



United Way
of East Central Iowa

WE FIGHT FOR: *Families*

From the CEO



Imagine you have one wish. With this one wish, you could make just one change in our community that would make it a better place for everyone.

Since this limits you to only one change, the decision can be difficult to make. Such a wish could advance our educational system, ensure stable jobs

and income for all, or bring good health and well-being to everyone. All of these areas are pillars for a successful life and thriving community. That is why United Way of East Central Iowa fights for the education, financial stability, and health of every person in our community.

So, what one wish would you make? This question led staff, volunteers, agency partners, and area leaders to develop spark*5 (strong parents and ready kids by age five). One of the most exciting aspects of spark*5 is that it enables multiple organizations and agencies to work together to change one thing that could have a profound effect on our future, ensuring children enter kindergarten ready to learn. You will be hearing more about spark*5 in 2018, but if you would like to read more about this system change, please visit spark5.org.

This edition of our newsletter marks my first year as President and CEO. It has been an exciting and productive year. In addition to building the foundation and partnerships to launch spark*5, this year has seen us strengthen our team through promotions, new hires, and trainings. To face ongoing challenges, staff and volunteers identified new collaborative approaches to engage more people in causes that matter to them. Earlier this year, the Better Business Bureau recognized us for our business practices. We were one of only two nonprofits in the state of Iowa to receive this honor. Just last month, our current campaign messaging and materials won a prestigious gold Marcom Award for excellence.

As encouraging as all of this is, we know much work lies ahead. I am confident that, together, we will make East Central Iowa a better place for everyone.

Thank you for your ongoing support,

Tim Stiles
President & CEO

One small gift can
make all the difference.

End of Year Giving

Supporting a cause, donating, or volunteering our time often serves as an extension of our passions, beliefs, interests, and desires. As you reflect on all you are thankful for during this season of giving, remember that even the smallest of gifts make a difference for families in need.

See how to make your gift before
December 31 at uweci.org/give17.



“THIS WAS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY to talk with my children about giving back. My eight-year-old even wrote letters to literacy kit recipients encouraging them to **FALL IN LOVE WITH READING.**”

—Whitney Pino, YLS Vice Chair

Family Volunteer Day

On Saturday, November 18, we celebrated Family Volunteer Day. Volunteering as a family teaches children that no matter their age, they can fight for a better community.

In Linn County, our Young Leaders Society (YLS) held an event at the Human Services Campus. Together, 17 families—24 kids and 27 adults—participated in creating literacy kits for local students. All literacy kits included the book *Marty McGuire Has Too Many Pets*, information for adults, and supplies for four activities related to the book. We will distribute these 42 kits to students in our Volunteers in Proficiency (VIP) program. To learn more about VIP or become a volunteer with the program, visit uweci.org/VIP.

The same day, our Jones County Volunteer Center, four families, and a few individual volunteers assisted HACAP with their first annual food drive outside of the Anamosa Fareway. They helped collect food, take it to the food bank, and separate it into piles to prepare for Monday morning stocking. The group collected 600 pounds of food and \$185 in just four hours.

Thank you to all the families who volunteered with us!

Condition of ACEs Report

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are traumatic or disruptive events that occur before age 19 that can have a tremendous impact on lifelong mental, behavioral, and physical health.

The Central Iowa ACEs360 Coalition commissioned an ACEs study and began serving Iowans in 2012. The findings, gathered in 2012–14 and published in the 2016 report, show 56% of adults report at least one ACE and 14.5% experienced four or more ACEs, signifying a significant level of stress in childhood.

What are we doing to help solve this issue?

Reducing ACEs has the potential to significantly impact the well-being of thousands of people in Eastern Iowa by breaking the cycle of poverty and solving root causes for issues in education, financial stability, and health.

Read the full Condition of ACEs Report at uweci.org/reports.

