

UNITED IS THE WAY

2026-2027
WORKPLACE CAMPAIGN



UNITED WAY
Southeast
Mississippi

Welcome to the United Way Team

THANK YOU FOR BEING A CHAMPION FOR OUR COMMUNITY AS YOU PARTNER WITH US!

A workplace campaign is a fun and rewarding team-building experience and YOU are just the person to lead it! Whether this is your first year as a coordinator, or you are a campaign veteran, the information in this guide will help you plan and execute a smooth and successful campaign. We encourage you to take advantage of the materials we’ve provided. Your UWSEMS staff liaison is always ready to support you in every possible way.

MEET YOUR STAFF LIAISONS



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OUR LOCAL IMPACT

“We unite community resources to address our community’s greatest needs.”



We lead programs that make a difference.

We lead programs designed to meet specific community needs and provide support to families and individuals.



We fund local nonprofits.

We advocate for and fund fantastic nonprofit agencies doing critical work in communities throughout our service area. We use an extensive vetting process lead by a Committee of professionals across a range of fields to guide funding decisions and ensure dollars go to organizations and programs working in each of our impact areas.



We tackle the issues.

We identify areas of need and bring together local governments, businesses, schools and volunteers to drive positive change in communities across our community.



We empower people.

We connect individuals with knowledge and services, which has a positive impact on the lives of people in the community as well as the lives of their family members, friends and neighbors.



We bring together volunteers.

Whether it's helping to build houses for low income residents or delivering fresh meals to the homebound and senior citizens, we bring volunteers together to improve the lives of people in our region.

OUR MISSION

United Way of Southeast Mississippi has been serving the community since 1940. UWSEMS builds collaborations with individuals, businesses, and nonprofits to address challenges that no one agency can solve alone to provide the building blocks of Youth Opportunity, Healthy Community, Financial Security, and Community Resiliency. We work to connect people with the resources available to meet those needs for the purpose of creating positive change across Southeast Mississippi.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR ROLE AS A **WORKPLACE COORDINATOR**



A Workplace Campaign Coordinator is a volunteer (or group of volunteers) dedicated to helping their co-workers serve our community by planning and executing a meaningful campaign experience.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND GUIDELINES:

- Work closely with your CEO & UWSEMS staff liaison to raise funds and awareness for United Way and our local community.
- Develop a campaign action plan including virtual or in-person presentations, goals, incentives, etc.
- Oversee internal communications with campaign team and employees.
- Promote the campaign throughout your company.
- Coordinate the distribution, collection, and reporting of campaign materials.
- Coordinate with your payroll office to make sure payroll deductions are processed as needed.
- Make your company campaign fun and enjoyable!
- Submit a campaign envelope to the UWSEMS staff with all fields completed, including a signature.

CAMPAIGN COORDINATOR OF THE YEAR

The Campaign Coordinator of the Year is awarded to an individual demonstrating exceptional commitment and leadership, including implementing creative fundraising activities to increase results, mentoring others, and sharing best practices. At our Annual Meeting, United Way will reveal the recipient and recognize all the efforts of our amazing Workplace Coordinators throughout the campaign year.



UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN 101



Information is the key to campaign success! Our United Way staff can tailor a presentation to suit your schedule and needs. Presentations can be range from 3-30 minutes (15-20 minutes is ideal) and can take place at any time, and for any size staff.

Please Remember:

- Presentations from UWSEMS are a way to thank your employees for their support.
- Giving will increase after having a United Way staff or board member participate in your campaign.
- We aren't just there to raise funds. We are also raising awareness of the programs available in our community. One of those programs might help your employees.
- This is a soft ask - we never want anyone to feel pressured.

COMPONENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL KICKOFF EVENT

Schedule a Virtual or In-Person Kickoff

Invite your staff well in advance, send out reminders, and consider incentives to encourage participation.

Prepare Visual Aids for Employees

Make your presentation something that will keep your employees' attention. Get creative!

Welcome - CEO or Campaign Coordinator

Brief opening remarks and introduction. Having leadership express support reaffirms your company's commitment.

United Way Impact - United Way Staff or Board Member

United Way can share information about our work and local impact in the community and answer any questions about how to donate. We're available for in-person and virtual presentations.

Speaker - Partner Agency Representative or Personal Story

One of the most impactful ways to motivate potential donors is to have someone share a personal story. Your staff liaison will be happy to coordinate this through agency partners or donors. Also, many companies find that their own employees may want to share their story if they have been helped through United Way. (TIP: employees can record a brief video message or provide a short-written story to share with others)

Wrap-Up - Campaign Coordinator

Make sure to thank everyone for attending and ask coworkers to consider participating. Deliver forms to employees. Provide information on United Way and any company incentives or fun activities. Make sure to share a deadlines and timelines for donations.

10 STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN



☐ 1 - Plan

Contact us, we're here to help! Call or email us to help you customize your campaign, ask questions, and get more resources!

☐ 2 - Approve

Get approval from senior leadership on an attainable fundraising and participation goal, staff communications, and schedule for virtual or in-person events.

☐ 3 - Assemble

Assemble a team! This is a great team-building project. Meet virtually or in-person to brainstorm, plan, and assign roles.

☐ 4 - Brainstorm

Brainstorm the strategies you'll use to reach your goal. Consider in-person or virtual events or challenges to encourage participation.

☐ 5 - Assign

Plan and assign roles for announcing your campaign start and end dates, distributing pledge forms or links, any staff events or meetings, and email communications.

☐ 6 - Ask

Ask to leverage an existing staff meeting to talk about your local impact and kick-off your campaign. Your United Way liaison can support this effort.

☐ 7 - Execute

Provide staff with your donation method: paper pledge forms, a fillable PDF, or an email link to give online. Start with your potential leadership donors (\$1,000+) who can lead by example!

☐ 8 - Inform

Inform employees about the issues facing our communities and the impact we can make together. We offer customizable email templates.

☐ 9 - Engage

Have fun! Whether it's in-person or virtual, encourage participation and enjoy some charitable team building.

☐ 10 - Wrap-Up

Announce the impact made by your colleagues' collective generosity! Thank donors, award any prizes, and remit funds to United Way of Southeast MS. You can arrange for pick up or drop off with your staff liaison.



TIPS & TRICKS

TOP 5 WAYS TO ENGAGE YOUR COLLEAGUES DURING THE CAMPAIGN

- 1** Host a campaign kick-off. **MAKE IT FUN!** Have a representative from UWSEMS share more about the organization and the impact donor dollars have on our local community.
- 2** Create teams to encourage friendly competition and boost morale. For instance, offer rewards & prizes for reaching goals based on office geography, department, individual, etc.
- 3** Host a group volunteer activity for employees to gain perspective on how their gift will make an impact. Our staff can assist in coordinating a volunteer project with one of our partner agencies.
- 4** Host food-themed events and contests. Gatherings are always a good way to bring people together and get them engaged.



HOW TO HANDLE THE “WHY SHOULD I DONATE?”

UNITED WAY SUPPORTS LOCAL PEOPLE

When you donate to United Way, you provide local children and families with access to education, economic mobility, and health care.

A UNIQUE POSITION TO HELP

No other organization has the scope and expertise to unite and mobilize hundreds of human service agencies, businesses, government, volunteers, and foundations around a common vision for the common good.

SPECIAL EVENTS GUIDE



Think Outside The Box

Guess the Number

Fill a clear jar with candy and have employees pay for a chance to guess the number of pieces in the jar. The most accurate guess wins the candy.

Carnival

Kick-off the event with a carnival-themed party. Employees can participate in traditional carnival games such as ring toss and ducky races. Provide cotton candy and popcorn to the winners. Have an executive dunking booth. Pay to pie your boss in the face.

Show Your Spirit

One day during the campaign, encourage employees to show their spirit by wearing apparel from their favorite sports team. On the same day, host your United Way meetings, a potluck or some sort of special event allowing the employees to interact and share.

Virtual Office Bingo

Distribute printable bingo cards to employees who pay to play. Every day of the campaign, email one bingo number to participants. The first one to reply with “BINGO” wins. The bingo game continues until all the prizes are distributed.

The Swear Jar

Donate jar for the word(s) your office would love to eliminate, or at least take a break from. Pivot, anyone? If they say the word, they drop in a dollar!

Incentives that Recognize Participation

Early bird pledges get one entry into the free day off drawing.

Provide a catered lunch or special treat for your leadership level donors (\$1,000+annually).

Raffle off prime parking spots for a month or year as a “VIP Parking” incentive.

Donors who increase their pledge by 10% from last year get to leave work an hour early.

For more **FUN** ideas visit unitedwaysems.org/campaign

FAQs?

WHAT DOES UNITED WAY OF SOUTHEAST MISSISSIPPI DO?

United Way fights for the basic needs, education, economic mobility, and health of every person. Locally we invest in programs providing services vital to the immediate BASIC NEEDS of the most vulnerable members of our community; while making long term investments in EDUCATION, ECONOMIC MOBILITY, and HEALTH - the building blocks for a good quality of life. Each day, United Way of Southeast Mississippi works to connect people with needs to the resources available to meet those needs for the purpose of creating positive change across Southeast Mississippi.

WHERE DOES MY MONEY GO?

The money raised here, stays here to help local people who most need it. We partner with local nonprofits to ensure access to food, shelter, education, health services, and other basic human needs needed to support healthy, safe families.

WHY SHOULD I GIVE TO UNITED WAY?

We look at what's happening in our community and work to fill gaps in the areas of greatest need. We do the research to determine where the greatest need is and invest your donation where it's most needed. We provide a safe and secure method for giving back to your community and ensure that the agencies receiving funding are in good standing with the IRS and deliver cost-effective, high impact local services.

WHY SHOULD I GIVE TO UNITED WAY OF SOUTHEAST MISSISSIPPI AND NOT DIRECTLY TO AN AGENCY?

No other single organization has the scope, expertise, or influence to bring human service agencies, government, education partners and dedicated volunteers around a common vision of achieving long lasting results for a stronger, healthier community. When you give to a specific charity, you support a cause. When you give to UWSEMS, your gift becomes part of a collective effort to strengthen our entire community. Your gift to United Way allows you to accomplish more than you can alone or through a single charity.

HOW ARE UNITED WAY FUNDING DECISIONS MADE AND BY WHOM?

All programs are reviewed and evaluated by community members serving as Community Impact volunteers. The volunteers consider each program application against variables that include – the administration of the program or service, its goals and effectiveness, finances, and the priorities established in our community. The Committee looks at programs providing services aligned with Support Services, Education, Economic Mobility, and Health, and makes appropriate funding recommendations to the United Way Board of Directors. The Board has the final authority to determine program funding.

IS MY GIFT TAX-DEDUCTIBLE?

Yes, UWSEMS is a federally registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation. Donations to UWSEMS are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by an individual's or corporation's circumstances.



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