

# WE FIGHT FOR LASTING CHANGE



United Way  
of East Central Iowa

NEWSLETTER | MAY 2024

## A NOTE FROM OUR CEO

The vast majority of our supporters know that from a big picture perspective, United Way of East Central Iowa is about building community. For those just getting to know our organization, that idea of “building community” can seem vague, hazy, hard to get your hands around. What’s the impact of that? How does “building community” make where we live, work and play better for all?

I hope as you read through this edition of We Fight For you’ll

see tangible examples of how building community uplifts individuals and families, businesses, and our corner of the world. Read how our Civic Circle program lit a fire in Stephanie to further connect with the community. Learn how our teaching people to be nonprofit board members impacts them and our community directly. Discover how volunteering builds a sense of unity in both our urban and rural communities. “Building community” may be a foreign concept to some and second nature to others. Here at United Way of East Central Iowa, our goal is for it to be instinctual whether it’s through volunteering, investing, or advocating for our community. Whichever way you engage with UWECI, we’re grateful for your core belief in the importance of building a stronger community for everyone to thrive.



*Kristin Roberts*

**Kristin Roberts**  
President & CEO



“It was truly inspiring to hear about the powerful impact of not only people in our communities, but the people working behind the scenes at area nonprofits, too.” — Ellen W.

## BECOMING BOLD

Our Collegiate BOLD (Board Orientation Leadership Development) program wrapped up and we had 13 exceptional individuals graduate back in April. Throughout their journey, they’ve not only built essential skills but also embraced the true meaning of being community champions for Eastern Iowa. Equipped with the tools to make effective change, they’re ready to serve on junior boards and student organizations, ready to create positive transformation on their campuses and within our broader community. Learn more about Collegiate BOLD at [uweci.org/collegiateBOLD](https://uweci.org/collegiateBOLD).

## RURAL TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS

Our volunteer centers in Jones, Benton, and Cedar counties proudly provide an assisted transportation program tailored for seniors aged 55 and above requiring rides to non-emergency medical appointments beyond county lines. This initiative ensures that seniors can maintain their independence while accessing essential medical care with ease. It not only provides essential support to seniors in need but also fosters a sense of unity and care within our community, positively impacting the lives of all involved. Visit our volunteer center page to learn more here: [uweci.org/volunteer/volunteer-initiatives/volunteer-centers/](https://uweci.org/volunteer/volunteer-initiatives/volunteer-centers/)



**Civic Circle made me aware of ways that I could make an impact and the confidence that I could do this on a greater scale.” – Stephanie S.**

## CIVIC CIRCLE

Our Civic Circle program has made a great impact on Stephanie Stulken through strengthening both her professional and personal life to champion for kids and families that need a voice or advocate. Civic Circle was the perfect opportunity as it encourages community engagement and creates conversations around key issues. Through this program, Stephanie bonded with her cohort and learned new ways to advocate effectively within the community. Knowing she was fostering positive change made her feel empowered to help others. Learn more about Civic Circle and how you can make an impact in your community at: [uweci.org/civiccircle](https://uweci.org/civiccircle).



## DAY OF CARING

There's a good chance that in late spring you've noticed a lot of people cleaning up around our community wearing matching t-shirts on a particular day. These folks are giving their time to help make our community better through our Day of Caring event. This year we brought together over 1,600 volunteers from more than 60 local companies to help more than 50 nonprofits tackle projects in mid-May. Day of Caring is a great opportunity for individuals to get out of the office and stretch their legs while giving back and making a positive impact on the community. You can learn more about Day of Caring's Impact on Eastern Iowa at [uweci.org/dayofcaring](https://uweci.org/dayofcaring).



## CONNECTION CORNER: SHARING OUR IMPACT

This past year, we have fine-tuned our strategy to maximize impact across Eastern Iowa. By staying engaged with us, you'll learn firsthand how we are building community and supporting initiatives throughout our community. Stay connected to explore ways to make impact VIA United Way, through Volunteer, Invest, and Advocacy efforts in Eastern Iowa. Stay connected by subscribing to a newsletter that fits your interest by visiting [uweci.org/newsletters](https://uweci.org/newsletters).

