

Greater Mankato Area United Way kicks off fundraising campaign

- [By Holly Marie Moore hmoore@mankatofreepress.com](mailto:hmoore@mankatofreepress.com)
- Jul 26, 2022



United Way CEO Barb Kaus and campaign chairman Matt Atwood pull streamers off of a thermometer showing this year's goal during Tuesday's campaign kickoff event in Civic Center Plaza. [Pat Christman](#)

Greater Mankato Area United Way kicked off its fundraising campaign Tuesday with live music and plenty of sunshine to announce the campaign goal for the upcoming year.

This year's goal is \$2,150,000. said United Way Campaign Chair Matt Atwood.

"All of the culmination of us gearing up for what we need to raise for those in need throughout our community is basically coming into fruition today," he

Leading up to Tuesday's kickoff, this past spring more than 90 community members volunteered to review the agencies applying for funding.

Fifty-five programs within 38 agencies serving Blue Earth, Le Sueur, Nicollet and Waseca counties will receive funding contingent on United Way reaching their goal.

This year's list of partner programs and agencies includes a wide variety of recipients that help with basic needs, health, education and more.

Atwood said the funds can be used in part to hire employees as resources.

"Counselors, people to help through mental health, drug addiction, even through Partners for Housing. So those funds are not only there to employ people to be the resource themselves, but to be securing other resources like different programs and even monies towards housing and things like that," he said.

One of this year's recipients includes the Mankato Family YMCA and the Brother/Sister mentoring program, which helps match youth with a caring adult in the community.

Tom Schueneman, director of social responsibility at the Mankato Family YMCA, which includes overseeing the program, said the resources they receive through the campaign in part go toward mentor matches.

“So we have community-based mentors who are out in the community and they attend activities in the community. Some of those resources help to offset the costs of the program for matches to attend activities,” Schueneman said.

Brother/Sister Program Coordinator Chriss Page said the resources not only help support the mentor matches, but they make sure they make the best impact they can.

“There’s several kids in our community that need just that extra caring adult in their life,” she said.



United Way CEO Barb Kaus talks with Partners for Housing board chairman Christian Bailey during the campaign kickoff Tuesday.

[Pat Christman](#)

United Way will hold a number of events during the campaign to raise money for their goal and hope to reach it by early 2023.