

# United Way of Central Oklahoma

## FACT SHEET



**Our Founding:** United Way of Central Oklahoma was founded in 1923 as the “Community Chest,” running an annual campaign for social services needs known as The Community Fund campaign. Through the years, the names of the campaign and organization have changed to keep its mission relevant to central Oklahoma by convening resources, incubating new programs and initiatives and funding 54 United Way Partner Agencies.

### **Our Mission:**

Connecting people and resources to improve the well-being of those in our community.

### **Our Vision:**

A stronger, healthier and more compassionate community.

### **Our Core Values:**

UWCO values health, education, financial stability and quality of life. We believe these core elements are critical to our success as individuals, as families and as a community. In order to achieve our vision of a stronger, healthier and more compassionate community, we are working to provide access to these essentials to all people in central Oklahoma through five Focus Areas.

### **Our Five Focus Areas:**

- **Strong Families:** Individuals and families have resources to achieve financial stability, as well as access to counseling, debt management, education, job training and housing.
- **Successful Kids:** Infants, children and youth are nurtured and given the opportunity to succeed in school, develop life skills and become productive citizens.
- **Healthy Citizens:** Central Oklahomans have access to physical and mental health care and adopt healthy lifestyles. Important health research is funded.
- **Independent Living:** Older adults and those living with disabilities are engaged in the community with access to independent living, job skills, volunteer positions and dynamic relationships while their primary care givers receive respite and support.
- **Community Preparedness:** Our community is prepared to respond to individual and community emergencies.

### **Our Facts:**

For 100 years, UWCO has been the community safety net for health and human services in central Oklahoma; a leading organization building a stronger, healthier and more compassionate community. Currently, we fund 141 strategic and impactful programs administered by 70-plus Partner Agencies that make a lasting difference.

Through the annual Community Investment process, UWCO convenes more than 200 donor volunteers to review and evaluate requests for program funding from United Way's Partner Agencies serving central Oklahoma and new agencies seeking partnership. These volunteers help determine the most efficient ways to invest dollars raised in the United Way fundraising campaigns into our community.

Since the beginning of UWCO, five of the originally funded agencies remain Partner Agencies today: Boy Scouts, The Salvation Army, Sunbeam Family Services, YMCA and YWCA. Collectively, these agencies have received more than \$138 million in United Way funds.

Many of those helped through UWCO's annual campaign need services provided from more than one United Way Partner Agency. A donation to our annual campaign is the most efficient way to support this network of social services providers to meet those needs in our community. More than \$700 million has been raised throughout the span of United Way's 100 years.

UWCO is a recipient of the four-star rating from Charity Navigator. According to CharityNavigator.org, a four-star charity is one that exceeds industry standards and outperforms most charities in its cause. Based on financial performance metrics, accountability and transparency, UWCO is one of several nonprofits in Oklahoma with outstanding performance.

UWCO proudly operates United Way of Canadian County and United Way of Logan County and administers their respective campaigns. We welcomed United Way of Logan County under our 501(c)3 status in December 2017, and United Way of Canadian County followed in December 2018.

Our administrative costs remain fairly consistent from year to year, but the amount of pledges and donations we raise each year does vary. It's that variable of "monies raised" that causes our percentage of administrative expenses to change from year to year. This is why we have chosen to state our percentage of administrative expense as an average percentage instead of an actual percentage. Over a three year period, UWCO's administrative expenses average approximately 11%.

UWCO holds the unique distinction of one of the few in the U.S. to house a research department to help determine strategic initiatives addressing our community's most pressing needs, supporting positive, sustainable change in social services. We assess the needs through census and program data, HeartLine 2-1-1 data and community forums and regularly share this research in our publication called Vital Signs. Additionally, we help convene leaders across central Oklahoma to discuss important issues affecting our community.

UWCO believes sharing our message with the community is important. It's a message of hope and an invitation to "Live United" for the common good. To help us broadcast our message, we rely on dedicated volunteers to secure donated media time and space throughout our communities.