**2023 United Way Campaign Talking Points**

For staff, board and volunteers

**Campaign Theme: United in Purpose, We Have What It Takes**

* United Way of Northwest Vermont mobilizes our community to do the work that no single organization can do alone.
* We bring people together to close gaps and open opportunities for everyone in our community. We are United in Purpose.
* **United in purpose**, **we can create a more resilient community** where every person has the resources and relationships they need to thrive.
* Together, we are making real change in the lives of our neighbors by focusing on the unmet needs most important to – and told to us by – our community:
	+ Meeting Basic Needs, Promoting Mental Health, Fostering Financial Stability, Supporting Families, and Reducing Substance Misuse.
* The challenges we face as a community are overlapping and interconnected which is why United Way of Northwest Vermont takes an integrated approach to tackling our community’s many challenges.
* United Way is unique because we exist at the intersection of nonprofits, business, government, and community. We get to see how everything, and everyone, is connected.
* Time and time again, our community has shown that **we have what it takes** **to support each other** and get through even the most difficult of times. But we each need to do our part.
* United Way helps people live their purpose – whether by donating, volunteering, or speaking out for policies to improve our community.

**How We’re Helping – Our Investment**

The community defines our priorities. Our investments address **5 Key Strategies**: **Meeting Basic Needs, Promoting Mental Health, Reducing Substance Misuse, Fostering Financial Stability, and Supporting Families**.

Thanks to generous community giving in our 2022 campaign, United Way is investing **$1.5 million in community funding in 2023** including:

* Community funding grants to 32 funded partners collectively serving 114,000 people in Chittenden, Franklin, and Grand Isle Counties;
* Funding to local programs and initiatives focused on reducing substance misuse among youth and young adults;
* Funding for strategic initiatives;
* Funding for Vermont 2-1-1.

Our **Mental Health Initiative** is bringing the region together to strengthen the system of care. The **Northwest Vermont Regional Prevention Network** is unifying the region with a holistic and comprehensive approach to preventing substance misuse.

**United Way also runs our own programs, including**:

* Working Bridges
* Common Good Vermont
* AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP, Bone Builders and Foster Grandparent Programs
* Volunteer Connection

Collectively, United Way’s community investments serve people and families of all ages and all backgrounds, living in every community and town in Northwest Vermont.

**The Ask – Join Us!**

* We all have times when we need help, and times when we can give help.
* Vermonters have what it takes to overcome our greatest challenges.
* And each of us has a role to play.
* Together, we can build a more resilient region where everyone can thrive.
* United Way is mobilizing our community and helping people live their purpose.
* Join us. GIVE, ADVOCATE or VOLUNTEER today.
* We can do more United than alone.
* Visit us at unitedwaynwvt.org to learn more.

**Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Access**

* United Way’s work has always focused on social justice and fixing inequities in our systems. Equity and inclusion are foundational principles and values, we are partners in this work – not saviors and thus seek to lift and center community voice in addressing our key strategies.
* But we know that we cannot continue this work without addressing the unique and exacerbated inequities in our system for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) communities specifically.
* Additionally, we know that we must focus on accessibility – for those with disabilities as well as those facing the intersectionality of race, gender, sexuality, and other systemic barriers that work much like physical barriers to limit our neighbor’s participation in our community.
* We are actively working to address these inequities and create increased engagement in three core areas
	+ Education – Amplify and increase both internal/external training opportunities for staff, volunteers, and community. Focus on ways to address micro-aggressions, calling in/out and the use of case studies to fuel dialogue and systems change.
	+ Communication – Provide opportunities to amplify underrepresented voices, advocate for data systems and talk specifically about our work including what we have done and what’s next.
	+ Investment – Leverage our position to provide financial and technical assistance support to reduce barriers and change systems.