"What does United Way do?" Well, we do so many things that it’s hard to summarize them in just a few words. But when I have to, I describe us as “a local think tank for helping people.” Our volunteers and our partner agencies constantly comb through articles and research to keep in touch with the greatest human needs in central Louisiana. But we do more than just think – we forge solutions and put them into action.

For example, we need more youth to graduate high school. We’ve been longtime funders of great programs at agencies such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and YWCA, which equip children and youth with a broad range of knowledge and skills for success. But we can’t wait until someone’s in high school to start preparing them. We also fund a proven program at the Volunteers of America called “Parents as Teachers,” which works closely with young, at-risk parents to help them and their preschool children succeed. We’ve just embarked on a journey to help elementary school students learn personal responsibility and soft skills through a program called “The Leader in Me,” based on Stephen Covey’s Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.

We all need financial stability. Right now we have IRS-certified staff and volunteers doing tax returns at no charge for low-income families, saving them hundreds of dollars and bringing tax refunds back into our local economy. We’re working to set up a financial counseling service so that folks can better deploy the resources they have.

Next time I’ll tell you more about our funding for programs in health and in basic needs like food, shelter, and personal safety. We’re active in responding to disasters, in connecting people with the services they need, and in helping community organizations achieve higher levels of excellence. But in all we do, we act as a local coalition of agencies, businesses, donors, and volunteers. If you haven’t already, join with us and LIVE UNITED to make central Louisiana a better place for all its citizens.

CLECO DONATES TO LAUNCH 2-1-1

On January 31, 2018, Cleco awarded United Way of Central Louisiana $150,000 to launch a 2-1-1 call center. 2-1-1 is a free, confidential referral and information helpline and website that connects people from all communities and of all ages to the essential health and human services they need, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

You’ll find information about:
- Basic Human Needs Resources
- Physical and Mental Health Resources
- Employment Support
- Support for Older Americans and Persons with Disabilities
- Support for Children, Youth and Families

“The work United Way is doing is critical,” said Bill Fontenot, Cleco CEO. “The center’s trained call specialists are providing access to basic needs like shelter and food, but what is just as important is their availability during a disaster to direct people to critical services. As first responders ourselves, we understand all too well how valuable this information can be to the well-being and safety of our communities and customers.”

"Cleco’s funding has given us the confidence to move ahead with launching our 2-1-1 system," said United Way CEO David Britt. “They have been among our greatest supporters since our earliest days back in 1954, and we would not be where we are without them. We are deeply grateful to our partners at Cleco for encouraging us to move ahead with this new system serving Central Louisiana!”
2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Welcome to our new board members for 2018! We are excited to have so many great leaders helping all of central Louisiana LIVE UNITED!

Shannon Alford, Rapides Parish Schools
Vick Bales, Social Security Administration
Josh Blackwell, Volunteers of America
Jonathan Bolen, Rapides Area Planning Commission
Diane Davidson, RoyOMartin
John Dean, CLEDA
David Brasher, City of Pineville
Wiletha Brown, Woodforest National Bank
Karen Franklin, Procter & Gamble
Frank Jackson, St. Matthew Baptist Church
Patricia Koch, 9th Judicial District Court
Leisa Lawson, Gold Weems
Kea Martin, Cleco
Melissa McKinney, Rapides Parish Schools
Rodney McNeal, Veterans Affairs
Sandra McQuain, Baker Manufacturing
Kay Michiels, Gold Weems
Maria Miranda, NSU
Tony Murray, Diamond B Construction
Doug Nelson, AFCO
Scott Newcomer, Bancorp South
Leigh Ann Purvis, RoyOMartin
Randy Ponthie, Southern Heritage Bank
Glenn Riggs, Salvation Army
Jannease Seastrunk, Red River Bank
Sue Sullivan, LSU-Alexandria
John Shaughnessy, CHRISTUS St. Frances Cabrini

WHAT’S HAPPENING AT UWCL?

February - April
VITA/Free Tax Preparation
Contact our office to schedule an appointment

Thursday, March 29, 2018
Campaign Reception/Annual Meeting

Friday, April 6, 2018
Day of Action

Saturday, May 12, 2018
Reading on the Red

JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL MEETING

For our Annual Meeting this year, we will host an event on the patio at Spirit’s on Thursday, March 29 at 4:30 pm. This event is free for all donors and volunteers who helped make our 2017 campaign year a success.

Thank you for making 2017 a Success!

Please join us for our Campaign Reception & Annual Meeting

Spirit’s Patio
1200 Texas Avenue
Thursday, March 29, 2018
4:30 - 6:30 PM

RSVP to abby@uwcl.org or 318.443.7203 ext. 3
Drinks & Appetizers

We will announce our campaign awards to our top performing workplace campaigns and look ahead into what we have planned for 2018.

We hope you can make it and celebrate the wonderful things United Way was able to accomplish in our community for 2017!