time? I got to see that whole arc, which was pretty amazing.” The following year after graduation, she would join the marketing staff full time.



Moe started in what longtime UWDC hands refer to as “the old building.” By 1998, the headquarters at 2059 Atwood Avenue was 40 years old. There had been for several years of serious discussion about the need for UWDC to either renovate, construct a new building, or lease space elsewhere. Something had to happen.

“From the time I started there in 1981,” Leslie Ann Howard said, “the building had problems. My first day on the job I was asked by the board chair to help squeegee the flooding in the board room.”

Howard continued, “You’d see cars literally floating in the parking lot. One time I looked out the window at the parking lot and water was

shooting out of a manhole cover like Old Faithful. Then it would come flooding into the basement.”

Neither was the three-story building accessible for people with disabilities.

In August 1994, the UWDC board appointed a future facilities committee, and it in turn engaged the Potter Lawson architecture and design firm to evaluate the existing building, gauge space requirements, and suggest solutions.

UWDC had become a valued and vital part of the Atwood-Schenk neighborhood. By 1995, the committee had recommended and the UWDC board had approved a decision to stay at the current location but most likely in a new building that would sit adjacent to the old structure, which would come down. The need was driven home that spring when a third-floor water pipe burst, causing flooding on all three levels. Damage was estimated at \$45,000, meetings were postponed, and staff hours lost to cleanup.

In 1996, the UWDC board approved a donor solicitation plan for a new building. The projected amount necessary eventually rose to just over \$3 million for a 32,000 square foot facility. Funds would be raised apart from the annual UWDC campaigns. American Family Insurance® CEO Dale Mathwich was named building campaign chairman. It was important that the project not negatively impact UWDC services.

By 1997, nearly \$1.4 million had been raised, and that year the Madison Community Foundation agreed to forgive a mortgage it held on the original building.

The night of November 19, 1998, Leslie Ann Howard had just returned home from a gathering at Monona Terrace celebrating the successful 1998 annual campaign, when her phone rang. Howard answered in her kitchen. It was Dale Mathwich.

“You had a pretty good day today,” Mathwich said.

“I did,” Howard replied.

“I think I’m going to make it even better,” Mathwich said. “Don and Marilyn Anderson have committed a million dollars to the new building.”

Howard was thrilled. “I knew who they were,” she said of the Andersons. “It was incredible. They were so generous, so excited, and so gracious.”

Two days later, the story broke on the front page of the State Journal. The Andersons—whose names would be on the new building—were described as a couple “who’ve kept a low profile through their 56 years of marriage.”

Don Anderson, who was a retired insurance executive, told the paper, “It’s part of living. We have to give of ourselves. It doesn’t have to be money. It can be serving others.”

The ground breaking for the new building was in July 1999, and construction started that September. The Anderson United Way Center officially opened on June 20, 2000. It was a significant upgrade from the old building, with its open office environment to facilitate communication. One of the highlights was a ceramic mosaic designed by local artist Michele Hatchell and painted by children attending summer

and after-school programs at the Atwood and Wil-Mar neighborhood centers.

While the official opening of the new building was in June, in August 2000, a grand opening celebration was held that included tours and a forum in which people were encouraged to offer thoughts on the community's most pressing needs and how United Way resources could best be utilized for maximum impact.



*Anderson United Way Center opened in 2000. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

Tom Zimbrick, fresh off chairing a record-breaking annual fund drive, was named head of a committee to study potential changes in UWDC's focus, with an eye on the success of the Schools of Hope project. "That was likely the catalyst," Zimbrick said, and his committee developed a

“community agenda” that would engage multiple stakeholders in helping address a variety of community needs. Years later he would say, “United Way frames issues, mobilizes resources and is accountable for results. That is its strength.”

“What we learned from Schools of Hope,” UWDC’s Nan Cnare told the State Journal in February 2001, “was the value of bringing multiple resources together to solve critical needs in the community.”

The State Journal also story noted, “The plan will dramatically change how the United Way distributes money and other resources. It will also have measurable goals. The idea is to change the United Way from a group that raises and distributes money to one that unites the community.”



At the same time, there was a new controversy. Just two weeks before the article touting UWDC’s “community agenda” appeared, a Sunday Wisconsin State Journal front-page, topline headline read, “Pressure mounting to cut [Boy] Scouts funds.”





*“United Way is about many, many hands coming together to make Dane County a great place” —Dale Mathwich. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

It was not unexpected. In June 2000, the US Supreme Court ruled 5–4 that the dismissal of a gay Boy Scout leader (in New Jersey) was not illegal because the Boy Scouts were a membership organization and not a public accommodation.

Gay rights groups across the country began immediately calling for organizations to disengage from the Boy Scouts. UWDC established a special committee on nondiscrimination, headed by Stark Company Realtors president Dave Stark.

It was a thorny issue in part, Howard felt, because the local Boy Scouts group—the Four Lakes Council of Boy Scouts, representing Dane County and four surrounding counties—had LGBTQ participation. “They had gay members and leaders,” she said.

But the national push and publicity surrounding it was forcing the issue. The State Journal's January 28, 2001, "pressure mounting" headline came two days before the UWDC board was meeting to consider adopting the recommendations of Stark's committee, which called for a review of programs that discriminate in the delivery of services and "whether any limitations imposed by an agency on its services or opportunities are reasonably necessary for the effective provision of services."

On Wednesday, January 30, the UWDC board unanimously adopted the policy. Asked by a Capital Times reporter if it would affect the local Boy Scouts funding—Four Lakes Council received around \$113,000 from UWDC in 1999—Stark stated that only time would tell.

"We have not made any funding decision regarding the Boy Scouts," he announced.

But in the same Capital Times article, Four Lakes Council executive Charles Dobbins was asked if barring gays met UWDC's standard for "reasonably necessary," and he replied, "In the strictest sense of the word, no."

The UWDC board's decision on whether to fund the Four Lakes Council would be made in late March.

Just prior, Howard published a lengthy letter in The Capital Times explaining UWDC's position.

"In a continuing dialogue," Howard wrote, "with the Boy Scouts, the gay and lesbian community, our agencies, the business community and countless individuals, United Way has been working to find common

ground on this issue. Can we find a way to have Boy Scouting and assure that all the programs we fund are open to all members of our community, as is the intent of our new nondiscrimination policy? I believe we can.”

A week later, UWDC announced it would be giving the Four Lakes Council funding for 2001–2 in the amount of \$136,240.

“They are taking enough steps toward changing their policy,” Howard told the Capital Times, “that we feel we can stick with them while they are making progress toward becoming more inclusive.”

In May 2001, the Four Lakes Council wrote to the national Boy Scouts organization requesting a review of its policy on sexual orientation. Months passed, and when the Four Lakes Council inquired about it, they were told the request was under review.

Meanwhile, by December, a group calling itself the Coalition for an Inclusive United Way of Dane County was mounting a campaign to have the Boy Scouts dropped from the 2002 to 2003 UWDC funding.

“I trust that if United Way stands by its policy on nondiscrimination, it won’t fund the Boy Scouts,” a spokesman for the group told The Capital Times.

UWDC’s Nan Cnare responded, “We’re still working with [Four Lakes Council] to achieve compliance,” adding that UWDC so far had elected to continue funding while working for change in the Boy Scouts both locally and nationally.

Recalling the controversy two decades later, Howard said, “We made



some headway. But in the end the Scouts could not stand up and say we won't discriminate. We had to part ways."

That happened in late February 2002, when the Four Lakes Council announced it would not accept UWDC funds going forward.

"I think it was a favor to us," Howard said.

She and UWDC had done their best, getting everyone to the table, looking for the elusive common ground.

A March 1 Capital Times editorial reported, "There is little to celebrate, except perhaps that all of the key players evidenced respect for one another."

The editorial continued, saying, "Local United Way officials tried to maintain the relationship, arguing that they were helping local Scouts become more inclusive and encouraging challenges to the national leadership. But statements from Texas-based Scouts officials indicate that movement toward a more enlightened stance is unlikely."<sup>2</sup>



The Boy Scouts controversy aside, the first years of the new century were an exciting time for UWDC. The new building was matched by a new willingness—almost an imperative—to pursue the kind of community impact that had been achieved with the Schools of Hope project.

"I remember going to our board," Howard said, "and saying, 'We should be doing all our work this way.'"

It would be a sea of change for the organization (and newspaper headlines identified it as such), but in fact UWDC had been gravitating toward it since at least 1984, when Stanley York chaired a needs assessment task force that tapped national data and best practices to assist in identifying the most pressing community problems and how UWDC could help solve them.

By 2001, UWDC had established a Vision Council and moved from allocation panels to community solution teams, groups of volunteers who, rather than simply distributing funds, began looking at the root causes of issues and which problems were the most critical to address. Where would the money raised in the annual campaigns have the most impact? Some 18 months of hard work—research, analysis, and prioritization—yielded answers.

In the end, seven specific goals were identified. The first official unveiling of UWDC's vision for the future came at the UWDC annual meeting on February 23, 2003.

It was an ambitious undertaking. More than one observer called it daunting. UWDC called it an Agenda for Change.

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1. After Jeff passed away in 2007, the City of Madison created the annual Jeffrey Clay Erlanger Civility in Public Discourse Award in his honor. Leslie Ann Howard was the 2014 recipient.
  2. The Boy Scouts of America, now Scouts BSA, removed the restriction denying membership to youth on the basis of sexual orientation effective January 2014, and the policy for adult leaders was removed in July 2015.



## CHAPTER 8

# AGENDA FOR CHANGE

**A**lthough the official unveiling of UWDC's Agenda for Change came at the 2003 annual meeting early that year, it was the following year's annual gathering, in February 2004, that really brought it to the attention of the public. Capital Times reporter Pat Schneider, who wrote regularly about the city's social services safety net, covered the 2004 annual meeting. Her prominent Capital Times article was headlined, "United Way goes new way."

The story called it "an unprecedented effort to focus the organization's resources to root out the causes of social problems in the community." Seven "areas of concentration" were identified:

1. Minority student achievement

2. Early childhood development
3. Access to healthcare
4. Homelessness
5. Independence for the elderly and people with disabilities
6. Domestic violence
7. Strength of local nonprofit agencies

Leslie Ann Howard told those assembled at the Madison Concourse Hotel that focusing would help “move the needle” toward progress on the identified issues.

# United Way goes new way

## Problems' roots will be focus

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**By Pat Schneider**

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*The Capital Times*

United Way of Dane County's president is urging members and donors to join in an unprecedented effort to focus the organization's resources to root out the causes of social problems in the community.

The agency plans to focus its money in fewer areas to "move the needle," Leslie Ann Howard said Wednesday after the group's annual meeting at the Concourse Hotel.

Each year the agency distributes millions of dollars, and although it has not yet released its allocation plans for this year, the areas of concentration identified in United Way's recently adopted "Agenda for Change" are:

- Minority student achievement.
- Early childhood development.
- Access to health care.
- Homelessness.
- Independence for the elderly and people with disabilities.
- Domestic violence.
- Strength of local nonprofit agencies.



**Howard**

The Capital Times *highlight on UWDC Agenda for Change. Newspaper clipping from The Capital Times, 26 Feb 2004, Thu.*

“I believe these issues are the tipping point for our community,” Howard said. “Your challenge to us was to eliminate the underlying causes of these needs. We will be accountable to you for results.”

Surveying the list of focus areas, it was clear that UWDC had already begun assembling partnerships to address most of the issues, going back years in some cases. Minority student achievement, for instance, sparked the now celebrated Schools of Hope project, which dated to the mid-1990s.

There were others. At the February 2004 annual meeting, outgoing UWDC board chairman Doug Reuhl, president & CEO of American TV, spoke about the ongoing work to provide access to healthcare to Dane County’s 32,000 uninsured. He praised the efforts of Barbara Snell, executive director of the Madison Community Health Center; Sally Zirbel-Donisch, Madison public school nurse; dentist Eric teDuits, whose program served 100 low-income children; the Dane County Coalition for Neighborhood Child Health for its well child clinics; Irwin and Bob Goodman for their support of pharmacy programs; and Mayor Dave Cieslewicz and Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk.

The major hospitals and medical groups in Madison were also on board. The coordinated effort dated to the 2001 formation of the Dane County Health Council, which grew out of a Dane County Health Summit in summer 1999 led by Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk. UWDC agreed to act as facilitator of the Health Council, which included representatives from all the hospitals, health systems, medical groups,

and other interested parties, including the City of Madison and Dane County.

When questioned by a reporter why UWDC was asked to facilitate the process, Howard replied, “Because we’ve shown we can bring the community together and get results.”

Healthcare access was a complex issue, but it had one glaring, easy-to-understand component: many uninsured patients were using hospital emergency rooms—which must provide treatment regardless of a patient’s ability to pay—as their primary source of care. In 1998, Dane County hospitals reported \$21 million in uncompensated care.

“It’s an expensive and inappropriate use of this resource,” Kenneth Baldwin, director of the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and a UWDC board member, told *The Capital Times* in June 2002. “Also, ERs are not providing follow-up care.”

A new systematic, cooperative approach was needed for goals that included increasing access to primary providers, dental care, and prescription drugs.

“The health people put the big brains into it,” Howard said, while UWDC facilitated. “We put together a system for giving health care access by assigning people a health care home if they showed up without insurance. They could go to a doctor and not have to go to the emergency room. Everyone was concerned that if one system did it alone, there would be a big influx of uninsured to them. Instead, let’s create a system that would be the same for everyone.”

A sticking point to reaching a common practices pilot program

agreement was the cost of pharmaceuticals. As she had in the past, Howard turned to Irwin and Bob Goodman, who stepped up with a sizable donation that helped push the program forward.

In 2002, UWDC increased by 35 percent—to \$103,000—its allocation to the Madison Community Health Center, which provided healthcare services to low-income families. In its 2003 allocation, and true to its new Agenda for Change, UWDC targeted \$1.4 million toward programs to assure healthcare access to Dane County’s uninsured.

In 2005, a major community healthcare initiative, coordinated by UWDC, was unveiled. The Healthcare Access Pilot was launched in collaboration with six Dane County health providers. Six hundred low-income Dane County residents were linked with primary care providers and pharmaceuticals.

A Wisconsin State Journal story on the pilot program called it “one of the boldest experiments of its type in the nation,” noting that it “provides six months of nearly free healthcare and prescription drugs, plus help from volunteer ‘family health navigators,’ who line up medical appointments, answer questions, translate languages and help with transportation.”

The goal, the State Journal wrote, was “to find out whether a community offering such a program can improve the quality of health care, change patients’ behavior from reliance upon emergency services to use of preventive care, and ultimately cut the overall health-care bill.”

It required extraordinary buy-in and cooperation from six Dane County healthcare providers, who were ordinarily fierce competitors. Each



provider would serve 100 patients in the program.

“It’s sort of like Wal-Mart and Target sitting down and working together,” Kevin Hayden, president of Dean Health Systems, said. Hayden chaired the 2005 UWDC annual fundraising campaign.

As with access to healthcare, the problem of homelessness had been on UWDC’s radar prior to the unveiling of the Agenda for Change. The homeless had once been largely comprised of single men, whereas by the early 2000s, half the homeless population were women and children.

In UWDC’s 2002 annual report, Steven Schooler, director of UWDC partner agency Transitional Housing, Inc., explained a philosophical change that was underway in combatting homelessness— a move that came to be called Housing First—prioritizing getting families into homes and preventing evictions rather than paying for temporary shelter.

“Eviction prevention is a far preferable means for addressing homelessness and potential homelessness than having families enter the shelter system,” Schooler said. “The data [is] quite dramatic. If you take the average voucher of \$65 to shelter a family in a motel and multiply it by their average stay of 15 nights, it costs almost \$1,000.”

Schooler noted that UWDC’s financial assistance program for eviction prevention “averaged just \$274 [when] provided to 876 households and 84 percent of those were still in stable housing six months later.”

Of the Housing First strategy, Lau Christensen, who chaired the UWDC Basic Needs Community Solution Team that studied the issue, said, “These strategies reflect a major shift for United Way. But we believe they will greatly aid those in jeopardy of losing their housing or who are

in transition into permanent housing, as well as save our community significant resources in the long-term.”

“It was hugely controversial,” Leslie Ann Howard recalled, nearly two decades later. “What we learned was that if you go to an emergency shelter, you have a 37 percent chance of ever getting out of the shelter system. But if you get someone before they end up in a shelter—even if they have the same set of problems, whatever the problems are—and keep them in their apartment or house, wherever they’re living, even if you subsidize them for a year, they have an 80 percent chance of remaining independent. And it’s half the cost of a shelter.”

Still, the shift was not easy. The system nationally—including the clientele group and the government—was accustomed to the shelter model.

“The idea of reversing engines was really difficult,” Howard said. “Both in terms of moving money and how we’d get out in front of it, so we didn’t have people out in the street.”

During the shift, UWDC Vice President Nan Cnare stressed that the key was to make certain they were accessing people before they were up against losing their housing.

In August 2005, two years into its Agenda for Change, UWDC helped launch a 15-member Housing in Action Leadership Team (HALT), with Cnare acting as coordinator.

“My sense,” Cnare said, “is that the community is ready to get excited about a specific community goal that we can work together to achieve.”

The goal was reducing homelessness, cutting in half the number of homeless children in Dane County by 2010.<sup>1</sup> Prevention was a key component.

“If we can keep them out of the homeless system,” leadership team member Judy Wilcox, chairwoman of the Dane County Housing Authority, told the Wisconsin State Journal, “it’s going to be less expensive for us as funders and it’s also going to be a lot better for the families that have to deal with homelessness.”

One immediate step was \$28,000 from UWDC to create a tenant education program to help renters better manage their finances.

Other prevention strategies included the following:

- Building bridges between renters and landlords, increasing awareness of alternatives to eviction
- Expanding access to food so family funds could go toward housing
- Boosting case management services: people who assist at risk families find stable housing<sup>2</sup>
- Focusing on the Housing First program and moving quickly when a family becomes homeless to provide counseling and help find permanent housing, as opposed to shelters

In 2005, the effort to reduce homelessness produced UWDC’s first Mobilization Plan—that is, calls to action that subsequently were utilized across the Agenda for Change. The Mobilization Plans were a

combination of a social services research paper and a business plan. They identified a community problem (e.g., homelessness) and announced UWDC's intent to improve it, employing research-based strategies to assess, reduce, and eliminate the underlying causes of an issue and bring measurable results.



*In 2010, four families achieved housing stability in Sun Prairie thanks to newly opened Housing First units. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*



It could be argued that if one had to pick the most crucial of UWDC's seven Agenda for Change categories, early childhood development might top the list. So much that comes after depends on a good foundation having been laid before a child ever attends school.

It had long been on the community's radar, dating at least to a Start Smart Dane County initiative in 1990. In October 2002, a civic journalism project— Birth to Four: The Building Blocks—would once again partner the Wisconsin State Journal and UWDC, this time to define a community vision for the county's youngest residents.

The project kicked off with a gathering of 400 people at Monona Terrace and a keynote address by pediatrician (and Brandeis University graduate school dean) Jack Shonkoff, coeditor of a widely circulated report on early childhood science: *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*.

The following day, two dozen community leaders convened in the State Journal auditorium, with Shonkoff also in attendance, to discuss how to get started.

Leslie Ann Howard ran the meeting and began by noting, "We have this huge elephant in front of us, and we have to figure out what part to bite off as a focus."

It was an interesting meeting. There was spirited debate on what part of early childhood to "bite off," as Howard put it, and while no decisions were made, four potential areas of focus emerged.

A story in the next day's State Journal explained, "The top three were: improve the way children are assessed for physical, cognitive, social and

emotional services; ensure safe places for children to live and play; and boost parent education.

“Also getting a lot of votes,” the State Journal concluded, “was an effort to upgrade training for child-care providers.”

Some of the meeting participants spoke about the hopes they held for the community’s children. Madison Police Chief Richard Williams said, “A joyful life,” and state schools superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster said, “A sense of hope for the future.”

But it was attorney Tom Ragatz, a longtime UWDC volunteer, who may have voiced the goal that would most affect positive change: “A secure and healthy home environment,” Ragatz said.

Schools of Hope had made that clear, especially when literacy was factored into that positive home environment.



*Tom & Karen Ragatz at Tocqueville Event. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

“With Schools of Hope we saw kids starting kindergarten with an 800-word vocabulary and kids starting with a 10,000-word vocabulary,” Howard said. “Imagine the difference. Their brains are quick, and they can learn—but they’re already behind, feeling alienated and disenfranchised from the situation.”

The October 2002 meeting at the State Journal established an early childhood leadership development team. Making a positive impact on early childhood for Dane County families would remain a priority for UWDC for years to come. In 2007, it launched a Born Learning initiative with a delegation that included Madison schools Superintendent Art Rainwater and Steve Goldberg of the CUNA Mutual Group Foundation,



a significant player on the Madison philanthropy scene. A key component of the delegation's community mobilization plan was screening children for developmental delays, with the help of medical providers, professionals, and community-based programs.

By 2011, and the advent of UWDC's Parent-Child Home Program, the strategy included in-home visits for low-income families with children two years of age. The first "class" involved 35 children who received a visitor at home twice a week for two years. The child received a book or toy appropriate for their development level, and the visitor helped the parent interact with the child and the new toy or book. They "graduated" at age four.

In July 2012, UWDC's board approved an expansion of the program from the original 35 children to 130. UWDC remained steadfast in getting the word out to the community: if you can change the first years of a child's life, you can change everything. In 2019, 254 children were enrolled, and 88 percent were 4K-ready, exceeding national benchmarks. Caregivers also reported significant increases in parenting confidence.

While the Agenda for Change—its insistence on priorities and measurable results—was greeted initially with skepticism by some UWDC agencies, it was embraced by volunteers. One volunteer, Madison banking executive Tom Dott, recalled the following:

We needed to be able to demonstrate results and accountability to our supporters. The Agenda for Change made the mission and the messaging clear and much easier to talk about when you were out evangelizing what United Way was all about and what it was doing. Getting people to understand what the organization was. That it was



trying to identify and address the root causes of the social challenges in our community. It wasn't just putting Band-Aids on things year after year. It was really trying to solve problems.

I spoke at a lot of campaign rallies, and as a volunteer, having a strong message I truly believed in and I could persuasively talk about really made me more effective. It made it easier as a volunteer.

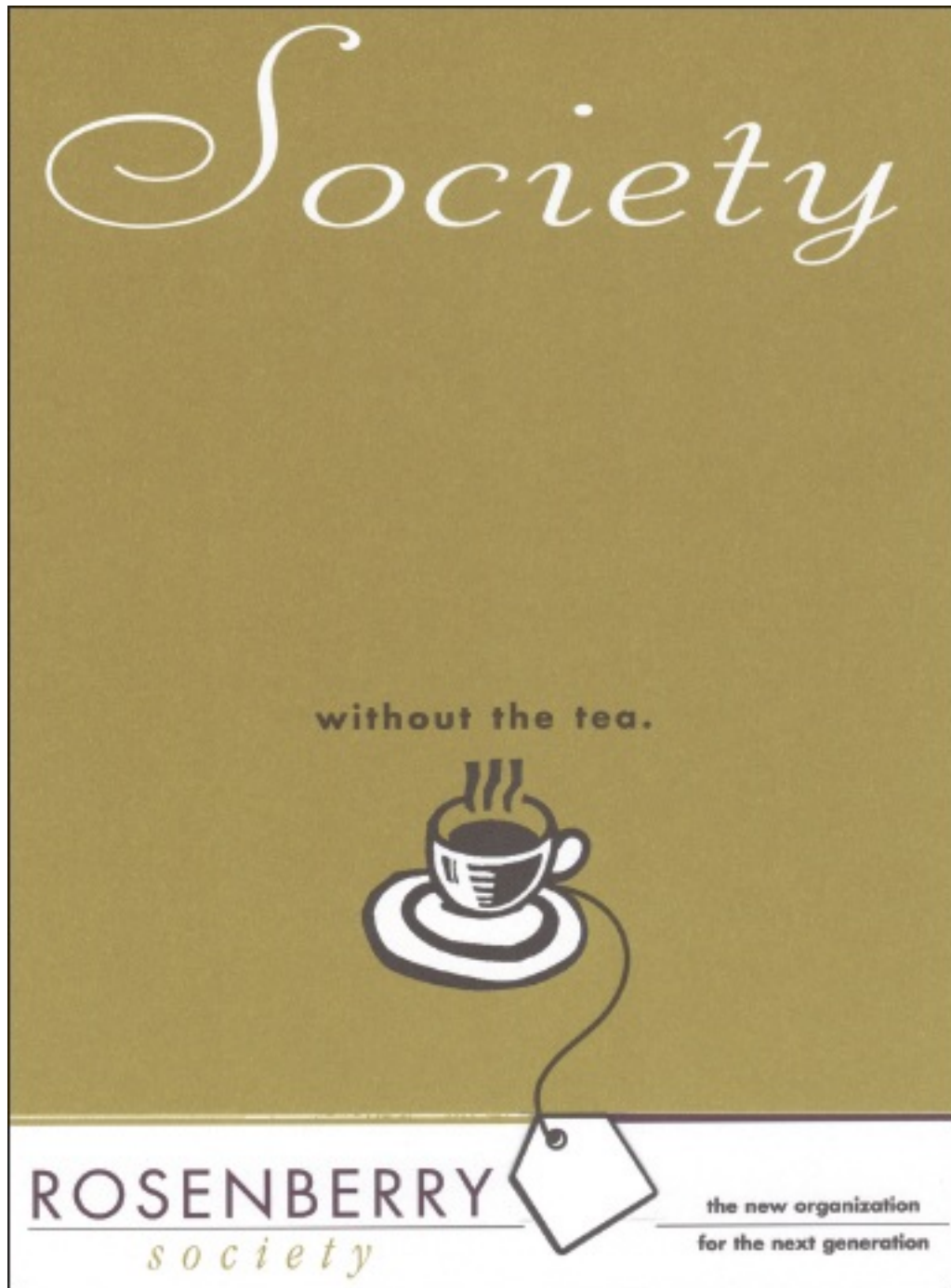


*2014 KinderReady Graduating class. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*



Of course, the Agenda for Change was not the only exciting UWDC initiative of the early 2000s. The first year of the new century saw the introduction of the Rosenberry Society, an effort to recruit young Dane

County professionals to the UWDC cause. Tom Dott was the volunteer leader who saw the need.



*Rosenberry Society Invitation. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

“Staff and I put our heads together and talked about how we could engage the younger generation in two ways,” Dott observed. “Financial philanthropy and volunteer philanthropy. Getting them informed and educated and in a position to be the next generation of United Way leaders.”

Dott was himself a young professional when he first interacted with UWDC. He’d seen UWDC in action in the early 1990s through being a Big Brother, then he got involved in the annual campaigns and in 1997 became a Key Club member. In 1998, his bank made him a loaned executive.

Eventually, the volunteer service of the Dott family—Tom, his wife, Kira, and their son, Brayden—led UWDC to nominate the Dotts for the annual outstanding volunteer fundraiser award of the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) Greater Madison chapter. The Dotts received the honor in 2011.

Kristi Shepard joined UWDC in January 2000 to oversee leadership giving—that is, the Key Club and three days on the job, also a new young leaders program. She came from a family that believed in giving back to the community, and upon landing in Madison in the early ’90s, she volunteered with the Madison Literacy Council, teaching a woman from Laos how to speak English.



*Kira & Todd Dott. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

Dott credits Shepard with coming up with the name for the new group, the Rosenberry Society, which of course harkens back to Marvin Rosenberry, the first great leader of UWDC's predecessor organization in the 1920s.

“It was one of the greatest challenges we had,” Dott said. “We didn’t want to throw any old moniker on this thing. Kristi learned about Rosenberry and attempted to get permission to use his name. It was said ‘he was the yardstick by which citizenship should be measured.’ It doesn’t get any better than that. He was groundbreaking in the things he did and the vision he had.”





*Rosenberry Society volunteers at Ronald McDonald House.*

Shepard credits Dott with recruiting the original steering committee for the Rosenberry Society and securing sponsorships to hold a kickoff event at the Executive Residence in Maple Bluff in September 2000. The Rosenberry Society's mission<sup>3</sup> was to engage Dane County professionals under 40 through a variety of social, philanthropic, and professional development activities.

In its first year, the Rosenberry Society's membership was 110 individuals, and the young leaders donated \$16,000. The Rosenberry Society grew to 315 members in 2001 and 504 in 2002. The monthly volunteer activities ranged from pure fun—a kickball tournament, in which all the participants wore T-shirts designed by Kira Dott—to CEO roundtables, like the one in September 2001 on the state of the local

high-tech industry.<sup>4</sup>

By the end of the decade, in 2009, the Rosenberry Society had grown to nearly 1,500 donors who that year contributed more than \$777,000.

Tom Dott would continue volunteering with UWDC through the next decade.

**I've gotten more from my involvement with United Way than I can ever possibly give back.**

“Over the years,” he said, early in 2021, “one of the things I’ve come to appreciate and treasure is that I’ve gotten more from my involvement with United Way than I can ever possibly give back. The people I’ve gotten to meet and work with—and learn from, from a professional development standpoint. Business leaders who are legends and I got to rub elbows with them and watch and learn how they ran meetings and handled themselves. There’s not an MBA course out there that could rival that.”



Another UWDC advancement in the early 2000s debuted on June 11, 2002, when UWDC, along with three other counties in Wisconsin, collaboratively launched the 211 telephone information and referral service. Called United Way 211, it was an upgrade of UWDC’s First Call for Help service, which debuted in 1981 and was itself derived from the

Madison Public Library's INFO program.

United Way 211 was staffed 24/7 by UWDC volunteers and offered easy access to assistance in a variety of areas, from caring for elderly parents to finding parenting classes and accessing food pantries. The program addressed issues that would soon be targeted in UWDC's Agenda for Change, including homelessness. A partner ship between United Way 211 and the Wisconsin Department of Administration's Division of Housing and Intergovernmental Affairs began the development of a community-wide online database that would provide up-to-date information on unmet needs regarding housing.

The easy access of 211 showed almost immediate results: for the month of September 2001, First Call for Help received a little more than 1,000 calls. In September 2002, United Way 211 received nearly 7,000 calls. In 2020, 211 received more than 49,000 calls and 36,000 web page views.

The expertise of United Way 211 paid an unexpected dividend far from Dane County a few years later, in September 2005, when New Orleans was devastated by Hurricane Katrina. In fact, 211 was only one of numerous resources UWDC committed to Katrina relief that month.

On September 5, 2005, UWDC partnered with several Madison-area media outlets for an all-day fund drive that raised more than \$100,000 for hurricane relief. Three days later, UWDC hosted at its offices more than 50 representatives of Dane County social service agencies for a two-hour discussion on coordinating the Katrina refugees who were beginning to appear in Dane County. The focus was on housing options, food donations, and employment possibilities.

On September 10, UWDC announced a \$25,000 gift to the American Red Cross Badger Chapter, which was training hundreds of new volunteers in the wake of Katrina and supporting the evacuees recovering in Dane County. Another gift of \$25,000 followed and was matched by \$25,000 from the United Way of America Hurricane Response Fund.

United Way 211 got involved because UWDC president Leslie Ann Howard was friendly with the directors of United Ways in Louisiana, and they needed help.

“The executive who ran the New Orleans United Way ended up getting stuck in his house,” Howard recalled. “He was sending photos. Eventually he went around in a boat getting people from his neighborhood out.”

Howard knew that Janet Durden, president of the United Way of Northeast Louisiana in Monroe, needed help with their 211 call center. The center in Baton Rouge had flooded, so the Monroe center was swamped by the sheer volume of people calling for help.

Monroe was far enough from New Orleans that Howard felt she could safely send help. Heather Hazelwood, assistant director of community building for UWDC, arrived in Louisiana on September 9 for a week of 12-hour shifts answering 211 calls. After a week, Hazelwood was replaced by UWDC coordinator Carl Rue. Many of the calls were from people wondering how to access food resources.

Closer to home in 2018, the community was rocked by an explosion in Sun Prairie and flooding in Black Earth and surrounding areas just a



month later. UWDC was able to assist local communities and Dane County Emergency Management with fund distribution processes and non-emergency property damage calls in 211. Community banks were key partners, particularly Jimmy Kauffman of Bank of Sun Prairie who co chaired the Sun Prairie emergency response committee with Mayor Paul Esser.

Locally, United Way 211 continued to grow. In 2004, it received more than 71,000 calls.

It was in 2004—due to a front-page, topline Capital Times story by Pat Schneider—that UWDC’s Agenda for Change landed once and for all squarely on the public radar. The buzzwords and phrases like “impact,” “moving the needle” were reiterated, and for the most part, the community reaction was positive. It didn’t hurt that earlier in the year, Brian Gallagher, president of United Way of America, pointed to UWDC and said, “If you want to see what community impact looks like, this is it.”

Schneider’s story noted that Gallagher had said that in a more competitive climate, donors were demanding more for their dollars, including accountability, not just in Dane County but across the country. It seemed undeniable that being early to community impact, as UWDC certainly was, made sense, and yet there were inevitable bruised feelings and some wariness from agencies with programs that might not fall under the Agenda for Change results-oriented umbrella. A Red Cross spokesman, lamenting that its water lifesaving program had failed to win funding, told Schneider, “It’s hard to demonstrate how many people you saved from drowning.”

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## If you want to see what community impact looks like, this is it.

Yet overall, the reception of the Agenda for Change and its aspirational goals of community impact was highly positive, and word of its efficacy spread across the country, to the extent that in 2005 UWDC was invited to speak with United Way of America's Board of Governors on its "journey to impact." Soon, requests were arriving in Madison from other United Ways asking to hear about Schools of Hope and the Agenda for Change.

"We were getting calls from United Ways all the time," Leslie Ann Howard said. "I'm not exaggerating. It seemed like every week. It got to the point where our staff—Kathy Hubbard, Nan Cnare, and others—would have been spending all their time going to other United Ways showing them how to do it. But we had our work to do here. I said if people are willing to come here, then we can do it."

United Way Worldwide ended up establishing Centers of Excellence around community impact work, with UWDC on point.

"We did a curriculum," Howard said. "It made it more efficient. We could have 80 people coming in at a crack once a year to do it." The first was July 16–17, 2007, in Madison.

While none of the problems targeted in the Agenda for Change could be solved overnight, immediate impact was possible, as evidenced by one signature project of UWDC's 2004 Days of Caring.

The Day of Caring dates to 1993, the first year UWDC used the kickoff date of its annual fundraising campaign to encourage volunteerism throughout the community. That year, 116 employees from 13 Dane County companies participated: Valley Bank employees helped clean a family center on Madison's north side; employees from Grant Thornton accountants took a group of kids awaiting a Big Brother or Big Sister for a day at the zoo; while CUNA Mutual employees volunteered at an immunization clinic on Simpson Street.

Eleven years on, the Day of Caring was expanded to six Days of Caring, as UWDC tried to generate more public awareness of the opportunities and rewards of volunteering. More than 2,000 volunteers participated.

As noted, the 2004 Days of Caring featured signature projects focused on the Agenda for Change. One such project was the construction of a Habitat for Humanity house for Samantha Johnson of Madison, a single mother of two who had applied for a Habitat for Humanity house in February 2004. In June, Johnson learned that the Honeywell company was sponsoring 60 employees to build two-and-a-half houses in 10 days. Johnson's was the "half a house". United Way Days of Caring volunteers stepped up to finish the job, along with Johnson herself.

One of the volunteers was UWDC board chairman Rick Searer, president of Kraft Foods-Oscar Mayer in Madison. He reflected on seeing the Johnson family move into their new home: "Having worked on this house, it made quite an impression on me to see the joy that it brought the Johnson family. I was really moved by this event."



*Decades of Habitat for Humanity volunteering (Spring Window Fashions group). Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

1. The number of homeless children has exceeded homeless men every year since 1990.
2. In 2007, two years after the leadership team's plan was laid out, UWDC provided two housing case management symposia, and 1,790 families received United Way-supported case management that helped prevent eviction.
3. Dott jokes that he worked half the night on a mission statement and by the time it was adopted the only word of his remaining was "a".
4. Panelists included legendary tech executive Jim Berbee, founder of Berbee Information Networks.



## **CHAPTER 9**

# **TARGETING DISCONNECTED YOUTH, SENIOR INDEPENDENCE, A GROWING LATINO POPULATION, AND MORE**

**W**ith all its focus on change and innovation in the first half of the 2000s, one thing remained constant for UWDC. Its annual fundraising campaigns continued to set, then meet or exceed, ambitious goals. When the total for 2005 was unveiled at an event in November of that year, the 700 in attendance stood and applauded: \$14,750,615 was the most they'd ever raised.

The master of ceremonies for the event was Neil Heinen, editorial director of WISC-TV/Channel 3 and Madison Magazine, a highly respected journalist whose first instinct was always to gauge what was

happening in the city by how it impacted people in need.

Heinen was a natural fit with UWDC, dating to the first editorials he voiced during Channel 3 newscasts starting in 1989. When his half-hour Sunday morning program, *For the Record*, debuted three years later, UWDC staff and volunteers made frequent appearances. Heinen was part of a delegation of UWDC staff, volunteers, and community leaders who went to Philadelphia in April 1997 for the presidential summit on community service and volunteerism, a group that included Kathy Hubbard and Justine Harris from UWDC. In 2001, after the 9/11 attacks, Heinen hosted a special live, one-hour *For the Record* program on how the city could best respond.

“[Channel 3 news director] Tom Bier and I talked,” Heinen said, “and we agreed the number one person we had to have on that day was [UWDC president] Leslie Ann Howard. There was no one better suited to keep a community focused on what’s important than Leslie.”

Heinen, who retired from Channel 3 in 2020, said he did dozens of editorials focused on UWDC over the years.

“We saw some real important contributions from United Way,” he said. “I would do an editorial every year urging support for the campaign, and participation in the campaign. Then, six months later, I’d do a proof of performance editorial, pointing to United Way’s stewardship in its responsible use of the community’s support. And the efficiency of it—the small amount that went to administrative and fundraising costs. I wanted the public to know that.”

Heinen played a leadership role in a national association of editorial

writers and broadcasters, and it took him to many cities across the United States:

I'd kind of check out the United Ways in other cities, and I always thought ours was one of the best in the country in a whole lot of ways, not least was how it was able to engage the business community at the very top levels. Not just in giving, but in being committee chairs and serving on the [UWDC] board. These were CEOs and chairmen of the biggest companies. Many times I was at United Way meetings around issues, and I wished people in our community could see who was sitting at the table. They showed up for 7:30 a.m. meetings, stayed until 9:00 and talked afterward. That was powerful.

I was a huge supporter of the Agenda for Change. There was a connection between Leslie, her team and board, and our editorial board at Channel 3. We knew they were out there walking the talk. It started showing up in a lot of ways, including Cuéntame and progress for the Latino community.

UWDC's engagement with Dane County's Latino population dated to at least 1983, when a \$14,000 gift from UWDC launched Centro Hispano, a center for the Latino community.

In 2005, an awareness of the growing Latino population in Dane County led UWDC's Latino Advisory Delegation to research and prepare a report on the quality of Latino life in the county and how it might be improved. Dane County's Latino population was estimated at around 19,000 in 2004 by the US Census Bureau—up from 14,600 in 2000—though local officials believed the number was much higher, as many as 40,000 or 50,000 (undocumented individuals in many cases, wary of



being counted).

“It was a growing population with growing needs,” Leslie Ann Howard recalled, in retrospect. “We needed to be more responsive. We had the legacy of a relationship with Centro Hispano and we wanted to make it deeper.”

UWDC sponsored three gatherings in which Latinos were invited to talk about their lives and concerns in areas like housing, healthcare, employment, and education. The events were called “Cuéntame”—meaning “tell me” in English—and included a gathering in February 2006 at Centro Guadalupe, the Catholic Multicultural Center.



*Day of Caring at Centro Hispano. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

A 71-year-old Latina woman, a 10-year resident of Madison soon to get



her US citizenship, said language was her biggest issue. She spoke through an interpreter and said she wished it were possible to get a “tongue transplant” so she could better speak English.

The chairman of UWDC’s Latino Advisory Delegation, UW System vice president Salvador Carranza, told a Wisconsin State Journal reporter covering the meeting that societal attitudes toward immigrants were a continuing concern.

“People are afraid that the new attacks on immigrants will affect their lives,” Carranza said. “All they’re asking is just a chance for an honest living.”

Four months after that event, in June 2006, UWDC issued a 43-page report titled, *Cuéntame: Latino Life in Dane County*. It was unveiled to a gathering of several hundred employers, government officials, activists, and social service professionals at Madison Area Technical College’s Mitby Theater.

Among the findings was that the median hourly wage for Latinos was \$4 less than for others; Latinos were half as likely to own homes compared to non-Latinos; and the mortality rate of infants born to Latina women was 1.5 times greater than babies born to white women in Dane County.

There was also a general distrust of law enforcement among the Latino community, which the report addressed by recommending, as noted in the next day’s State Journal, “that police offer a packet of materials in Spanish when giving citations to reduce confusion; develop a countywide bilingual call center to handle the reporting of crimes and assist police; and improve the collection of data to track trends involving

Latinos.”

Madison schools Superintendent Art Rainwater said of the UWDC report, “It leaves me hopeful. It does not leave me fearful. One of the wonderful things about Madison is we’re willing to confront issues and try to solve them.”

In the 1980s, as Dane County began addressing the needs of its growing Latino community, another group of immigrants was calling Dane County home. In response, UWDC helped fund Madison-based United Refugee Services of Wisconsin, which provided interpretation, advocacy, outreach, and other support services for Southeast Asian refugees who had settled in Dane County.

“Once we got that initial funding it gave us credibility,” recalled Gray Williams, the organization’s executive director in the late 1980s. “It was very important, we were cultural brokers helping people navigate the system. If you are new to a country, you have to make changes... It can be scary and intimidating.”

Peng Her came to Madison with his family as a young boy in the 1970s and watched as United Refugee Services was established in the 1980s, becoming a leader in the community himself as time went on. Her recalled the following:

United Refugee Services became a place to gather when we had community events. The whole community came. That is how we survived. We acted like a co-op, we pulled together and bought a car for someone so they could drive everyone where they needed to go...

Within one lifetime, 40 years, we have made so much progress. Now my

children are going to college. The resilience! One thing that was so important about United Refugee Services was the language classes, how to speak English, so we could get a job. Employment services were important. We were just trying to survive, but we wanted to be productive. Language and employment services were the most crucial. Fast forward to now. It's mental health services and we need a space and building where people can come together.

Helping seniors and people with disabilities stay in their homes—one of the seven components of the Agenda for Change—didn't generate as much media coverage as the others, but UWDC was committed to seeing positive change nonetheless. In February 2007, UWDC held a town hall event on how best to support the unpaid family caregivers who are often essential if someone is to remain at home. That August, another gathering featured staff of the agencies who provide direct services to seniors and people with disabilities talking about the need for community alignment around the issue.

In 2008, the UWDC annual campaign chairman, Jim Riordan, CEO and president of WPS Health Insurance, took note of the good work, especially with seniors and the disabled, that often happens “under the radar.”

In a guest column for the Capital Times, Riordan wrote, “In other areas, United Way's work happens so quietly, it's hard to notice. But area seniors and people with disabilities in Dane County see the results of United Way's work when they are able to live independently in homes of their choice.”

Riordan pointed out that over the next decade,

Dane County can expect the senior population to grow at three times the rate of our total population... United Way of Dane County and its partner organizations are committed to preserving the independence of seniors and people with disabilities. United Way is reaching out to those who give care to family and friends, and helping people understand the broad definition of caregiver. With more information and special tools, informal caregivers can assist seniors and people with disabilities with the activities of daily living...

Each year, United Way of Dane County and its partners help preserve the independence of more than 10,000 people in Dane County.

**Each year, United Way of Dane County and its partners help preserve the independence of more than 10,000 people in Dane County.**

At the other end of the age spectrum, in 2007, UWDC launched its Delegation on Disconnected and Violent Youth cochaired by Corey Chambas of First Business Bank and Darrell Bazzell of UW–Madison. The 30-member delegation included Madison Mayor Dave Cieslewicz and Madison Police Chief Noble Wray and was formed in part because of a twofold increase in juvenile crime from 2003 to 2005.

The delegation was announced in April 2007, and in January 2008, UWDC hosted a gathering at the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center to roll out what it called its Achievement

Connections mobilization plan, a four-point strategy to keep students from disengaging from family, school, and the community. The goal was to increase the high school graduation rate in Dane County to 95 percent by 2012.

Banking executive Corey Chambas, told the Capital Times that a key to the plan was forming leadership teams in individual communities. They started with pilot programs in Oregon and Middleton.

“The community teams are critical to getting the many disciplines involved, not just education, but the economy, juvenile justice, health care.... We need to engage the community behind this effort.” Chambas said volunteer “graduation mentors” would be matched with struggling youths, starting in middle school.

UWDC’s research yielded a somewhat surprising red flag: the most significant disenfranchising occurs in middle school.

“The research in Madison schools,” Leslie Ann Howard recalled, “found that the highest incidence of anger, anxiety, and depression occurred in middle school [i.e., grades six through eight]. What the research and data showed is that kids begin to experience these things in sixth grade.”



*Noble Wray, Madison Police Chief. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

Their aberrant behavior, Howard said, was often shrugged off: in other words, what can you expect from a 12- or 13-year-old?

“But by the time they get to ninth grade,” Howard said, “we’ve pretty much lost them. That’s why they call it disconnected and violent youth. They start becoming disconnected in sixth grade.”

In early 2008, UWDC provided \$100,000 to the Dane County Mental Health Center to expand its Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS) program, which screened six graders for depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The funding meant all Madison middle school students could be screened.

“Children experience trauma,” Howard said, “and we tend not to recognize it. They don’t show it at the time.”

For UWDC Vice President Nan Cnare, who had coordinated the 2005 Housing in Action Leadership Team (HALT), students struggling in school could be linked directly to the trauma of homelessness. Indeed, it could be argued that until there’s a safe and secure home environment, all other problems—including learning in school—are unmanageable.

Cnare said it was at a United Way national meeting in San Francisco where she first heard the phrase “Housing First.”

It was a problem-solving session where we were meeting with fellow frontline workers and supervisors from across the country. Shelters were how homelessness was addressed at the time, but during the discussion the idea was advanced that someone in a shelter is still homeless; what they need was housing. In a phrase, Housing First.

I thought, “This is exactly what we’re talking about.” What was interesting was that even the Housing First meeting was primarily for single men. And I remember sitting there and thinking, “No, no, no. We cannot just do this for single men.” I think it took several years before we could warm people up to the idea that we could even admit we had homeless families. It’s tough for a community to admit there are families sleeping in their cars and couch surfing.

In July 2010, Madison’s police chief, Noble Wray, wrote a guest column in the Wisconsin State Journal headlined, “Permanency is key to fighting homelessness.”

Along with being the police chief, that year Wray was the chair of

UWDC. To some that might seem like an unusual partnership, but in Dane County, it was not. Wray was an advocate for community policing; later, President Barack Obama would hire him to lead the US Justice Department's Policing Practices and Accountability Initiative.

"The police were an important partner for us," Leslie Ann Howard said. "They're often at the forefront of seeing the needs in the community. Where people are getting into trouble and having issues, particularly in the areas of homelessness and mental illness."

Wray's 2010 column made the case for UWDC's Housing First.

"When families become homeless," Wray wrote, "getting them quickly back into housing is the top priority. Housing First, an evidence-based initiative we adopted three years ago, is highly effective at keeping families out of shelters and in stable housing. In Dane County, it is 80 percent effective (versus shelters having a 37 percent effectiveness rate), and our Dane County experience demonstrates that Housing First costs 40 percent of the cost of handling families through traditional shelters."

An important early supporter of Housing First was the Henry J. Predolin Foundation. Predolin grew up in a small town in Croatia and came to the United States in his 20s in the years after World War II, settling in Madison. With a work ethic instilled by his father, Predolin became a successful businessman. He established a foundation in the name of his son, Henry J. Predolin. When the elder Predolin died in 2007, his assets went into the foundation, which is directed by Predolin's longtime Madison-based attorney, Robert Chritton.

"He had a real concern for children," Chritton said of Henry Predolin.



“Particularly disadvantaged and indigent children.”

UWDC is a primary beneficiary of the foundation. Like many, Chritton and his board initially felt like a donation to expand shelters would be an effective way to address homelessness. The UWDC team, led by Leslie Ann Howard and Nan Cnare, made the pitch for Housing First, getting families into permanent housing.

Cnare recalled, “I remember the social worker from Leopold School was with us when we met with the Predolin board and talked about how critical housing was for school success. That gave us some momentum. Not just that United Way was doing it but now the schools were buying into it, the community was coming together. And that’s what United Way does best. We brought people together.”

In 2008, the year after Predolin’s death, the foundation agreed to a two-year grant funding Housing First: \$521,000 in 2008 and \$537,000 in 2009.

“We’ve funded Housing First every year since,” Chritton said. “Since [its] inception we’ve given almost \$8.5 million for housing, including 2020.” With the 2021 grant, the total exceeded \$9.2 million!

**And that's what United Way does best. We brought people together.**

Of the Henry J. Predolin Foundation’s work with UWDC, Chritton said, “Their [UWDC’s] team has changed but they’ve always been focused on

these families and are clearly very passionate about caring for them. There are five people on our board. It took a little bit at the beginning for all of us to understand the concept of Housing First, as opposed to shelters. But once we got on board with the concept of rapid re-housing rather than shelter and could see the results of Housing First, funding Housing First made the most sense to reduce homelessness for Dane County's poorest children."

Chritton said the Predolin board has been impressed with how many families remain stably housed 12 to 24 months out.

"The [UWDC] team has been very transparent," Chritton said. "I work closely with them on their grant proposal and they provide a lot of good information."

In 2014, UWDC presented—and Predolin accepted—a funding opportunity for what Chritton called "a different kind of housing plan." They called it Family Housing Stability. "It's aimed at families who are not technically homeless," Chritton explained. "They don't qualify for some of the support that is available through the US government or Salvation Army. They're staying with friends, they're barely able to afford a motel room."

Chritton thinks Henry Predolin would appreciate the foundation's partnership with UWDC.

"He was a results guy," Chritton said. "He would be impressed by the performance of UWDC in all these different metrics. We have guys on the board who are looking for results. If UWDC wasn't doing the job, we wouldn't be funding them at the levels we have been."

UWDC benefited as the second decade of the 2000s began and the national and local economies started to rebound from the severe 2008 downturn. The success of UWDC's 2011 annual campaign generated an enthusiastic editorial in the Wisconsin State Journal, headlined, "More tutors, fewer evictions and falls." Clearly, scholastic achievement, reducing homelessness, and championing senior health and independence remained UWDC priorities.

The 2011 annual campaign raised more than \$16.8 million, with some 38,000 residents contributing and more than 1,100 businesses and organizations participating.

The State Journal, reporting on the distribution of funds, noted that education efforts, "and especially tutoring programs led by Centro Hispano and the Urban League of Greater Madison, will receive nearly \$3.5 million. That helps more than 1,000 tutors work with more than 7,200 students throughout Dane County."

From 2010 to 2011, the number of fourth graders in the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) reading at or below the minimum threshold was reduced from 9 percent to 6 percent, according to the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam (WKCE). Between 2006 and 2011, the rate of Latino students scoring minimally on the WKCE declined from 20 to 11 percent, and African American students saw a reduction from 17 to 14 percent.

One Schools of Hope volunteer tutor was a woman named Terry Twedell, who had retired after 34 years as a teacher in Sun Prairie.

In 2011, Twedell tutored a fifth-grade girl at Northside Elementary

School who was experiencing difficulties with math and reading.

Twedell spoke about that experience in UWDC's 2011 annual report: "We went backwards and started with second-grade reading and math so we could build a foundation. Schools of Hope allows the tutor and student to go back, find the spot and get the help needed."

Twedell reported that the girl was now reading at grade level and improving her math skills. "Students look forward to that half an hour to an hour they spend with you," she said. "They are going to be tomorrow's leaders – we need to make sure they have a strong foundation – and that would be an education."

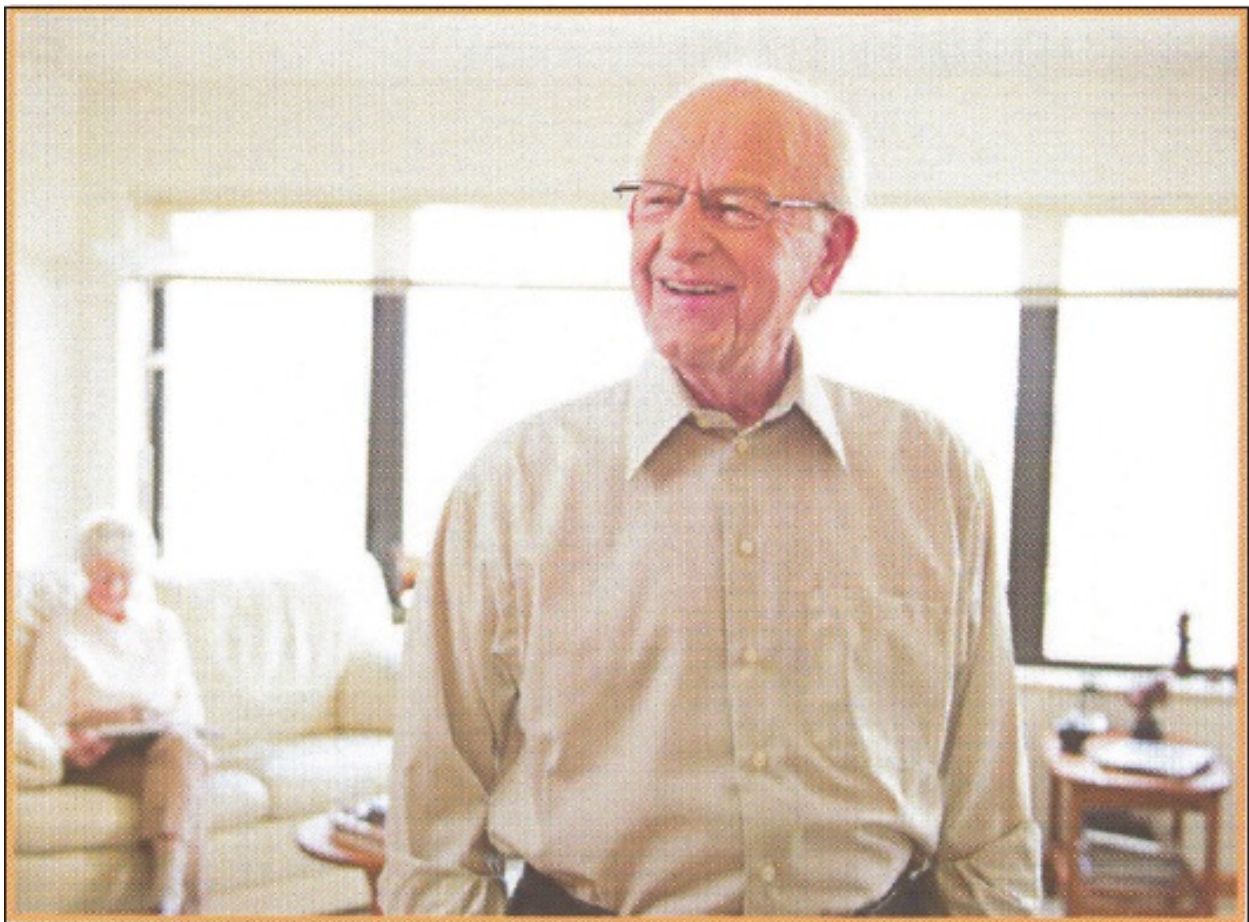
In September 2011, UWDC launched its Safe and Healthy Aging Initiative, which included strategies to keep seniors safe, healthy, and independent by reducing the rate of negative drug reactions and falls.

"We wanted to keep seniors in their homes," Leslie Ann Howard recalled. "What we found when we got into the research and best practices was there were primarily four reasons why they went to nursing homes: falls, incontinence, dementia and adverse drug effects."

But the research also showed that adverse drug reactions were a driver underneath at least two of the others. People were sometimes misdiagnosed, failed to follow directions, took two of the same drug (generic and brand name), or used drugs that produce a bad reaction when taken together.

"The seriousness of the problem and lack of awareness was shocking," Howard said. The average Dane County senior took 6.4 medications daily.

The intelligence gathering was the product of UWDC's Delegation on Safe and Healthy Aging, made up of 38 healthcare professionals and community partners. The delegation spent a year studying the problem and developed a plan, in partnership with the Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Pharmacy Quality Collaborative (WPQC), to reduce the rate of negative drug reactions and falls among Dane County seniors by 15 percent by 2015.



*Howard remains independent through the support of United Way's Safe and Healthy Aging Initiative.*

*Beneficiary of the Safe and Healthy Aging Initiative. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

In fall 2013, UW Health approached UWDC with an ambitious plan to help low-income Dane County residents navigate changes in healthcare triggered by the national Affordable Care Act (ACA) and Governor Scott Walker's administration's rejection of federal money for Medicaid expansion.

Healthcare providers were worried that the complex new rules and premium requirements might prevent people from getting insurance and lead to increased emergency room visits—the same concern that led to the formation of the Dane County Health Council, facilitated by UWDC, a dozen years earlier.

UW Health and UWDC together developed a plan, funded by UW Health and administered by UWDC, to help low-income people get health insurance. It was called HealthConnect. UW Health contributed \$2 million to make it happen—up to that point the largest single gift ever made to UWDC.

The Dane County families and individuals targeted by the new program — an estimated 7,300 people—had incomes either at or just above the federal poverty level. Many hadn't previously had health insurance. As sweeping and well-intentioned as the ACA was, there was still a premium requirement. HealthConnect would help with those premiums.

“We are really humbled and honored to be part of it,” Leslie Ann Howard said at a press conference. “We realize the gravity of it, we realize the complexity of it, and we want to be part of something that's going to fundamentally affect healthcare access, the quality of healthcare outcomes and the cost of healthcare. That's a pretty big statement to be able to make, and it's because of our partners at UW Health.”

The press conference announcing the HealthConnect partnership was held at the Wingra Family Medical Center on South Park Street, itself a partnership between UW Health and Access Community Health Centers (ACHC). The nonprofit ACHC was launched in 1982 and for 40 years has provided high-quality care regardless of patients' ability to pay. They were an early member of the Health Council and like other Dane County nonprofits, including ABC for Health, Inc.,<sup>1</sup> offered invaluable input across the years.

“Having them at the table,” Howard said, “helped us to make sure we were meeting the needs of the people we were really targeting.”

Tackling HealthConnect was always going to be a challenge, but in the second half of 2013, UWDC was also engaged in finding a successor for Howard, who had originally intended to retire in 2013 but agreed to stay through 2015. Her long, successful tenure as UWDC president would be a daunting act to follow.

The decision on her successor rested with the UWDC board, and there was an extensive search process that included widespread community input on what was wanted in a new leader. A central question was whether to bring in someone from the outside or promote from within someone familiar with the organization.

For the latter, a candidate emerged who in the past 15 years had assembled abundant experience across the organization.

Renee Moe, who joined UWDC as a student intern in 1998, had by 2004 assumed a vice presidency role leading resource development and marketing. By then, having had a front row seat to the Schools of Hope

initiative and Agenda for Change results, Moe's belief in the UWDC mission and its ability to accomplish it had solidified.

"We were using data, bringing community organizations together and empowering leadership in nonprofit and business partners," Moe affirmed. The cooperation yielded results unattainable by institutions acting alone. "That was exciting," Moe said. "We started seeing measurable change. I got turned on to how the work happened and how you can inspire a community to mobilize to create that change."

Facing the recession in 2008, Moe led the development of two mobilization plans: one centered on donor retention, the other on new donor acquisition.

"There's an inverse relationship when times are tougher—needs are higher and resources are harder to raise," Moe said. "What I remember most about that time was aggressive goals and despite the tough times people still came together to step up."

"Renee really shined," Howard said. "I made a commitment to get her new experiences and to get to the point where she could be seen as a viable candidate for the [president and CEO] job."

Moe clearly knew the business and resource development side. In 2012, she added community impact responsibilities, working with Schools of Hope to get kids tutored in the summer; acquiring mentor texts for teachers as part of their professional development; and staffing the Born Learning early childhood delegation chaired by Dane County Executive Joe Parisi and attorney Michael Morgan.

"There was a lot of intentionality around making sure I had the breadth



of the organization,” Moe said.



*Renee Moe, President & CEO from 2015 to present. Photo from United Way of Dane County personal collection.*

Still, president and CEO? “I was uncomfortable with the idea of a big title,” Moe admitted. But a trusted friend and long-time UWDC volunteer asked her, “Who could do it better?”

“I remember exactly where I was in the United Way building when it dawned on me,” she said. “The reason you want a job like this is for the access to resources to affect positive change. Then it felt like the right thing to do.”

Moe was in the parking lot of her child’s daycare center when she answered a cell phone call from UWDC board chair Rich Lynch.

“We would like to offer you the job of president and CEO,” Lynch said.

“Awesome,” Moe said.

She took over as president in October 2015 and added the CEO title with Howard’s official retirement at the end of December.

On October 7, 2015, Leslie Ann Howard spoke at downtown’s Rotary Club of Madison. She was reflective and insightful about the hard-earned accomplishments of UWDC in the areas of early childhood, reducing homelessness, Schools of Hope, and more. Speaking about meaningful change, she got personal, recalling how her father had beaten alcoholism in his 40s and lived three more decades, helping numerous others attain sobriety. Helping others—what was that if not a mantra for the work of United Way?

“People want to change the world, and they want to make a difference,” Howard told the Rotary Club. “Everybody is struggling with something in their lives. Still, they want to help somebody else, they want to help the community. They do it and they sacrifice—and it’s humbling.”

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1. Founded in 1994.



## CHAPTER 10

# NEW LEADERSHIP, NEW CHALLENGES, NEW COLLABORATIONS: UWDC AT 100

The leadership change at UWDC happened as two major initiatives were underway.

In fall 2014—in the wake of a high-profile officer-involved shooting of a Black man in Ferguson, Missouri—law enforcement leaders in Dane County asked UWDC and the Dane County branch of the NAACP to facilitate a stakeholder dialogue on what was, increasingly, a divisive issue across the country.

“When Michael Brown was killed in Ferguson [Missouri] in 2014, I called Leslie,” Sue Riseling, then chief of the UW–Madison Police Department, recalled. “As we watched the destruction in Ferguson, I

thought it would be good for us to come together in Madison and have a conversation about race relations and police relations before we had an incident here.”

Riseling “hoped United Way could invite community advocates, leaders of color and people that were concerned and invested in what was happening with law enforcement. I thought United Way could be an honest broker to bring people together and make the connections.”

Law enforcement’s outreach resulted in the Law Enforcement and Leaders of Color Collaboration (LELCC), which initially looked at local reaction to the national incidents, finding frustration and anger among communities of color.



*Law Enforcement and Leaders of Color Committee (LELCC), 2015. Photo from United Way of Dane County personal collection.*

“Once we came together,” recalled Greg Jones, president of the NAACP Dane County chapter and the LELCC’s cochair, “it quickly became about what we were going to do in the way of action. We decided we had to start with Use of Force. We engaged communities of color and law enforcement... Our goal was about building trust between community and law enforcement.”

In March 2015, Dane County experienced its own officer-involved shooting of an African American male.

Tony Robinson’s death led the LELCC to create a Special Community/Police Task Force charged with making recommendations regarding use of force by law enforcement. In December 2015, the task force—cochaired by Sue Riseling and Reverend Everett Mitchell<sup>1</sup> provided a list of recommendations that included institutionalizing major incident debriefings and training officers to become as competent in de-escalation as they are in using weapons.

“I saw law enforcement become more accepting of the need for change,” Greg Jones said. “When history books look at this, following the events of Tony Robinson, can we say we have built some trust between the community and law enforcement? I think we can.”

“All this work was a big risk for United Way,” Riseling said. “Tensions were high, stakes were high. But this was for the greater good. We were working for a fairer society and a fairer justice system. We accomplished a lot.”

“I was struck by both the opportunity and fear that this presented,” said Deedra Atkinson, senior vice president of community impact and

strategy for UWDC. “It was daunting... But it was important because the community asked for it. When they ask, it’s important we [respond]. We had been friends with law enforcement for many years; they had become strong voices and advocated in our work... For leaders of color, it was a powerful position. The danger was that their advocacy position would be compromised. But we all felt it was important these kids [protesting] not be arrested and have a record.”

Riseling’s task force co chair, Reverend Mitchell, recalled the following: “The table had to be set with all different types of voices. And [we needed to] let those voices be heard. That’s what made it successful. The product we developed [use of force standards] was a gift to me. I learned so much from Sue Riseling. I walked away with a transformed perspective on policing. You can be in different professions and have the same calling and the same passion... We came together to do this, and we did it.”

Urban League president and CEO Dr. Ruben Anthony, who assumed that role as the Tony Robinson controversy unfolded, agrees—but up to a point.

“When I joined the [LELCC] team the protests were going on and we decided we needed peacekeepers,” Anthony said. “In cooperation with United Way, we coordinated the recruitment, training and support of people willing to be peacekeepers during the protests. We had lanyards for name tags to identify people [who] provided water, support, and communication... Many of us were out there talking with the kids [protesting] and communicating with police.”





*Sue Riseling, and others, at 2017 Women United Breakfast. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

Of the use of force recommendations, Anthony said, “Ultimately all units of law enforcement in the county adopted the recommendations, they didn’t necessarily implement everything. There is still work to be done.”

Former Madison police chief Noble Wray—who in 2015 was asked to lead the Policing Practices and Accountability Initiative for the Obama administration’s Department of Justice—saw UWDC’s role in the use of force task force being of a piece with its larger role in the community.

“UWDC had, and has, the ability—and credibility—to convene a group,” Wray said. “People said, ‘I’ll go there because United Way is having it.’ They feel like at least United Way will listen.”

On use of force, Wray continued, “You [UWDC] brought in not only [the Madison Police Department and Dane County Sheriff’s Office], but

all the smaller law enforcement agencies in the county. Now all the smaller agencies are dealing with this, they are dealing with big city issues. United Way did all this in a non confrontational way, ushering in the 21st century to the rest of the community.”

The use of force collaboration became a model for the Immigration and Refugee Task Force created in Dane County in summer 2017.

“Our communities were so afraid,” recalled Centro Hispano CEO Karen Menendez Coller, who co chaired the new task force with Chief Deputy Jeff Hook. “This was during the time of the presidential primaries and the rhetoric about Mexican immigrants and building a wall between the United States and Mexico... We did many, many focus groups. Many important recommendations came out of the task force [and] we are still using [them] today.”

Among the recommendations was advocating for a state driving card and greater community engagement with law enforcement, supporting public safety for all.

While United Way and its partners were working on this crucial issue for the community, an anniversary of another unique collaboration was coming up in 2018.

By Youth For Youth (BYFY) was an initiative between United Way, Oscar Mayer™, Dane County, and the City of Madison. Started in 1993 and ready to celebrate its 25th anniversary, the initiative represented a significant step to recognize and engage youth leadership and importantly youth voices in decision-making in Dane County.





*By Youth For Youth (BYFY) shopping event in 2014. Henry Gaylord, future board member, in front.*

“We thought about how much of our emphasis and funding was focused on children and youth. It was time to not only hear from them, but to give them an opportunity to lead and direct resources in a meaningful way,” reflected Leslie Ann Howard. Over the course of the program, more than 600 high school youth were provided leadership and meeting facilitation training. Each year, the group would undertake priority setting for what the youth of our community needed. They would then manage a grant request program and make decisions on where funding should go to youth projects. BYFY has awarded more than \$800,000 to 458 youth-led initiatives.

Another outcome was that in 2010 United Way took the step to include a BYFY member (a high school student) as a full voting member of the UWDC board of directors. Henry Gaylord, who participated in BYFY as an East High School student, recalls his participation: “It was the only activity I saw in Dane County where youth got to be the actual decision

makers. It wasn't advisory, it wasn't input, it was decision making."

Henry served on the United Way board as a youth member and recalled the first meeting where he was elected to the board:

"I was intimidated and nervous because everyone seemed to know everyone else, and I didn't know anyone." But it all worked out. "I met someone that night who became a dear friend [Leslie Ann Howard] and it solidified my relationships with others in the community like Jennifer Cheatham [MMSD superintendent at the time and member of the board]. It gave me an opportunity to better understand the community and its challenges, to understand United Way's mission and impact—it's why I fell in love with United Way."

Following his time on the board, Henry Gaylord would go on to serve as a loaned executive in the 2015 campaign.

Around this same time, United Way's Delegation to Create Economic Stability for Young Families was assembling data and preparing to release a report on how the county could best address a single-word issue that caused problems across the board: poverty.

According to longtime UWDC volunteer Barbara Nichols, who served as Vision Council chair, it was a board member, UW-Madison administrator Darrell Bazzell, who brought addressing poverty to the forefront in 2014.



*Barbara Nichols, longtime UWDC volunteer*

“He said the most important thing United Way could be working on was poverty,” Nichols recalled. “It made us think about how the Community Solution Teams work and function and how they related to the Agenda for Change. It was a casual statement made at a board meeting that got operationalized.”

The idea of anchoring a plan—which came to be called Strong Roots—on poverty was not without skeptics. The word itself has often been stigmatized. But it is also definable. Identifiable results had been a core principle for UWDC since the earliest days of the Agenda for Change. In trying to move low-income Dane County families into a better circumstance, a place of well-being, the problem was quantifying it. There is no metric for well-being. But the opposite of well-being could be defined as poverty, and that is measurable.

The delegation's report, Strong Roots: Building Economically Stable Families Mobilization Plan, was unveiled to the community in February 2016 at an event at Monona Terrace. UW–Madison Chancellor Rebecca Blank, who co chaired the delegation with former Madison police chief Noble Wray, spoke at the gathering:

“Our delegation’s challenge to the United Way is that business as usual in this community hasn’t worked to address some of the most hard-core issues facing poor single-mother families and particularly families of color,” Blank said. “The United Way, I firmly believe, given its effectiveness in this community, given its reach in the business community, in the social services community, in the government community, does have the potential to do more.”

The report laid out four recommendations:

1. Promote a two-generation coordinated support system for young families living in poverty.
2. Grow the number of families earning incomes that can sustain a family.
3. Create more affordable housing.
4. Focus on helping kids in low-income families get developmentally ready for school.

That this plan also emphasized centering families—calling out the distinct differences in poverty and race and bringing the nationally recognized work of the Agenda for Change together in a coordinated way—was yet another catalyst for United Way’s next chapter of

innovation, collaboration, and positive impact.

This occurred as a major shift in philanthropy was underway. Starting during the Great Recession, in 2008, the economy changed dramatically — for example, fewer local headquarters; technology, including the first smartphones, transformed how people communicate, find information, and eventually give; and new for-profit businesses emerged that developed tech platforms to process and distribute donations.

While corporate and leadership giving continued to be the growth engine of UWDC's campaign, participation was declining. Oscar Mayer™ announced it was moving its headquarters in 2015, and in 2017, millennials (who had less experience with United Way) became the largest generation in the US workforce.

Through surveys, focus groups, and more, UWDC learned that while most in Dane County had positive feelings toward United Way, exactly how they perceived its work and place in the community varied widely.

Business leaders and major donors understood UWDC as an accountable convener and change catalyst; other community members saw it as a volunteer clearinghouse. Many in the workforce recognized the yearly campaign and payroll deduction but not necessarily the impact of their gifts. Some nonprofits and grassroots groups didn't trust the perceived "top-down, donor-centric" approach, while most families working with UWDC partner agencies weren't aware of United Way at all.

Unsurprisingly, research showed that the less information people had about United Way, the less trust and likelihood of giving.

The aspiration to scale and coordinate impact during this giving compression drew the target population into sharper focus: families with young children who had the least resources and most barriers. Strong Roots would build on Agenda for Change results, innovating systems change that could move young families on a pathway out of poverty toward economic stability...and, aspirationally, wealth building.

“Instead of anchoring around six different Agenda for Change goals, which now had 4–6 strategies each,” Renee Moe recalled, the board decided to “focus in on a target population of young families, and measure well-being by looking at poverty. We know through research and common sense: when families do well, our community does well.”

“UWDC’s complicated message and metrics created a disconnect in the community, especially for new donors,” board member and marketing chair Dave Florin said. “Our board also felt we needed a simpler, clearer, and more emotional message to the community.”

UWDC continued to speak about its Agenda for Change, highlighting education, income, and health fueled by “greatest needs” giving, as well as the flexibility of donor choice. However, the aspiration was to continue to address root causes and create measurable results with those precious unrestricted resources that fuel innovation. What would it take to build a nonprofit ecosystem that works more effectively for families?

“You interface, and the whole is greater than the sum of its parts,” Barbara Nichols said. “If you understand where the intersections occur, you can achieve a greater depth and breadth by coming together. The idea of getting more people on the pathway out of poverty allowed the creation of a ‘2 Generation’ concept and a holistic approach to grant

funds for greater outcomes in generational change.”

“It involved the community by helping agencies build a shared vision,” Nichols continued, “and a collective community value that ultimately increased community capacity.”

The Dane County Health Council, a coalition of healthcare providers, local government, and nonprofits, also began work on a care coordination system and community health worker network to eliminate disparities in low-birth-weight births between African American and white women in Dane County. UWDC was instrumental in concept design and securing \$2 million in resources from the Wisconsin Partnership Program and Schmidt Futures for implementation. UWDC staff Gabe Doyle and The Foundation for Black Women’s Wellness partner Lisa Peyton-Caire were invited to speak at South by Southwest® (SXSW®) 2021 to discuss “health equity in care coordination,” and United Way Worldwide interim CEO Neeraj Mehta highlighted this work, once again placing UWDC on the national stage.

The 2017 UWDC annual report began with a pledge: “We focus on the most in-need families in our community: the 64,000 men, women and children who live in poverty.” By 2019, that number was 58,000.<sup>2</sup>

We know,” the report noted, “that focusing on the education, income and health of our most in-need families will ultimately lead to a better Dane County for all. In the next five years we’ll begin to take this impact to scale, leverage care coordination and 211, expand our work in strategic collaborations and jump into advocacy in support of this impact.”

While the community had long been invited to give, advocate, and volunteer with UWDC, advocacy was traditionally event or social media focused. However, in 2016, the board strongly encouraged UWDC to embrace its unique position in the community to help educate lawmakers and advance effective policy change. It was not lost on the board that shifting public dollars into effective impact strategies could accelerate positive change beyond the capacity of the community's annual fund-raising campaign.

UWDC's advocacy work is centered around building community awareness of local issues, elevating research-based strategies and practices, strengthening public and private relationships, and bringing diverse voices to the table to discuss issues and share policy solutions. The inaugural MVP roundtable for Dane County mayors and village presidents was a success, with UWDC sharing education, housing, and 211 data and best practices in response to questions and requests for municipality-specific information.

Growing and diversifying revenue sources and donor participation was another part of the strategic plan. Getting donors proximate to community issues and new relationships (e.g., through LINC—Lead Impact Network Change—for professionals in their 20s–30s), strengthening donor stewardship and online giving, and helping employees understand the root causes of the root causes and how they could best help were determined critical not only to fuel the mission with donations, but also to civic engagement, civil discourse, and perhaps even community cohesion (as our population continues to grow, information is fragmented, and rhetoric is polarized).

One of Renee Moe's first moves upon assuming the UWDC presidency



was establishing a technology committee, in part to make engagement and electronic giving easier.

“We’re trying to get smarter about meeting people where they are, on their phones or computers,” Moe said. “Our tech was clunky and old. I told our technology team this [giving] has to be as easy as Amazon. And they did it.”

Several years in, online direct response giving and electronic pledging have grown substantially—a 560 percent increase between 2016 and 2020.



*Lead Impact Network Change (LINC) volunteer group. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

Bob Trunzo of CUNA Mutual Group, Ken Parker of TDS®, Bryan Chan of SupraNet®, and Paul Kundert of UW Credit Union have been technology champions for UWDC, upgrading tech systems, web and mobile capabilities, and digital engagements. With Mary Romolino and Acme Nerd Games, UWDC developed Dane Changers, a turn-based, educational game where players get an inside scoop on community issues and “spend resources” through giving, advocating, and volunteering to improve community wellness.

UWDC was also looking to innovate in the area of major gifts and grants, what they called strategic collaborations. Lau and Bea Christensen were inspired by the impact results of the Agenda for Change and wanted UWDC to bring in grant dollars to accelerate impact. Through generous support, they invested in capacity building to increase the strategic collaborations staff. That team, led by Hayley Chesnik, has secured more than \$37 million in funding since 2008. Major gifts became another important revenue stream as the United Way Foundation saw its assets top \$15 million, with another estimated \$10+ million in expectancies.



*Lau and Bea Christensen. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

Longtime UWDC volunteer Janet Loewi is a past chair of the United Way Foundation and active with a centennial celebration effort to get 100 endowed (at least \$250,000) gifts to the foundation. She and her husband, Jay, appreciate how UWDC employs analytics to identify and solve Dane County's most pressing problems.

"Jay and I like to make unrestricted gifts to the United Way," Loewi said, "because they have this process where they identify the problems, analyze the root causes, and decide which organizations can best fix those problems. We as individuals don't have the capacity to do that kind of analysis. It's great when people give to a directed cause, but to me that's not the real benefit of United Way."

Loewi likewise endorses an estate gift to the United Way Foundation.

“We do have an estate gift in our plans, and I think it would make sense for a lot of people,” Loewi remarked. “It might not come to fruition for years, but United Way has been around for 100 years, and the likelihood is they’re going to do great work in the future. So when I’m not around to make those decisions, I have the confidence they will be.”

The emphasis on collaborative efforts between agencies, which was central to the focus on poverty reduction that began in 2017, carried over into UWDC’s funding for 2018.

One example was the HIRE Initiative, a joint effort of the following organizations:

- Centro Hispano
- Literacy Network
- JustDane
- Urban League of Greater Madison
- Vera Court Neighborhood Center’s Latino Academy of Workforce Development
- YWCA Madison

It received nearly \$800,000 in funding for 2018. The HIRE Initiative matches people in poverty with family-sustaining jobs from some 50 Dane County employers.

Jack Salzwedel, the 2014 campaign chair and president and CEO of American Family Insurance®, the top workplace campaign for more than a dozen years at that point, asked United Way how a gift of \$1 million could be transformational for our community. Expanding on the HIRE Education Employment Initiative, the investment of \$500,000 from American Family Insurance® was matched by 14 individual, foundation, and corporate donors in six weeks, and it launched the HIRE Initiative to provide better coordination of services and promote family-supporting employment for participants in other United Way-funded programs.

HIRE's design expressly focused on removing barriers around employment, housing, and childcare, truly creating pathways out of poverty, in particular for single moms of color.

Another HIRE innovation is how it brought together those seeking to diversify their workforce while being intentional about training and mentoring in partnership with six partner agencies focused on readying clients for employment.





*HIRE Celebration 2018 participants. Photo from United Way of Dane County Personal Collection.*

The HIRE employer council was chaired by Marcia Anderson, of US bankruptcy court and a retired US Army major general, and Dave Beck-Engel of J. H. Findorff & Son, Inc. for six years. Through 2020, more than 3,370 HIRE participants found employment with 33 percent earning at least \$15 an hour, what's deemed a family-sustaining wage. American Family Insurance® was inspired to do even more, announcing all employees would start at \$20 an hour in January 2020.

Another leading HIRE employer was Total Administrative Services Corporation, a Madison third-party benefits administrator known as TASC.

TASC's CEO, Dan Rashke, chaired the 2015 UWDC annual campaign.<sup>3</sup> In a message to TASC employees, he explained the company's

partnership with the YWCA as part of the HIRE Initiative:

Together we marketed and recruited attendees and designed the curriculum for an 11-day training session. In addition, TASC donated food and transportation, along with field trips to our corporate headquarters in Madison for class attendees. With the help of this program TASC recently welcomed some qualified new hires to our Customer Service team. And while we knew it would be beneficial to participate in the HIRE Initiative, we had no idea the far-reaching positive impact... By demonstrating their initiative and commitment, these neighbors are earning a living wage and opening new doors in their lives.

The year 2018 was an investment year, and UWDC again trumped innovation and collaboration. Getting families out of poverty, moving them from crisis to stability, was the goal and an enormous undertaking. It could only be done collaboratively. Successful outcomes—in programs like early literacy, kindergarten readiness, homelessness reduction, job readiness, and health access—are always desirable, and they're only transformative if they're happening to the same family at the same time; that's how one moves from poverty to self-sufficiency.

The 2018 report noted the following:

After a year of development, we will begin our newly redesigned investment process. The investment redesign will create opportunities for programs and services that collaboratively meet the needs of babies, children and families. When parents have less stress about housing, work, high quality childcare and early education opportunities, babies can have healthy bodies, healthy minds and healthy futures that will lead

to a better Dane County for all.

UWDC unveiled new investment categories including “cross-system investments” that rewarded “two or more organizations working across multiple areas of education, income and health.”

UWDC called this investment a two-generation approach, or 2Gen. The 2019 annual report explained it like so:

The ways we build the well-being of adults are connected to the ways we build well-being of their children... 2Gen approaches deploy resources devoted to early learning, education, employment, housing, health and so on in a more coordinated way to maximize their effectiveness.

The 2Gen approach involves identifying the historical and structural barriers that undermine a family’s overall well-being and working with the family to solve problems, access new resources and sharpen existing skills. A responsive, holistic, family-centered mindset differs significantly from the traditional approach to anti-poverty efforts, which rely on a confusing array of separate programs focused on a specific piece of the poverty puzzle.

By 2019, the results were encouraging. Eighty-eight percent of the four-year-olds in UWDC’s ParentChild+ program with RISE Wisconsin (United Way agency partner) were 4K-ready, exceeding the national benchmark for the fourth straight year.

HealthConnect provided insurance premium support to 4,172 adults, and Journey Home in partnership with JustDane had reduced community reincarceration rates from 66 percent to 39 percent.



Family homelessness in Dane County had been cut by 50 percent since 2014 with help from The Road Home, Salvation Army, YWCA, and others. Since 2008, a staggering 83 percent of families in Housing First have not returned to shelters. In yet another innovation, UWDC income volunteers leading this work were frustrated by the lack of affordable housing to end homelessness for even more families; as a result, they started the UWDC Affordable Housing Fund, which has now created 82 new units of affordable housing and counting. The Affordable Housing Fund also partnered with Madison Development Corporation to create a social impact fund that raised more than \$10 million to seed nearly 1,000 workforce housing units.

The new approach was not without controversy; however, it did appear to resonate with donors. As the decade drew to a close, UWDC's annual campaigns in 2018 and 2019 exceeded their goals, raising more than \$19 million in each of those years.

Renee Moe spoke to the generosity of the Dane County community:

We're an extraordinarily giving community. When you look at rates of civic participation, in voting, in philanthropy and volunteerism, we do really, really well. I do think there's something about being smushed on an isthmus, where you have higher ed and government and the Wisconsin Idea, and you have businesses and students all together on the Capitol Square and extending out to the borders of Dane County—there is a natural mashing up and ability to see through others' eyes that makes participation and better decisions happen. In terms of the generosity of the community and how UWDC mobilizes it and helps others access opportunities from it—I think they go hand in hand.

The recent campaigns have been a combination of the tried and true along with new and innovative ways of connecting with donors. At Madison's Exact Sciences, now one of the city's largest employers, the traditional workplace campaigns have been highly successful, with participation in the neighborhood of 90 percent.

Ana Hooker, Exact Sciences vice president of operations, explained as follows:

From my perspective you have to engage all levels of the organization. Every level of leadership should be prophets, essentially, for United Way. Disciples. Truly taking that charge and stressing that it's an important priority for our company—giving back and being part of our community, helping those around us, making a healthier community. We want to remind our employees they are part of that broader community and the role United Way plays. It's a big part of our social responsibility, and I think doing the right thing resonates with the younger generation.

Yet, as Renee Moe contends, competition means UWDC needs to keep listening and evolving:

Giving to United Way in the past was like voting, or shoveling your sidewalk, being a good neighbor. People had it in their head and heart that part of their duty as a good citizen was to give to the United Way campaign. Well, nonprofits have evolved. There's a lot of choice. You can give to a Facebook fundraiser on your phone. A percentage of your online purchase goes to your favorite charity. It's harder to have a clear message break through.

We have to be more thoughtful, and not take for granted the payroll deduction giving, but say, “Hey, what do you really care about? What’s your capacity? Who are you connected to?” Having more of a relationship to inspire that giving and not take it for granted, all while owning our responsibility to hold our power and influence to center lived experience and make matches that actually create the changes in economic and racial outcomes we all demand.

To that end, in 2020, UWDC volunteers merged its Rosenberry Society and Key Club into a new donor network called Lead United. Lead United offers members a chance to grow professionally and build relationships while gaining an understanding of the critical issues facing Dane County. Compelling events remain part of the mix, as well as the volunteer opportunities that allow participants to truly touch and feel what is happening in the community. Seeing the need and the opportunity to help can lead to investing in making a difference. Lead United is a pathway to new relationships, a pathway to civic leadership.

Community voices were strengthened, too. Embracing the adage of “nothing about us without us,” UWDC aimed to develop more lived experience experts from the community to serve on committees and boards.

UWDC’s Boardwalk Academy is a nine-week personal and professional development series created to support the community leadership desires of adults who have successfully navigated poverty-related lived experiences aligned with education, income, and health. This series, imagined by Reverend Carmen Porco and Reverend & Judge Everett Mitchell, is designed to develop and strengthen the professional and interpersonal skills for members of our community to serve as active and

informed leaders of boards of directors or in other leadership positions. CUNA Mutual Group is the primary supporter of this innovative program.

As noted at the beginning of this book, much of the work of UWDC in 2020 was focused on the pandemic and the extraordinary circumstances it presented. Still, new projects did emerge, if sometimes with a twist.

One example is The Playing Field, a childcare center focusing on high-quality preschool programs for low-income families—especially those impacted by homelessness. It was planning a second, east side, location for fall 2020 to go with an existing Playing Field on the west side. UWDC contributed \$150,000 to operating costs for the new facility.

The Playing Field considered shelving plans for the second site. Instead, they went forward, albeit with a smaller, temporary facility near East Towne Mall.

“The new location,” the Wisconsin State Journal reported, “is part of a larger collaboration among The Playing Field, The Road Home Dane County and the local plumbers’ union to provide a two-generation approach in which children can access childcare and parents are aided in searching for jobs and housing.”

Another example is UW Credit Union’s desire to remove barriers for people of color by creating financial stability, closing the education achievement gap, and making emergency COVID-19 relief funds available for organizations meeting immediate needs of racial equity initiatives.

UW Credit Union was impressed with UWDC’s acute understanding of

community needs and important infrastructure already in place to facilitate effective fund applications and distributions. UWDC staff built a process that engaged UW Credit Union employees to distribute more than \$1 million dollars from UW Credit Union Fund for Racial Equity in the UWDC Foundation.

That kind of collaboration is central to UWDC's vision of the future. Even its most venerable and successful programs will find value in it.

"We're focused on early literacy," Gloria Ladson-Billings said. "But we also want to look at what other programming United Way is engaged in that has a natural connection with this work. If United Way is engaged in programming that deals with parents, how can the Schools of Hope Delegation connect up with them?"

Ladson-Billings is a retired UW-Madison professor nationally celebrated for her work in early childhood education and especially academic disparity as it relates to mainstream and minority students. It was she who coined the term "opportunity gap."

In 2020-1, she co chaired (with Bill Westrate, American Family Insurance®) UWDC's Schools of Hope 2.0 Delegation, which studied the local landscape and best practices elsewhere to see what might be utilized for positive change in Dane County. "We wanted to get a sense of what we could do better," Ladson-Billings said.

Among their findings? The need for a more diverse group of tutors. "We still have mostly white tutors working mostly with black and brown kids," Ladson-Billings said.

Other recommendations include the following: centering on the science

of reading and providing timely, individual support; ensuring a culturally relevant (racially and linguistically) curriculum and including student and family input; and ensuring AmeriCorps members and community volunteers are trained in social-emotional learning (SEL), allowing them to serve as mentors to students and help improve self-esteem and confidence.

It's the kind of important work that will carry UWDC forward into its next 100 years.

Renee Moe said, "Continuing to invest in the well-being of families, which is an investment in the well-being of our whole community, is an important part of where we will continue to focus.

"We've determined," Moe continued, "that education, financial stability—including housing—and health are absolutely the right things for us to do. We have to do that work understanding that racial and economic equity have to be the lens through which we see and do everything. That's how we'll be most effective...for families, nonprofit partners, and donors."

UWDC's board is approaching the next century, post-pandemic, with renewed energy. Led by Londa Dewey, a centennial committee focused on marketing, engagement, history, workplace, and major gifts is getting ready to lift up the stories of the people and organizations who have led collaboration, innovation, and positive change these past 100 years.

A goal of 100 living room conversations was disrupted by the pandemic, so a partnership with Local Voices Network helped UWDC's listening go virtual. Over 200 conversations occurred with these key themes rising to

the top: education, housing, homelessness, racism, and criminal justice. These voices of lived experiences were shared with UWDC's Vision Council and Basic Needs Community Solutions Team to aid in community-level priority and metrics setting. Further, the board employed Tim Prince of Findorff to conduct hundreds of one-on-one interviews, focus groups, and surveys, which resulted in four strategic priorities:

1. Be a change catalyst to establish and lead collective impact to advance family well-being in Dane County.
2. Be bold in advancing our methods of attracting philanthropic support to grow our impact and be accountable stewards of the resources entrusted to us.
3. Actively listen and connect with others to form mutually beneficial relationships, aligning our services around shared priorities that lead to authentic collaboration and action.
4. Grow participation and support by building awareness, strengthening partnerships, and providing year-round opportunities to give, advocate, and volunteer.

Even with all the challenges our community and country are facing (i.e., pandemic health impacts, racial unrest, economic upheaval, and political division), there is reason for optimism.

“Any time you shine a light on something,” Gloria Ladson-Billings said, “things start to happen.”

In 1922, Justice Marvin Rosenberry, in founding the Community Union,

shined a light on the need to consolidate charitable fundraising and solve problems in Dane County.

One hundred years on, embracing UWDC's role as a change catalyst, it's shining still.

- 
1. Who is also a Dane County judge.
  2. That progress will certainly be impacted by the pandemic.
  3. His catchphrase was "Revenue Rocks!"





## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

**C**ollaboration is a theme that runs through the history of United Way of Dane County's first 100 years, so it's fitting that this centennial book was also a collaborative effort.

I was helped from the outset by UWDC staff, past and present, by donors and volunteers, all offering whatever assistance they could provide to make the book the best it could be.

Kristi Shepard, UWDC's director, foundation and gift planning, served as point person for the book. She helped arrange interviews and tracked down archival material, all with persistent good cheer.

Current UWDC President and CEO Renee Moe's belief in the book was steadfast. She offered encouragement, sat for two extended interviews, and read and commented on the draft manuscript.<sup>1</sup>

Renee's predecessor, Leslie Ann Howard, embraced this project with

great enthusiasm. That was crucial, as Leslie's UWDC service across several decades gave her unparalleled insight into the organization's challenges and successes. Not only was Leslie available for numerous interviews, but also she volunteered to conduct some herself, and did, with many key players. She also read and commented on the draft manuscript.

For sharing their memories in interviews, thanks to the following individuals: Frank Denton, Nan Cnare, Neil Heinen, Dr. Floyd Rose, Tom Dott, Steve Goldberg, Tom Ragatz, Londa Dewey, Gray Williams, Peng Her, Noble Wray, Karen Menendez Coller, Greg Jones, Sue Riseling, Robert Chritton, Deedra Atkinson, Rev. Everett Mitchell, Enis Ragland, Dr. Ruben Anthony, Gloria Ladson-Billings, Ana Hooker, and Barbara Nichols.

I was helped in unearthing some of UWDC's earliest history by accessing minutes from meetings of the Madison Community Union, which are archived at the Wisconsin Historical Society.

For the years preceding the Community Union's launch in 1922, my thanks to the eminent Madison historian David Mollenhoff, who gave an excellent talk on how philanthropy looked in Dane County in the late 19th and early 20th centuries at UWDC's 70th anniversary celebration in 1992.

Madison newspapers and periodicals did an excellent job of detailing the growth of UWDC over the last 100 years, and I owe thanks to reporters and writers from the Wisconsin State Journal, The Capital Times, Isthmus, In Business, and Madison Magazine for their good work.

In addition, I drew on two earlier books: *Grassroots Initiatives Shape an International Movement: United Ways Since 1876*, by Richard and Mary Lu Aft; and *People and Events: A History of the United Way*, published by United Way of America.

An organization like UWDC obviously has more individuals and organizations to recognize than can fit in this book. If you have a memory or photo to share, please email it to [writeus@unitedwaydaneco.org](mailto:writeus@unitedwaydaneco.org) or post on social media tagging [@unitedwaydaneco](https://www.instagram.com/unitedwaydaneco)

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1. Doug Moe and Renee Moe are not related.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENT TO CONTRIBUTORS

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## BOARD CHAIRS AND CAMPAIGN CHAIRS: 1922-2022

YEAR	BOARD CHAIR	CAMPAIGN CHAIR
1922	Marvin B Rosenberry	A C Larson
1923	Marvin B Rosenberry	James R. Garver
1924	Marvin B Rosenberry	Harry L French
1925	Marvin B Rosenberry	Paul E. Stark
1926	Paul E. Stark	Emil Frautschi
1927	Paul E. Stark	T W Gosling
1928	Emil Frautschi	Oscar Rennebohm
1929	William H Spohn	Burt Williams
1930	William H Spohn	Grover C. Neff
1931	Leo T. Crowley	Stanley Hanks
1932	Leo T. Crowley	Milton B. Findorff
1933	Dr H C Bradley	R J Neckerman
1934	Dr H C Bradley	A C Breuch
1935	R J Neckerman	A E Rowlands
1936	Ray M Stroud	Walter A. Frautschi

1937	Ray M Stroud	Ray T. McGuire
1938	Dr E L Sevringhaus	Duane Bowman
1939	Dr E L Sevringhaus	William Ryan
1940	F S Bramdemburg	Gilman C. Page
1941	F S Bramdemburg	Joseph Rothschild
1942	Frank A. Ross	Joseph C. Ford
1943	Frank A Ross	W M Harris
1944	Lowell Frautschi	B J Mautz
1945	Lowell Frautschi	Morgan Manchester
1946	D A Forsberg	W J Rendall
1947	D A Forsberg	Carl Regenber
1948	E L Wingert	John Canfield
1949	E L Wingert	R H Marshall
1950	Francis F. Bowman Jr.	Oscar G. Mayer Jr
1951	F. Bowman/M Manchester	John Guy Fowlkes
1952	J. Fowlkes/F Bowman	Stanley Kubly
1953	John Fowlkes	Leslie Pollard
1954	San Orr	John Wrage
1955	P Goff Beach Jr.	Robert W. Anthony Jr
1956	P Goff Beach Jr.	Carl Mayer
1957	R A Eissfeldt	C N Goulet
1958	R A Eissfeldt	T M Meloy
1959	T M Meloy	EL Diener
1960	T M Meloy	C L Duquaine
1961	F D Holford	L J Larson
1962	F D Holford	Robert Schmitz
1963	Erwin Gaumnitz	Collins Ferris
1964	Erwin Gaumnitz	Owen Slauson
1965	Collins Ferris	A Paul Bowman

1966	Collins Ferris	Charles F Eikel, Jr.
1967	Charles Eikel	John Zimbrick
1968	A. Paul Bowman	Robert A Cooper
1969	Dean Kurt F. Wendt	John C Weston
1970	Robert A. Cooper	Thomas E Bolger
1971	James R. Underkofler	Weber L Smith, Jr.
1972	Thomas E. Bolger	Robert W Pohle
1973	Theodore Long	John D Larson
1974	Robert W. Pohle	W Jerome Frautschi
1975	John D. Larson	John E Wall
1976	Patrick J. Luby	Robert C O'Malley
1977	W. Jerome Frautschi	Reed Coleman
1978	John E. Wall	Jay L Smith
1979	Gene Glover	Harold Scales
1980	William Moreth	W Robert Koch
1981	Michael J. Larson	Robert L Curry
1982	Jean B. McKenzie	Hugh C Henderson, Jr.
1983	William Walker	William D Mauerman
1984	Ron Bornstein	Dean W Case
1985	Norma Madsen	James R Underkofler
1986	Dr. Robert Walton	James D Blanchard
1987	Erroll Davis	James J Holt
1988	Jim Blanchard	John E Spohn
1989	Jim Holt	MaryAnn Shaw
1990	Mary Ann Shaw/Bob Lang	James R Lang
1991	John Robison	Jerry M Hiegel
1992	Jeffy Hiegel	Erroll B Davis, Jr.
1993	Jim Cavanaugh	Dale F Mathwich

1994	Dale Mathwich	John R Pollock
1995	Jac Garner	Greg M Larson
1996	Judy Householder	Robert T Barnard
1997	Gary Larson	Harold F Mayer
1998	Bob Barnard	Thomas J Zimbrick
1999	Clayton Frink	Londa J Dewey
2000	Angela Bartell	Douglas G Reuhl
2001	Dave Stark	William D Harvey
2002	Dave Stark	Jac B Garner
2003	Doug Reuhl	Robert A Schlicht
2004	Rick Searer	David R Anderson
2005	Hal Mayer	Kevin R Hayden
2006	Londa Dewey	Gary J Wolter
2007	Londa Dewey	David K Stark
2008	Dave Anderson	James R Riordan
2009	Tom Zimbrick	Michael E Victorson
2010	Noble Wray	Richard M Lynch
2011	Jim Riordan	Greg A Dombrowski
2012	Gary Wolter	Nick Meriggioli
2013	Mike Victorson	Doug Nelson
2014	Nick Meriggioli	Jack Salzwedel
2015	Rich Lynch	Dan Rashke
2016	Rich Lynch	Kevin Conroy
2017	Anna Burish	Bob Trunzo
2018	Mike Hamerlik	Corey Chambas
2019	Fritz Grutzner	Dave Orr
2020	Ryan Behling	Paul Kundert
2021	Dave Beck-Engel	Ginger Zimmerman and



2022

Bill Westrate

Dan Frazier  
Jeff Keebler



# STORIES OF IMPACT AND COMMUNITY BUILDERS

## ***STORIES OF IMPACT***

- 1920s: Origin – Madison Community Union (Now, United Way of Dane County)
- 1930s: First Full Decade of Community Support
- Agenda for Change Developed
- Anderson United Way Center Established
- BoardWalk Academy Begins
- United Way of Dane County Foundation Incorporated
- Early Childhood Developmental Screening Protocol Becomes Standardized at Well-Child Visits
- Leadership Giving Strategy Leads Financial Support and Volunteer Engagement
- Family Legacy and Philanthropy
- First Days of Caring – Community-Wide Volunteering Event Occurs
- South Central Federation of Labor and United Way of Dane

## County Partnership Established

- HIRE Initiative Builds a Stronger Community Through Diversifying Workforce in Dane County
- Housing in Action Mobilization Plan – Effective Strategies Proven to Reduce Family Homelessness
- Info Help Desk/First Call For Help/211 – A 24/7 Health and Human Services Helpline and Database in Dane County
- Innovative Funding Panel Created to Invest in New Programs
- Journey Home Reduces Recidivism – Successful Reentry Builds Stronger Communities
- Latino Advisory Delegation Creates Cuéntame – Telling the Latinx Story in Dane County Through Engagement
- United Way of Dane County Loaned Executive (LE) Program Begins – Expanding Our Reach Across Our Community
- Lowell Frautschi's Credo is Adopted in 1946 – Forming the Basis of Codes of Ethics for United Ways and Nonprofits Across the Country
- Madison Givers' Fund Formed in 1950 – A First-Time Approach to Centralized Community Giving
- NAACP & United Way of Dane County Co-Lead Law Enforcement & Leaders of Color Collaboration To Build Trust in Dane County
- Pandemic Response – Created Emergency & Transition Funds During a Remote Work Environment
- Partnerships with Nonprofits Representing Communities of Color
- Schools of Hope | 100 Black Men
- United Way of Dane County Tocqueville Society Established
- Transition to Community Impact Model – Funding Programs

Based on Alignment with Community Visions and Outcomes

- VolunteerYourTime.org (VYT) Database Created – Connecting Volunteers to Community Needs
- War Chest Formed to Meet the Increased Need and Community Support During World War 2
- Workplace Campaigns Begin To Engage Community with Philanthropy, Volunteerism and Understanding of Critical Initiatives in Dane County
- Youth Volunteering - Helping Build the Next Generation of Leaders

## **COMMUNITY BUILDERS**

Annie Thym

Betty Franklin-Hammonds

Business Volunteer Network (BVN)

Carla Smith

Christy Buchanan (Mrs. William) Kittle

City and County Executives

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David R. “Dave” Anderson

Don and Marilyn Anderson

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Gregory C. "Greg" Jones

Gretchen and Darold "Dode" Lowe

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Henry J. Predolin Foundation

Ilda Thomas

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Sheila Sims)

Lau and Bea Christensen

Londa Dewey

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Mary Garner

Neil Heinen

Noble Wray

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Oscar Mayer Company  
Peng Her and Mai Zong Vue  
Rajesh “Raj” Rajaraman  
READI - Retired Employees Are Dedicated Individuals (Doyle Wilke)  
Reynolds Transfer Family  
Richard M. “Rich” Lynch  
Sabrina Madison  
Salvador L. “Sal” Carranza  
Stanley “Stan” York  
The Bolz Family  
The Frautshi Family  
The Honorable Reverend Everett Mitchell  
The Stark Family  
Thomas E. “Tom” and Kira Dott  
Thomas G. “Tom” and Karen Ragatz  
Thomas J. “Tom” Zimbrick and The Zimbrick Family  
United Way of Dane County Board of Directors  
United Way of Dane County Corporate Partners  
United Way of Dane County Loaned Executives  
United Way of Dane County Partner Agencies  
United Way of Dane County Staff  
Vincent P. “Vince” O’Hern  
William “Bill” Westrate



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