



United Way
of Ellis County

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

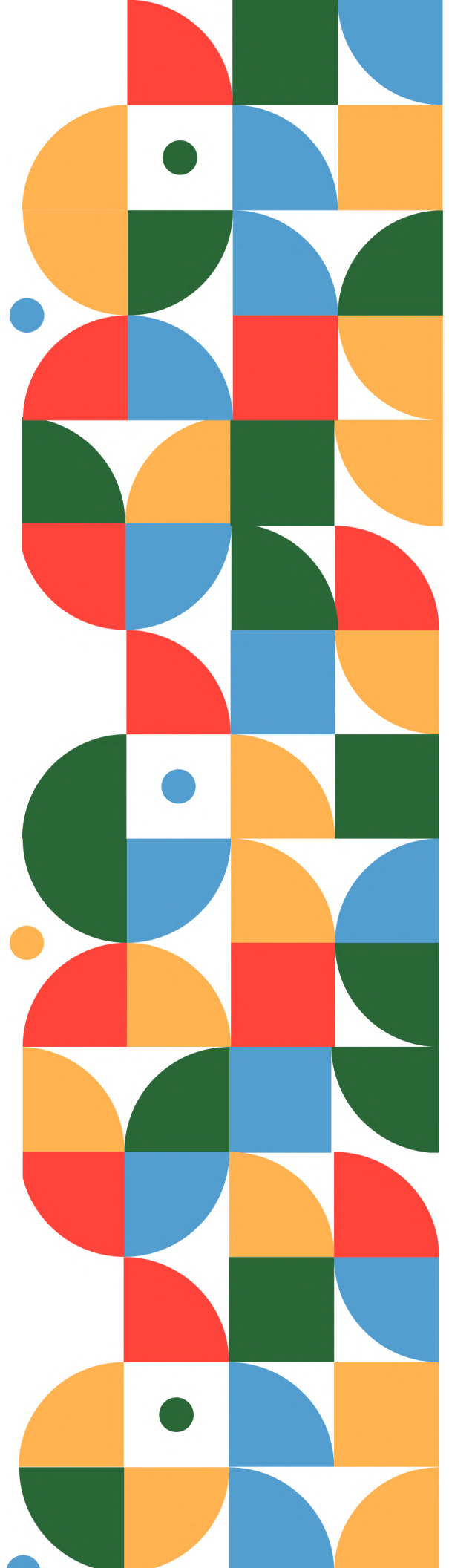


TABLE OF CONTENTS

About The United Way	1
Meet Our Team	2
Vision, Mission & Focus	3
Where The Money Goes, Focus Areas, and Partner Agencies	4-5
Community Impact	6
Champions Circle	7
Financial Statements	8
Year in Review	9-10
Programs & Services	11



ABOUT US

1

2024 marks 71 years of providing leadership and support to those in need in our community. Over the decades, much has changed—the name, the organizations we support, and the communities we serve—but one thing has remained constant: our commitment to improving the lives of Ellis County residents. We focus on addressing the local needs through four key areas: a healthy community, financial security, youth opportunity, and community resiliency.



United Way of Ellis County has been a cornerstone of our community since 1953, originally founded as the Hays United Fund. In that first campaign, volunteers set a fundraising goal of \$18,132.15—a goal that was met. Since then, the organization has grown in both scope and impact, with a continued mission to help those in need and support the efforts of local agencies. Today, United Way of Ellis County funds 14 agencies that provide vital services to our community. These agencies support thousands of individuals each year, and the programs they offer address needs such as Options' Safe Shelter program, and DSNWK's Job-Follow Along Program.

As we reflect on 71 years of service, we are reminded of the power of collaboration and community. United we thrive and united we're able to create a brighter tomorrow for the individuals in our community that need it the most.



MEET OUR STAFF

2

ERICA BERGES

Executive Director

Erica serves as the public representative for the United Way of Ellis County, championing its mission within the local community. Her responsibilities include fundraising, public relations, volunteer engagement, and driving collaborative community initiatives. As the executive director in a small office with a team of two, Erica oversees all aspects of the organization's operations.



MEET OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jennifer Harmon – Board President

Jaden Richardson – Vice President

Mandy Giess – Secretary

Ryan Scheck – Treasurer

Amy Schaffer – Past Board President

MEMBERS

Erin Giebler – Sarah Dreiling

Cindy Strube – Shelbi Wiles

Aaron Ladd – Becky Kiser

Lisa Keever – Kim Reel

Dustin Schlaefli



VISION

United Way envisions a community where every individual has an opportunity to succeed, and entire communities thrive as a result.

MISSION

The United Way of Ellis County positively impacts lives by strategically channeling community resources.

FOCUS

United Way's focus is on a Healthy Community, Financial Security, Youth Opportunity, and Community Resiliency the building blocks for a good quality of life and a thriving community.



WHERE THE MONEY GOES

4

\$280,000 was awarded to support...

A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

**Cancer Council of Ellis County
Center for Life Experience
Options
Hays Senior Center
CPRF**

FINANCIAL SECURITY

**Salvation Army
Western Kansas Association on Concerns of the Disabled
DSNWK**

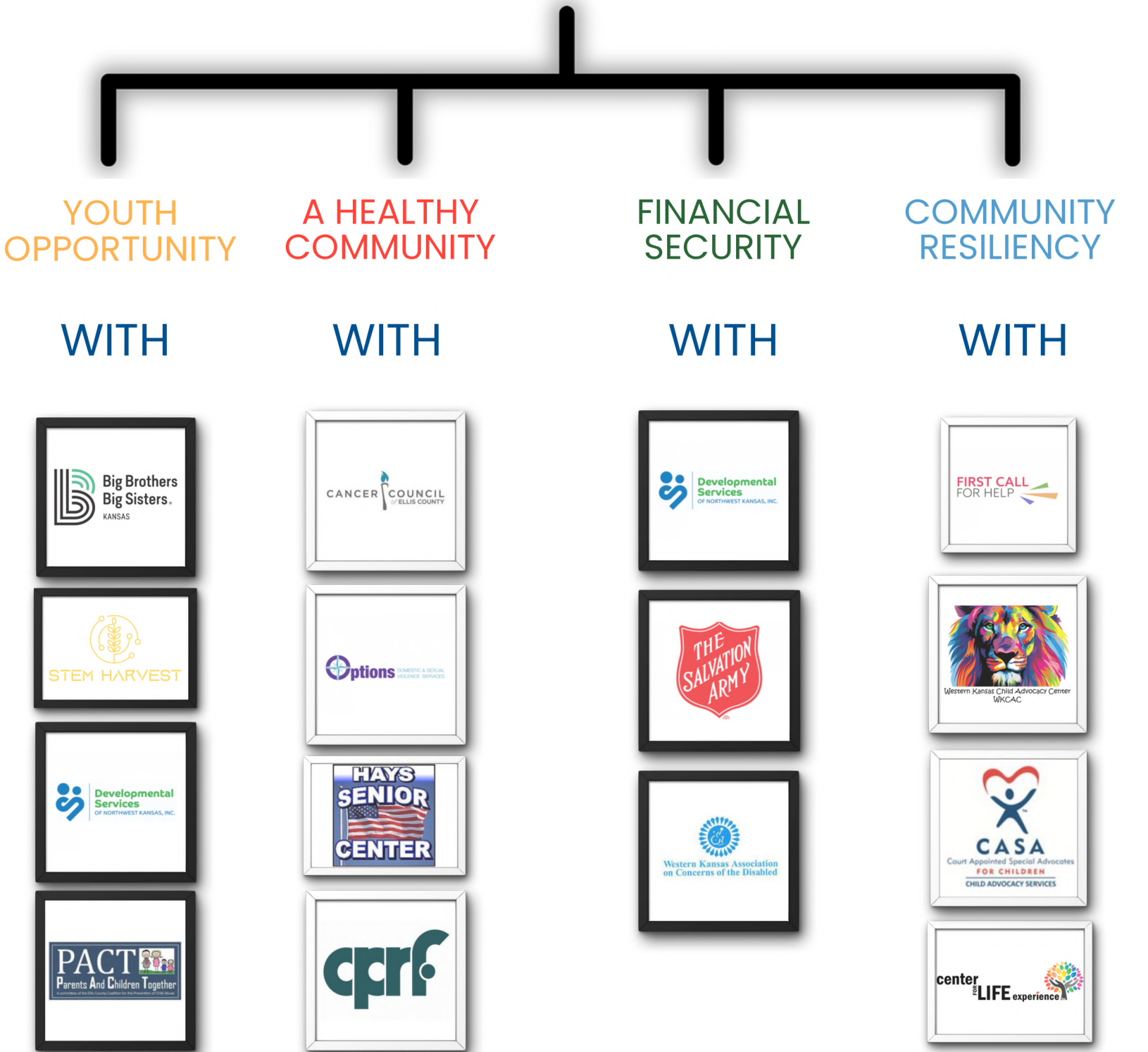
YOUTH OPPORTUNITY

**Big Brothers Big Sisters
Parents and Children Together (PACT)
DSNWK
STEM Harvest**

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

**First Call for Help
Western Kansas Child Advocacy Center
Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)**





COMMUNITY IMPACT

6



A grandmother, grieving the sudden loss of her grandson, faced financial hardship as she struggled to cover funeral costs and basic bills. Two months behind on her Midwest Energy bill, she was at risk of having her utilities shut off.

A friend referred her to First Call for Help of Ellis County, a United Way partner. Thanks to United Way funding and a special grant, the agency covered her energy bills for April and May, preventing the shutoff.

While such assistance is not always available, this timely help provided her with much-needed relief, hope, and compassion during an incredibly difficult time.



"Becca", whose journey highlights the transformative power of support from Options Domestic & Sexual Violence Services.

"Becca", facing overwhelming challenges, found refuge at Options, where she began rebuilding her life. With the help of shelter staff, she gained financial independence through full-time employment and secured stable housing. She even purchased a car, marking a new chapter of freedom.

Most importantly, Options supported "Becca" in maintaining a connection with her children, assisting her through court proceedings. Today, "Becca" and her children are looking forward to a safer, brighter future in Hays.



The Follow Along service under the Employment Connections program at The Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas helps individuals succeed in their careers. One young man, fresh out of high school, dreamed of working at Walmart. Despite no immediate openings, he stayed determined, took a job elsewhere, and eventually seized the opportunity when it arose.

With support from the DSNWK team, he overcame challenges and is now thriving at Walmart, working full-time, earning great pay, and loving his job!





United Way of Ellis County CHAMPIONS CIRCLE

Individuals

Platinum

Patricia Philips
Patrick and Kathleen Parke
David Kohtz
Dave and Sonya Herl
Don and Millie Bickle
Brian and Michelle DeWitt
Larry and Margie Caspers
Randy and Tammy Walker
Matt and Schamra Detherage
Tim and Sandee Werth
John and Jayne Clarke
Phil and Linda Stahlman
Jim and Shelby Doty

Gold

Mike and Rena Morley
Ernesto Lopez-Corona
Grover Musser
Gary and Mary Ann Shorman
Tim and Susan Bickle
John and Connie Braun
Dustin and Kristy Schlaefli
Kevin and Cindy Strube
Fred Taylor
Shane and Stacey Smith
Nancy Apel
Craig and Kris Dewell
Sharon Dreher
Larry and Judy Getty
Travis Kohlrus
Lindell Linenberger
Tisa Mason
Aaron Pfeifer
Andrew and Kathy Rupp
Collin and Hali Bielser

Silver

Andy Parrot
Ruth Firestone
Brandon and Shaina Prough
Jack and Jessica Dennis
Troy Basgall
Josh Dreher
Tim and Michele Flax
James and Deborah Braun
Cindy Elliott
Jaden Richardson and Kelly Lewis

Bronze

Travis Dinges
Jim and Shelby Doty
Gene and Cheryl Stramel
Jeff and Darla Braun
Meagan Wellbrock
Josh and Shauna Zweifel
Jennifer Harmon
Justin Randa
Darrell and Melissa Romme
Andrew Beck
Michael Drees
Gregory Swob
Jeff Brull
Tura Clement
Raymond Haas
Todd and Kim Meier
Margaret Plante
Michael and Marlene Pollock
Don and Cristi Scheibler
Shirley Bollig
John and Shelbi Solida
Nicholas Flax

Bronze

Edward Herrman
Mark and Kathy Kaseforth
Tim Kershner
Steve and Julie Paul
Eric Pfannenstiel
Verlin and Elaine Pfannenstiel

Businesses

Midwest Energy
HaysMed
Fort Hays State University
Schmidt Foundation
Dillons
Insurance Planning
Adams Brown
Bank of Hays
Nex-Tech
Warehouse/S&W Supply
Eagle Communications
Sunflower Electric
Sunflower Bank
City of Hays
Commerce Bank
Vyve Broadband
USD 489
DSNWK
Jeff Pinkney CPA
Tacos El Guero Guey
Hamlin Creative Consulting
Gone Logo

Blue Cross Blue Shield
Epic Games
Hays Rotary Club
High Plains Mental Health
Midwestern Pipeworks
Volga German Association
Northwestern Printers
First Kansas Bank
Brungardt Hower Ward Elliott & Pfeifer
Michael Hattan OD
Ellis County
TMP & Holy Family
Emprise Bank
Additions Accounting
Jeter Law Firm
Harfmann
Heartland Credit Union
Clinkscales Elder Law
Kennemer Orthodontist
Kinderknecht Family Dentistry
Lifetime Dental
EyeSmile
I-70 Truck Repair
Kansas Natural Gas Operating
Allen Pfeifer Construction
Hearing Solutions
AT&T
McHays
Classic Quality Body
Gordon's Carpet Center
Commercial Builders
Zinszer Oil
Golden Plains Trucking
Hertal Tank Service
State Glass Co.
ABC Seamless
Gambino's Pizza
Field Abstract & Title
Voss State Farm
High Plains Farm Credit

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

	2023	2022
Current Assets	\$405,929	\$630,813
Property, Plant and Equipment	\$0	\$1,963
Other Assets	\$276,182	\$235,048
Total Assets	\$682,111	\$867,824
Total Liabilities	\$38,702	\$65,562
Net Assets	\$643,409	\$802,262
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$682,111	\$867,824



YEAR IN REVIEW

United Way's annual Dueling Pianos fundraiser is a one-of-a-kind event that combines lively entertainment and a great cause. This interactive night features two professional pianists facing off on stage, playing a variety of songs — all while raising essential funds for local programs that support youth opportunity, a healthy community, financial security, and community resiliency.



The United Way of Ellis County's annual golf tournament is a key fundraiser that brings our community together for a day of friendly competition while supporting vital programs throughout the county. The event raises essential funds that directly benefit local initiatives focused on youth opportunity, a healthy community, financial security, and community resiliency. By participating in this fun and meaningful event, sponsors and golfers play an active role in strengthening our community, ensuring that resources are available to those who need them most. The tournament is not only a great opportunity to enjoy a day on the course but also a powerful way to make a lasting impact in Ellis County.



We proudly participate in the homecoming parades, engaging with the community in a fun and festive way.

As we walk through the parade, we collect spare change from generous individuals in exchange for candy. This tradition helps raise awareness for our mission while bringing our community together to support vital local programs.



YEAR IN REVIEW

Our Christmas-themed trivia event at Defiance in Hays was a festive and fun way to support the United Way of Ellis County. The event brought together trivia enthusiasts and holiday cheer, with Defiance generously donating 10% of all nonalcoholic sales to benefit our programs. This partnership not only made for an enjoyable evening but also helped raise crucial funds for local initiatives.



During the holiday season, the United Way of Ellis County spread festive cheer by providing milk and cookies at the local mall, creating a magical experience for children and families. As kids enjoyed their treats, they had the chance to meet Santa, take pictures, and listen as he read them heartwarming stories. This beloved annual tradition not only brought smiles to children's faces but also helped foster a sense of community spirit, all while raising awareness for the important work the United Way does to support our neighbors in need.

At Oktoberfest, we hosted a booth where festival-goers could test their skills by throwing ping pong balls into mugs from a distance. For each successful toss, participants won the mugs they landed the balls in, adding an exciting challenge to the festivities. The booth was a hit, drawing in people of all ages while raising funds for vital community programs.



PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Reality U is a one-day financial literacy event for students in high school and middle school designed to help them understand some of the "realities" involved in preparing for an employable future and adulthood. Students undergo a 75-minute interactive and engaging personal finance simulation.



The United Way of Ellis County recognized the need for a better way to connect volunteers with local agencies. Instead of the old method of giving volunteers phone numbers for different organizations, we now have NWKSVOLUNTEER.ORG—a one-stop website where volunteers can easily find current opportunities and agencies can post their needs. This makes it simpler than ever to get involved and support our community.



nwksvolunteers.org

The purpose of the Community Resource Directory is to provide a human services resource for information of services available to individuals, youth and families in need of assistance. The directory is distributed to various social and health service agencies throughout Ellis County. Printed directories can be picked up at the United Way of Ellis County's office or at various service agencies.



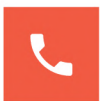


United Way
of Ellis County

THANK
YOU



1200 Main St, Hays, KS



+785-628-8281



www.liveunited.us

