

United Way of King County grows Champions program and other affinity groups to build a community where people have homes, students graduate and families are financially stable.

SEATTLE- August 8, 2018. United Way of King County is pleased to announce its fundraising totals for the campaign year ending June 30, 2018, raising more than \$41 million to invest in its priority work of building a community where people have homes, students graduate and families are financially stable.

With traditional charity-giving models like workplace campaigns changing, United Way has focused its energy and efforts in engaging different donor groups that care about tackling tough issues.

“As a tech entrepreneur, I care about constant innovation, and I love United Way’s amazing platform as a true and direct solution to solving some of our biggest community challenges, like homelessness and young people dropping out of school. It’s like $1 + 1 = 3$ ”, says Jonathan Sposato, co-founder of GeekWire and PicMonkey and 2018-2019 United Way of King County Campaign Co-Chair.

In 2017, United Way of King County launched its Champions program, which offers those who give \$10,000 or more, the opportunity to support big solutions and meet the people impacted by United Way investments. United Way cultivated more than 50 new Champions in fiscal year 2018, bringing the total number of Champions donors to close to 300. “We have such a dynamic group of people that are committed to supporting real answers to problems like persistent poverty,” said Angela Stowell, 2017-2018 United Way Campaign Co-Chair.

Another area of focus is growing United Way’s Emerging Leaders program, aimed at professionals in their 20s and 30s who are interested in coming together with like-minded individuals to solve issues. 8,400 young professionals count themselves as Emerging Leaders, an increase of 1,500 people.

United Way programs to ensure people have homes, students graduate and families are financially stable resonated with donors. Jobs Connect is a unique United Way program that connects individuals experiencing homelessness and looking for work with employers looking to fill jobs. United Way’s Streets to Home program gives outreach workers flexible dollars and other tools they need to move people who are living on the streets into housing. The program moved more than 1,500 people into housing at a cost of less than \$1,000 per person.

United Way’s Free Tax Preparation is just one program aimed at breaking the cycle of poverty for low-income individuals and families. 1,000 United Way volunteers prepared a record number of tax returns this year, which resulted in \$31.6 million in refunds.

More than 8,500 young people ages 14 to 24 who left school without graduating are getting reconnected to their education and earning their high school diploma or GED thanks to United Way’s Reconnecting Youth program and its fantastic corporate sponsors like **Microsoft, Nordstrom, Costco, and Key Bank**. “There are so many generous companies that care about this community and invest in United Way so that young people in King County receive one-to-one mentoring, educational coaching and career navigation to achieve their goals,” said Jon Fine, CEO of United Way of King County.

Starbucks, PACCAR, Amazon and Seattle Mariners invested significantly in United Way programs to support vulnerable people in our community.

United Way recognizes and celebrates a tremendous philanthropic spirit in King County. An additional fantastic outpouring of financial support from the community through donor-directed gifts to area nonprofits brings United Way of King County’s overall fundraising tally for the year to nearly \$65 million.

