Ignite

Ignite awareness and understanding of the root causes of our community’s social challenges to inform social planning and collaboration through storytelling, data analysis, research, evaluation and outcome measurement.

Global impact starts with local love. Recognizing the importance of bringing together the world's biggest to-do list, United Way worked with the London Poverty Research Centre at King's University College to map the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This local framework gave United Way-led London for All volunteers an understanding of the root causes of our community where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential and that starts with our staff.”

Influence

Influence systems and policies through advocacy and by strengthening relationships with governments, corporate partners, community organizations and community networks.

As United Way wraps up the final year as lead agency for London For All, the City of London’s roadmap to end poverty in a generation, we’re celebrating more than a few successes.

A powerful example happened late last year. Acting on a London For All recommendation to eliminate the need for predatory lending, City of London Social Services implemented direct deposit for Ontario Works clients. More than 6,000 cheques were directly deposited into clients’ bank accounts or, for those without one, disbursed as payment cards. As a result, over $102,000 in service fees was diverted from payday lending businesses.

It’s simple solutions like this that showcase United Way’s ability to get the right partners working together to influence systems and policies. Other London For All successes include $355,420 invested in mental health and addiction services, 891 new licensed child care spaces, 1,374,048 subsidized bus rides for low-income Londoners, 27,385 families & seniors accessed physical activity, healthy food or nutrition programs that build healthy habits and increase belonging.

Inspire

Inspire contributions of dollars, influence, time and knowledge to social change in our community by individuals, donors, corporate partners, community organizations.

Sometimes, inspiration comes on two wheels. What started off as a door prize at the St. Thomas & District Chamber of Commerce July Business After 5 event, soon turned into Share the Ride, a rolling community awareness initiative and city-wide fundraiser for United Way. When a stunning new cruiser bike was wheelie out to owner Angela Devries, she promptly auctioned her prize off to the highest bidder, with proceeds to United Way. Robert Fureaux placed the top bid of $460, ovening the bike a brief moment before putting it up for auction again. The virtuous chain reaction didn’t stop there. In the span of a few weeks, the bike had almost 20 owners, and travelled across St. Thomas before finding a permanent home with a “little” in the Big Brothers Big Sisters of St. Thomas program, a United Way partner agency.

Invest

Invest resources, including dollars, time and knowledge, in programs, services and community convening to strengthen social service networks and increase community capacity.

United Way gives everyone a fair shot at their best life. More than just raising dollars, we tackle local issues linked to poverty and social exclusion through strategic leadership, advocacy and investments at partner agencies proven to get results.

Last year, United Way:

Invested in 92 funded programs at 54 partner agencies
Mobilized community wide collection drives that distributed over $350,000 in urgently needed supplies to local agencies. This included 813 pairs of winter boots for school-aged kids, 3,808 backpacks so that every kid can have a Best First Day, and over $350,000 in urgently needed supplies to local agencies.

Led collective impact projects like London For All, a roadmap to end poverty in a generation

“"I want to make sure help is there when our neighbours, friends and colleagues need it. Our community is counting on each and every one of us.”

– Christy Back, 2019 United Way Campaign Chair and Chief ChangeMaker & Managing Director, Freedom 55 Financial, a division of Canada Life

Suitcase Party Takes Flight

On a chilly night in February over 150 guests said YES to adventure and attended Suitcase Party at the ultra- cool Art Museum. Attendees enjoyed a live band, food trucks, local beverages and a chance to get whisked away on an all-expenses paid weekend getaway to New York City. This new adventure raised over $10,000 and introduced United Way to a whole new crowd.

Scotiabank StairClimb Rocks Out!

1,637 head-banging, stair-climbing rockstars
214 wanna-be bands
472 steps to the top of the charts
$225,028 raised

United Way Elgin Middlesex joined the ranks of living wage employers this year, signalling that paying people at least enough to meet basic needs for shelter, food and recreation is a critical investment in our community.

“Paying a living wage is integral to our core values,” says Kelly Ziegner, President & CEO, United Way Elgin Middlesex. “We believe in a community where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential and that starts with our staff.”

27,385 families & seniors accessed physical activity, healthy food or nutrition programs that build healthy habits and increase belonging.

Share the Ride caught the attention of many eager to see where the bike would go next as it travelled from owner-to-owner across St. Thomas and Elgin. The grassroots campaign got people talking about United Way and raised $8,500 along the way.