

60 YEARS OF IMPROVING LIVES!



1. Before United Way of Yellowstone County existed, there were two important organizations that served as the foundation and inspiration: The Billings Community Chest and United Neighbors of Greater Billings.
2. For 13 years, until 1961, the annual cost of operating the Community Chest in Billings was between \$8,000 - \$9,000.
3. United Neighbors of Greater Billings incorporated in the State of Montana in the spring of 1961, "To raise funds in the City of Billings and throughout the surrounding area, for the purpose of financing charitable, non-profit health and welfare organizations, both local and national, by means of a united fund-raising campaign, thereby reducing duplication of effort and expense which result from the conduct of numerous separate fund-raising campaign; and to provide plans, facilities, manpower and leadership for such a united fund-raising campaign."
4. In 1964, over 2200 cities and towns in the United States instituted a united fund plan.
5. United Neighbors of Greater Billings hired its first Executive Director, Maury Enright in 1967.
6. The 1968 the United Neighbors campaign focused on health, family assistance and youth programs; 26 agencies received a collective \$241,271.
7. United Neighbors changed its name to United Fund of Billings in 1970. First indication of association with United Way of America in 1971.
8. In 1986, 5,800 campaign records were converted from a manual system to a computerized one.
9. United Fund of Billings introduced the United Way helping hand logo in 1973.
10. United Fund of Billings became United Way of Billings.
11. In 1977, Board President George Selover, announced that for four years in a row, the campaign goal hit a milestone of raising over \$500,000.
12. United Way of Billings expanded its reach to become United Way of Yellowstone County in 1978.
13. The 1981 campaign raised over \$700,000 for the first time, with \$638,981 allocated to local agencies.
14. The Human Services Coordinating Committee was established in 1984 to better coordinate the funds and ensure that the truly needy will be cared for properly.
15. Kevin Justis replaced Maury Enright as Executive Director in 1984.
16. UWYC purchased its first computer and Microsoft products for campaign use in 1985!
17. UWYC conducted the first Needs Assessment Project in 1985 to identify community needs and priorities.
18. In 1986, 5,800 campaign records were converted from a manual system to a computerized one.
19. The UWYC endowment fund was created in 1987.
20. The 1988 campaign gets "off and running" with a Rim Run.
21. To start better serving the homeless, UWYC convened two community-wide meetings in 1988.
22. The 1989 campaign surpassed the monumental milestone of raising \$1,000,000!
23. The Big Sky Leadership Giving Club was established in 1990.
24. The 1991 Campaign opened the option for donors to designate to non-UWYC funded agencies.
25. In 1991, UWYC shifted to a deeper involvement with activities labeled as "community problem solving." These efforts included Child Care and Development Block grant planning for federal dollars coming to Montana, emergency food and shelter planning, mental health resources, and transportation of the elderly and handicapped.
26. Points of Light Foundation awarded a \$20,000 grant for the development of a Volunteer Center for Yellowstone County in 1992, a vital piece of our work that is still in operation today!
27. United Way provided a 28% funding match for The Voice for Children program for child care to families "at risk of going on welfare," resulting in \$113,142!
28. Pam Sanderson was hired in 1993 and continues to serve as our Volunteer Center Director, 28 years later!
29. In 1993, Day of Caring was implemented to mark the start of the UWYC Annual Campaign.
30. United Way moved offices in 1993 from the Stapleton Building, where they had been located for approximately thirty years, to 2920 Second Avenue North.
31. UWYC was awarded a grant in 1996 from the State of Montana Prevention Resource Center to improve behavioral outcomes for children, youth and families in five areas: child abuse and neglect; youth violence and crime; teen pregnancy; use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs and school drop-outs.
32. Kevin Justis retired in 1998 and Carol Burton was hired as the new Executive Director.
33. In 1998, priority areas were consolidated: Preparing Young People for Success, Strengthening Families and Individuals and Meeting Emergency Needs and Helping People in Crisis.
34. In 1999, just 6 years after inception, Day of Caring included 500 volunteer opportunities!

35. In 2001, UWYC served as Lead Contact for Billings' Promise – The Alliance for Youth—mobilizing the community to provide increasing numbers of youth with a caring adult, a safe place, a healthy start, marketable skills and the opportunity to serve.
36. A design team was convened in 2002 to research and identify necessary strategies and resources needed by UWYC to achieved greater results and be able to plan for community wide outcomes.
37. In 2003, UWYC hired its first Community Resource Director, Kristin Lundgren, as we continued to move towards creating more community impact.
38. The Board of Directors approved a new mission statement in 2004: to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of our community.
39. Mark Lambott was hired in 2005 to lead a new after school program at Lewis & Clark Middle School called Discover Zone. In over 16 years of operating, Discover Zone has served hundreds of middle school students.
40. In 2006 UWYC joined the Montana 211 Coalition to bring 211 to the state. We continue to work collaboratively to ensure Montanans have access to up-to-date, reliable sources of help through Montana211.org and by dialing 211 in portions of the state, including Yellowstone County.
41. A five-year, \$2.5 million grant was secured in 2007 for Second Chance Home to work with addicted parents and their children.
42. Youth Volunteer Corps (YVC) was also started in 2009 as a hands-on way to promote youth volunteerism. YVC is based on a service learning model with programming for youth ages 11-18.
43. In 2009, UWYC assumed operations of the CARE Academy Out of School Time program from Billings Public Schools. CARE Academy has served thousands of elementary students, providing before, after, and summer opportunities. CARE Academy offers on site programming at 5 elementary schools and serves students from 10 elementary schools in Billings, with a part-time staff of 20.
44. UWYC celebrated our 50-year anniversary in 2011 with the largest Day of Caring ever! More than 1,000 volunteers representing 103 companies assisted 37 local nonprofits and completed 85 projects!
45. The Best Beginnings early childhood coalition launched in 2012 with the goal of improving school readiness outcomes for children ages 0-8 in Yellowstone County.
46. UWYC moved from downtown to 2173 Overland Avenue in 2013.
47. Best Beginnings secured \$380,000 in grants in 2014 to increase home visiting services for parents in Yellowstone County.
48. In 2015 there was more emphasis placed on improving graduation rates in Yellowstone County with the introduction of the Reader Tutor Mentor program that remains in operation today and with the goal of graduating 95% of our students by 2025.
49. The first annual Underriner Holiday Car Giveaway occurred in 2015!
50. UWYC introduced Reach Out and Read to Yellowstone County in 2014! Since then 48,740 books have been given to children 6 months-5 years free of charge during their well-child check!
51. Greater emphasis was placed on understanding the complex causes of school dropout and plans to improve attendance rates in 2016 with the introduction of "The Key is Less Than 3" marketing strategy encouraging students and parents to have no more than 3 absences per school quarter.
52. The first Community Baby Shower was held in 2017, which provides essential baby items to families who may not otherwise be able to afford them.
53. The first cycle of Go Grants! launched in 2018 and awarded \$50,000 to help local agencies carryout one-time projects to boost their impact.
54. Inspired and convened by UWYC, the Continuum of Care's Coordinated Entry System started in 2018 to re-imagine Billings' homeless response. Through coordinated entry, these agencies are now combining efforts to better understand the root and full picture of their clients' needs and better support them.
55. UWYC brought Bright By Text to Montana in 2018, which delivers free, developmentally appropriate tips, advice, resources and events to caregivers of children 0-8 by text message.
56. Parent Connect started in 2019 in partnership with RiverStone Health, St. Vincent Healthcare, Billings Clinic, and the Family Tree Center to connect with parents of newborns to available resources as soon as they leave the hospital.
57. Vice President Mike Pence visited Yellowstone County and requested a personal debrief with our Substance Abuse Connect leaders to learn more about their efforts to combat meth use in our community.
58. The COVID-19 Community Response fund was started in 2020 in partnership with the Billings Community Foundation which raised and awarded more than \$80,000 in grants to local agency to ensure vital resources remain operational during the global health pandemic.
59. The YCOAD (Yellowstone County Organizations Active in Disasters) Food Group began meeting in April of 2020 to consolidate and share resources for our neighbors experiencing food insecurity.
60. Kim Lewis was hired in 2020 as the 4th President & CEO after Carol Burton's retirement.
61. We began a partnership with RiverStone Health in October 2020 to use the UWYC building as a drive-through COVID-19 testing site.
62. The Continuum of Care responded to COVID needs in the winter of 2020 by creating a temporary low barrier shelter and quarantine/isolation site.
63. As of January 2021, 10 former CARE/Discover Zone kids have come back through our program as employees, volunteers, or practicum students.



**United Way
of Yellowstone County**