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United Way awards more than \$937,000 in grants, setting record

KATHERINE KNOTT The News-Enterprise 6 hrs ago



United Way of Central Kentucky

United Way of Central Kentucky has set a new record for funding with its 2018 grants, the organization announced Tuesday.

United Way announced its annual 2018 community grants to 26 agencies with 34 programs from its five-county service region, receiving more than \$937,000 for the next year, a record level of investment, organization CEO Megan Stith said.

“We could not do it without our community,” she said.

The grants are locally paid for through United Way's annual campaign, which raised \$1.4 million, she said.

Last year, the organization awarded \$812,415 to 24 agencies throughout its service region.

The organization said in a news release that grant awards reflect a focusing of resources to accomplish United Way's goal of moving more families out of poverty through employment.

Additionally, it provided grants to organizations that improve education, financial stability and health while meeting basic needs.

Helping Hand of Hope received \$96,500 for emergency assistance with rent, utilities and other basic needs, along with \$21,000 for job placement services that remove barriers to employment.

Another large award went to Feeding America, Kentucky's Heartland. The food bank received \$77,000 for its Backpack Program and to distribute produce from the Farms to Food Banks Program, according to the news release.

United Way said in the release it considered applications from the entire community. A team of volunteers who comprise the community investment team evaluated applications.

"United Way creates success stories by empowering people to achieve their fullest potential," 2018 Community Investment Team Chairwoman Trena Floyd said in the release. "The Community Investment Team is a great example of United Way's commitment to providing maximum value for each dollar entrusted to us. Our volunteers spent over 1,000 hours reviewing the applications with great care, ensuring alignment with our mission to help people become self-sufficient."

United Way continued its funding this year to Hardin County Schools and Elizabethtown Independent Schools.

HCS will use \$50,000 from United Way for its First Connections program, which prepares children for kindergarten and keeps teen parents on track to graduate, according to the release.

EIS's after-school program Panther Place received \$34,000. Money goes toward providing at-risk students with homework assistance, educational enrichment, physical and arts activities, and family events, according to the release.

Last year, United Way-funded programs provided more than 60,000 services throughout Hardin, Breckinridge, Grayson, LaRue and Meade counties. For a full list of funded agencies, go to unitedwayck.org.

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