Entering kindergarten and not being able to comprehend letter sounds, the thought of cracking open a book left Sara frustrated. Watching other classmates read made her embarrassed to even come to school.

There is great news for Sara, and other children in her situation. United Way of Weld County (UWWC) has teamed up with Greeley-Evans School District 6, AmeriCorps and Youth for a Change to offer Colorado Reading Corps, an evidence-based nationally implemented program that helps build literacy skills and increase reading proficiency for students in kindergarten through third grade in six schools. Madison, Shawsheen, Billie Martinez, Dos Rios, Scott and Meeker elementary schools have full-time, year-long AmeriCorps tutors whom provide daily one-on-one sessions for 20 minutes. About 120 children in those six schools are being tutored. A seventh school will be added. Thanks to our donors, UWWC has received $70,000 in donations for seven tutors with the goal of having 10 tutors in 10 different schools.

The numbers are already indicating that the program is a success. The latest results are extremely encouraging as 90 percent of first-graders, 80 percent of second- and third-graders and 65 percent of kindergartners are showing above target growth.

“We are thrilled to be part of this partnership,” said Jeannine Truswell, UWWC president and CEO. “We have been looking at this opportunity for several years and visited schools in the Denver area. Thanks to our donors, it is so critical that children receive all the resources they can to be ready at grade level by the fourth grade. It is the foundation for future success.”

Deirdre Pilch, superintendent for District 6 who is also a UWWC board member, is so supportive of what Colorado Reading Corps offers. “What Colorado Reading Corps is doing is bringing in tutors - AmeriCorps members - to work one-on-one with children who have delays in their reading,” Pilch said. “In some of those schools, as few as only 12 percent start kindergarten where they should be in reading.”

“We cannot do the work we have to do for the children in our community without the support of our community partners of which United Way is one of those very important partners, and now we’re happy to have Colorado Youth for a Change on board with us.” - Deirdre Pilch, superintendent for District 6
Promises for Children brings car seat clinics to Weld County

United Way of Weld County Promises for Children Quality Improvement team (Jessica Miller, Saray Mendoza and Tessa Erickson) helped to bring three car seat clinics throughout the county in October to educate parents, providers and caregivers on the importance of not only having a car seat, but using the car seat as directed, especially before winter driving conditions. Locations included: Eaton Recreation Center, Little Trappers Preschool in Fort Lupton and First Congregational Church in Greeley.

Colorado State Patrol Child Passenger Safety Training Coordinator Angel Giffin shared with participants how to best follow not only the laws, but manufacturer guidelines for safe car seat installation. “By bringing this clinic to three different areas in Weld County, we were able to include more families interested in knowing more,” Miller said. Miller said Giffin’s hands-on approach allowed participants to maneuver the seats and straps to learn how to best position and secure seats in their vehicles.

Each location also featured opportunities for children and parents to meet and interact with safety personnel from local fire and police departments. UWWC provided translation in Spanish as well as childcare so parents could participate in each class, Miller said.

Colorado State Patrol’s Angel Giffen talks at the car seat clinic in Greeley

Thanks to you, cold weather shelter housing guests every night

With the winter months upon us, the cold weather shelter is filling up with guests every night and it’s your donations that make it possible.

United Way of Weld County’s Weld’s Way Home partners with Catholic Charities to provide an emergency cold weather shelter, 2930 11th Ave., Evans. The cold weather shelter opened on Nov. 1, 2018, and is open to single men and single women ages 18 and older until April 15, 2019. Cold weather shelter hours are from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. daily.

At a capacity of 80, on Nov. 29, 76 guests were provided shelter marking the most guests in one night that month. Seventy-one guests were provided shelter on Dec. 12-13. As of Dec. 11, 197 unduplicated guests stayed at the shelter, and 524 meals were served. “Once we do hit capacity, we’re working on different options we can assist people between UWWC, North Colorado Health Alliance and Guadalupe Shelter so that they don’t have to sleep outside,” said Brandy Chaparro, housing navigation center coordinator at UWWC’s Weld’s Way Home.

Chaparro added that staff from North Colorado Health Alliance, North Range Behavioral Health and UWWC are at the shelter at night to help with needs, mental health issues, birth certificates and ID vouchers.

For more information or to volunteer to cook and serve meals, contact Monica Gerber, volunteer coordinator at Guadalupe Shelter at mgerber@ccdenver.org or at (970) 616-8606, or Chaparro at brandy@unitedway-weld.org or at (970) 573-6430.

UWWC does not exist without the generosity of our donors.

Last month, Barb called United Way of Weld County’s 2-1-1 Information and Referral program in need of transportation assistance. Barb doesn’t have a car, and for the last year, she’s walked everywhere - to get groceries, to go to the doctor and to get to job interviews. When she’s able, she makes use of the free single-use bus passes her local church offers. Unfortunately, the church often runs out, and she has to pick and choose when to use the limited number of passes she receives which can make arriving on time to interviews and appointments extremely difficult. Once the 2-1-1 resource navigator spoke with her, he was able to secure a 31-day bus pass from a local church for her. Without 2-1-1, Barb would not have known where to turn for help.
the children are not reading at grade level by fourth grade and tracks pretty darn closely to the poverty level in Weld County.”

Pilch said Colorado Reading Corps has proven nationwide to have an impact on early literacy for children. “We’re really excited about the promise that comes with this new program in our schools,” Pilch said.

Rick Bucher, instructional coach coordinator for Greeley-Evans School District 6, is so excited to have the program in the district. “Our goal is to get kids to be able to read fluently and for understanding by the third grade,” Bucher said, “We have other systems, tutoring options and alternative pathways for kids to catch up, but this is one more that laser-like focuses right on the kids that need it the most at those early grade levels. I think this is only going to get stronger. We’ve seen nothing but good.” Bucher said he’s so grateful to UWWC for its funding toward the program. “The ability to have extra intervention. There are so many kids that have so many needs, and every little bit helps,” Bucher said. “I can’t say thanks enough.”

Leticia Mercado, District 6 instructional coach, really likes the one-on-one aspect of the program. “These kids really need that special attention, and it’s a 20-minute session,” Mercado said. “I’m finding that it’s very effective.”

AmeriCorps tutor Carrie Dyer said Colorado Reading Corps is going very well for her and her students at Madison and she’s proud of the growth they’ve displayed. “Some kids didn’t seem to want to come at the beginning of the year,” Dyer said. “Now they look at me and they get a really big smile. Seeing the growth and seeing how much they’ve opened up has made all the hardships worth it. It’s an amazing experience for me and for the kids. I want to help them. I want them to love reading as much as I did when I was a kid.”

A big thanks to company employee campaigns for their support

United Way of Weld County thanks companies throughout the community for supporting us during the 2018-19 campaign drive. Here are three companies that put on successful employee campaigns:

Hensel Phelps supports multiple United Way of Weld County activities. The company has a team of employees who volunteer for Weld Project Connect and Day of Action. Its campaign activities this year included a lunch at Halloween, a chili cook-off and silent auction. “Since its founding, Hensel Phelps has been dedicated to corporate and social responsibility,” said Ronda Wells, campaign coordinator and senior accountant for Hensel Phelps. “We proudly support the communities in which we live, build and work. By supporting United Way, we are able to reach a multitude of agencies resulting in a collective impact to the community as a whole.”

Professional Finance Company runs an employee campaign that features many activities for employees. “Professional Finance Company (PFC) is such a huge advocate for United Way of Weld County because it is a great way to give back to people in need right here in our own community,” said Tiffany Wiggert, campaign coordinator and HR Generalist for PFC. “There are so many different ways for our employees to give back. Whether that be a cash donation during our campaign week, bringing in books, socks or hygiene items for the various United Way drives, a silent auction or one of our employees’ personal favorites which is volunteering for the Day of Action or Weld Project Connect.”

Anadarko Petroleum Corporation’s employee campaign includes pancake breakfasts, raffle drawings, presentations and encourages its employees to get involved. “We are proud to partner with the United Way of Weld County during our annual employee giving campaign,” said Amanda Gash, campaign coordinator and manager for social investment at Anadarko Petroleum Corporation. “Anadarko doubles the impact of every employees’ gift by matching it, dollar-for-dollar, to the United Way. It’s great to see our folks come together every year in support of an organization that plays such a critical role in the community.”

Please give today! www.UnitedWay-Weld.org
THANKS TO YOU

UNITED WAY IS WORKING TO CHANGE LIVES RIGHT HERE IN WELD COUNTY

THANK YOU TO OUR CORNERSTONE PARTNERS

Cornerstone Partners donate all or a portion of their corporate donation to help cover 100 percent of administrative and fundraising costs for the resources under our management, including this newsletter. This ensures that your donation goes directly to programs and services that benefit our community.


LEAVE YOUR LEGACY

When you make a gift to United Way of Weld County’s Legacy Endowment Fund, you are truly making a gift with a future! Your endowment gifts guarantee that financial support will remain readily available for the future needs of the community. If you are interested in any of our planned giving options, we will be pleased to work with you and your advisers to develop a planned gift that best suits your particular needs.

For more information or to discuss your needs in confidence, please contact Christi Smith, Vice President of Resource Development, at 970-304-6185 or christi@unitedway-weld.org