

TOGETHER WE ARE BUILDING A BETTER WELD COUNTY



Together we are building a better Weld County, one where children are reading to learn by the start of fourth grade, youth are working at good jobs by age 25, families have stable housing, older adults are aging well and people are connecting to the help they need.

United Way: Rising to meet the challenges of this time



*Melanie Woolman
President & CEO*

My sixth grade class was given a research assignment; I chose poverty as my topic. I found out that there are people across the world who live on less than \$1 per day and couldn't believe it! It was a pivotal moment that set me on my current path, from studying political science and international relations, to serving in El Salvador, to traveling around the globe with Semester at Sea.

Through these experiences, I learned that complex challenges are intersectional, and that it's important to listen to people's experience for addressing problems in an integrated way. Given this learning, it was soon after I arrived in Weld County in 2014 as an AmeriCorps member that I knew that I had found the right place to serve: United Way of Weld County. If you've been a part of our community for some time, you know that this is what United Way does: look at the broader picture; engage the community; work towards solving, rather than managing, the most difficult issues.

After eight years on United Way's staff, I am so glad to now be serving as president & CEO. I'm excited to continue working with our fantastic staff and board, and to connect more deeply with our donors, community business leaders, and the companies that support us through their corporate social responsibility programs. Over the past 37 years, Jeannine Truswell has established a strong foundation that United Way will continue to stand on. And we have a significant vision for the future that has been set by our community, for our community.

We are also entering a new time in Weld County, which this quarter's newsletter highlights. As we walk out of the shadow of these pandemic years, we know that there's more work to do to overcome its effects, particularly for those it touched most: children, tireless educators, frontline workers and

families who were already facing hard times. And with each challenge, we continue to see helping hands rise to meet them.

Weld County is a gem, and I am always impressed by the way people help each other. *As we go into this next chapter, you can trust that United Way will continue to be a good steward of your dollars.* There are many ways to participate. You can give – whether \$25 or \$250 or more, money builds the foundation that we wouldn't be here without. You can advocate – if you read something in this newsletter that is important to you, tell your friends about what's happening. You can volunteer – United Way manages the county-wide platform (www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/Volunteer) that can connect you to meaningful opportunities and wonderful partners.

United Way of Weld County cuts the path for working together towards sustainable change. Thank you for being on the journey as we move into the year to come.

Melanie Woolman



Ending Homelessness Even During the Pandemic

Foundation Spotlight: El Pomar Foundation

Thanks to El Pomar Foundation, both the Housing Navigation Center and the Northern Colorado Continuum of Care (NoCO CoC) were supported in their ending homelessness efforts during the pandemic.

Nechie Hall, a trustee with El Pomar in Colorado Springs and a regional trustee for El Pomar's North Regional Council, says homelessness is an issue that has come up time and again as they seek to impact Weld, Larimer and Boulder counties.

El Pomar funding during COVID-19 assisted United Way in expanding open hours at the Housing Navigation Center's cold weather shelter. And in 2021, El Pomar's support of the NoCO CoC unlocked access to emergency funding that in turn helped the continuum's 40+ partners permanently house more than 130 people.

"The way that United Way of Weld County advocates for the needs of its community and brings people together around a cause is truly inspiring," Nechie said. "By employing the Housing First strategy, **United Way and its Housing Navigation Center are approaching the issue in a way that provides those experiencing homelessness with housing as quickly as possible, which is the only way to end homelessness.**"

Thank you El Pomar Foundation for tirelessly working to enhance the lives of Coloradoans in Weld County and beyond.



Local Leadership for Your United Way

Board Member Spotlight: Deirdre Pilch

United Way: Why do you support United Way of Weld County?

Deirdre Pilch: I've watched United Way's impact in the community throughout my career. I started giving \$5 per month through a payroll deduction as a teacher in 1987. Now, United Way is still aligned with my work as superintendent of Greeley-Evans School District 6. Almost every area overlaps with the work we have to do.

UW: Why is it important for you to volunteer your time?

Deirdre: United Way has proven to be a great convener; when it comes to significant needs, or financial or social response to crises, United Way has been the one to bring people to

the table to solve complex problems. The cold weather shelter, for example, didn't have a consistent space, program or budget each year. United Way convened the community to figure it out.

UW: What is your goal as a board member?

Deirdre: It is very rewarding to see real outcomes and the data. To see resources come in and go out in ways that make a true difference. At Weld Project Connect for example – I'm getting emotional about it – it's not always easy to show vulnerability and ask for what you need. It was just an honor to be able to do something to help people that are bravely showing up to get help.



Dr. Deirdre Pilch has spent more than 30 years working in public education, from serving as a middle school Language Arts teacher and middle and high school principal, to being the superintendent of Greeley-Evans School District 6. Dr. Pilch and her husband, Jeff, and Pomeranian, Zoey, make their home in Greeley.

Invest in Weld County Today For Tomorrow. Donate today!

See enclosed envelope or donate online at www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/donatenow



Help Achieve Community-wide goals as Big as Weld County! **Would you make your year-end donation today?**

Building a better Weld County requires us all and our generosity of time and money. Would you make a year-end donation to United Way of Weld County so that together we can move further towards community-wide goals that are as big as Weld County herself? We can look forward to a day when...

- EVERY child is reading proficiently by 4th Grade
- EVERY youth is connected to a caring adult
- EVERY family has stable housing
- EVERY older adult has what is needed for a fulfilling life
- EVERY neighbor is connected with needed resources

Donations to United Way's work to increase the quality of child care provided throughout Weld County can receive a 50% State of Colorado tax credit. A donation of \$100 costs you only \$50. Learn more at www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/RGB8.



Donations to United Way's Housing Navigation Center where homelessness is ended and prevented can receive a 25% State of Colorado tax credit. A donation of \$100 costs you only \$75. Learn more at www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/WWH.



Together, in time, we can reach these Weld County-worthy goals.

Find out more at www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/BenefitsofGiving. Make your donation at www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/yearend or by calling 970-353-4300. Thank you for your generosity.

Get to Know Melanie Woolman, President & CEO

Watch Melanie Woolman being interviewed by Tony Garza of Garza Media Productions about how she developed her passion for being with people in their difficulties, why she thinks the United Way work is important, and what she hopes for United Way and Weld County.



www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/Melanie

Bringing HumanKind to Weld County Cornerstone Partner Spotlight: Chevron

Many are familiar with the name Chevron. What they may not know of is Chevron's commitment to community engagement, mental health, DEI training and education – where approximately 50% of their local funding is aimed.

In 2021, Chevron hosted a series of conversations to learn what was critical to residents in Northern Colorado. Those meetings inspired Chevron's local social investment areas, and in 2021 and 2022, Chevron supported United Way of Weld County because of its early childhood development and youth programs. "That's what's great about United Way. Like Chevron, they dive deep and work with others to learn of what's needed in the community," said Cary Baird, Chevron's community engagement and social investment advisor.

It's a philosophy that goes beyond social investment. "Across all levels and functions of Chevron's Rockies Business Unit, it is full of wonderful, giving people who care about and serve the community they live in. It's really a company-wide ethic," Cary added.

This ethic drives HumanKind, Chevron's giving program where employees can direct donations to any nonprofit they wish, and the company provides a 100 percent match. Chevron's support of United Way happens through this program as well as in a separate donation to United Way via its social investment program.

"It's apparent that United Way of Weld County plays a big, important role in the community," Cary continued. "There's no better example than during the pandemic. United Way was an absolute force during lockdowns."

Thank you to Chevron for your investment in the community and for helping United Way make an even bigger impact in Weld County and Northern Colorado.



Generosity and Service as a Way of Life

Donor Spotlight: Carol and Harold Evans

In the late 1970's while working for Hensel Phelps Construction, Harold Evans was tasked with heading up the employee giving campaign for United Way of Weld County. Over 40 years later, he and Carol, his wife, are still involved with United Way as donors and volunteers.

"It's the way we were both raised," Harold shared about his inspiration for getting involved. "Our families believed in community service." In the early 1980's, Harold joined the United Way board of directors and, as they were able, he and Carol became Leadership Givers. *"For those of us fortunate enough to donate, it also sends a message to other donors and grantors: that United Way is important to our community."*

As "dyed in the wool Coloradoans," Carol and Harold enjoy the mountains and skiing, and Carol is an avid gardener. Yet first and foremost, they call themselves active community participants. They give back where they can, and after 50 years in the community, haven't lost steam. Carol volunteers at Weld Food Bank and is on the Greeley/Weld Economic Development Action Partnership board, while Harold chairs the City of Greeley Water and Sewer board.

Harold's advice for a lifetime of service? "Look for places where you have some skill set, something you enjoy, and become a participant."



Harold and Carol Evans



- How much money did United Way help get to Weld County child care providers during 2021-2022 for increasing capacity and improving quality (hint: it's in the 7-figure range)?
- How many recreation programs received funding for scholarships for more vulnerable children and youth?
- How many guests have been helped back into housing since the Housing Navigation Center opened in 2019?
- Is your name on the Leaders in Giving list of donors?

Find out the answers to these questions and more by reading the 2021-2022 annual report at www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/AnnualReport.



Thanks to donors, United Way mobilizes the caring power of our community in five initiative areas, seeking permanent solutions to our most pressing human services challenges.



Early Childhood Development



Youth Success



Ending & Preventing Homelessness



Older Adults and Healthy Aging

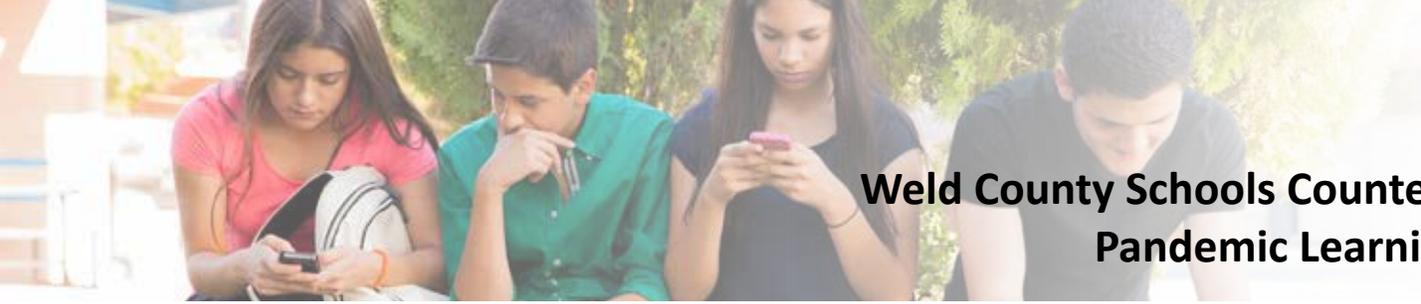


Access to Services

Invest in Weld County Today For Tomorrow. Donate today!

See enclosed envelope or donate online at www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/donatenow





Weld County Schools Counteracting Pandemic Learning Loss

Recently the first studies on the impact of COVID-19 on childhood learning were published. The results are concerning. In August, the Associated Press reported that some students lost “about half of an academic year of learning.” In October, the New York Times shared that the National Assessment of Educational Progress – known as “the nation’s report card” – revealed declines in both math and reading. In reading, only about 1 in 3 students met proficiency standards.

So, how are Weld County students faring?

“What we know is that some of the growth that we had accomplished prior to the pandemic, we have seen some steps backwards. We’re now working to get kids back on track,” shared Dr. Deirdre Pilch, who has been superintendent of Greeley-Evans School District 6 since 2015. “A lot of the children in our district never had preschool, some have never had formal education. So even before the pandemic, our work has always been about closing gaps for kids.” Deirdre further offered that the most recent data shows students are back to making gains.



Johan Van Nieuwenhuizen, superintendent of Weld County School District RE-1 (Platteville/Gilcrest/LaSalle) since 2019, highlighted the demands that the pandemic put on teachers. “In a matter of days,” he remembered

from 2020, “educators had to change from a traditional in-person teaching environment – from what they’d always known and mastered – to one that was online,” which for many was new and out of their comfort zone. From hybrid online/in-person teaching options to inconsistent attendance, “all these things had an impact on learning.”

As in-person classes have resumed, the challenges have shifted again. Schools are seeing a drop in student’s ability to engage in all-day learning, and a loss of attendance in middle and high school students. Many are experiencing anxiety as they return to busy hallways. As such, school leaders are paying careful attention not only to academic progress, but to staff and student’s well-being as a whole.

Yet to hear how Weld County schools are bridging the gap is nothing short of inspiring.

Robust after-school programs have started up at most Weld County schools. Some have added extracurricular activities – like a skateboarding club – to keep students motivated and engaged. Parent advocates are educating younger children and their families about the importance of attendance and grades, while high schools now have attendance advocates for older students. And for the first time, elementary schools have counselors on-hand to help young students’ total well-being, with every District 6 school having at least one half-time social worker to support students, families and staff as school resumes.

Much of this has been made possible by COVID-19 relief dollars, which are set to expire in 2024. These funds have also helped schools provide new programming for staff, like therapeutic services, legal and financial advice, child care and even pet care options. Plus,

the addition of cloud-based reading and math intervention programs are giving teachers more tools to help their students get back on track.

When asked about the future of learning for Weld County students, both Deirdre and Johan, who are also United Way of Weld County board members, used the same word for what they feel: hope.



“My predominant feeling is hope,” Johan said, noting the importance of what the pandemic helped us learn about education. “We realized that teachers have a special skill set to help students through the learning process. The pandemic highlighted how, especially for students who struggle with reading, technology alone is not going to get them there. Students need human connection.”

“I’m very hopeful,” Deirdre echoed. When she recently met with a group of high school seniors – who were in 9th Grade when schools went remote – she was impressed by their resilience.

“We have the resources,” Dierdre offered with energy. “We have data that shows these interventions work. Our educators do so much, and as a result, we’re going to see a big difference through the work we’re doing, no doubt.”





Weld Food Bank

Weld Food Bank: Delivering Food and Well-being

Every day, Weld Food Bank volunteers gather to carefully select produce, meat, baked goods and dairy items. These are added to shelf-stable food boxes designed by the USDA, then delivered to about 500 homebound older adults who can't physically drive to one of Weld Food Bank's locations.

For these older adults, living on a fixed and limited income often means having to choose between buying food or paying for rent, medicine, utilities and transportation. Studies show that their health care costs could rise by 121%, due to the health risks of food insecurity.

Plus, what volunteers do is not only about food. **Many older adults lack family or other support systems, and since Weld Food Bank volunteers deliver food boxes to the same individuals each month, they provide vital social connections as well.** Many residents call in to thank volunteers for their deliveries and their time.

You can be the difference in the life of a Weld County older adult. To become a volunteer or to learn more about how to support Weld Food Bank, visit volunteer.unitedway-weld.org and search "food bank."



211 Colorado has helped Coloradans for 20 years

Founded in 2002, 211 Colorado has helped Coloradans connect to the human services that they need to keep their housing, jobs, health and more for 20 years. Since the 2-1-1 dial code became active in Colorado, 211 Colorado has assisted over 3 million Colorado families and today provides border-to-border coverage, serving all of Colorado's 64 counties.

A comprehensive information and referral service that connects users to an exhaustive listing of more than 8,000 services throughout the state, 211 Colorado streamlines access to nonprofit and governmental assistance by providing one central location where Coloradans can get connected to opportunities for keeping their lives on track. **Because of 211 Colorado, more workers keep their jobs, more older adults are connected to their communities and more children live in families that are stably housed.**

With seven partnering organizations and four contact centers statewide, anyone can make use of 211 Colorado via phone (dial 2-1-1), text (send zip code to 898-211) or at the www.211Colorado.org website. Trained 211 Colorado resource navigators assist individuals, families and service providers

who are seeking community services in times of need such as rent and utility support, help finding food resources, adult and child day care options, legal and tax assistance, natural disasters and more. The service is available in English, Spanish and other languages.

211 Colorado offering organizations include Hilltop Community Resources in Grand Junction, Mile High United Way, Pikes Peak United Way, Senior Resource Development Agency in Pueblo, United Way of Larimer County, United Way of Southwest Colorado and United Way of Weld County. Visit www.211Colorado.org or contact Kayla McIlvaine, 211 Colorado program specialist at Mile High United Way, at kayla.mcilvaine@unitedwaydenver.org to find out more.



CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF
CONNECTING COLORADANS TO HELP

Invest in Weld County Today For Tomorrow. Donate today!

See enclosed envelope or donate online at www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/donatenow



Greeley-Weld Habitat for Humanity Breaks New Ground

Following the 2013 Northern Colorado floods, Greeley-Weld Habitat for Humanity and the City of Evans teamed up to replace some of the affordable housing that had been destroyed. Together with multi-family home builder Commonwealth Companies, they replaced 95 townhomes, cottages and single-family homes through the Mission Springs project.

The Mission Springs community development model has now blossomed into a bold move to advance affordable housing in Weld County. “Greeley-Weld Habitat has developed a full-circle partnership model that substantially increases affordable housing opportunities in the communities that we serve,” shared Cheri Witt-Brown, Greeley-Weld Habitat’s executive director. “We are bringing together a coalition of business, nonprofit, governmental and faith-based organizations to plan for and

build Hope Springs, a 42-acre, 491-unit model development.” Hope Springs will address housing need for a number of Coloradoans, 86% of whom shared in a statewide survey that housing costs are a huge concern.

In Hope Springs, 491 families will build generational wealth through homeownership and move into a thriving environment. The community will include an on-site child care center, a mini soccer pitch, and a frisbee park and playgrounds, all walkable to shopping and schools.

The need for affordable housing in Colorado is great, with Weld County alone needing 2,500 more affordable units within the next few years. Cheri is undaunted. “We now have a partnership model that can be duplicated across the state and nation. Plus we want to show that affordable housing doesn’t mean ‘less-than,’” she recently said in a BizWest interview.

In partnership with its private sector and community partners, county-wide Greeley-Weld Habitat, which is currently celebrating its 35th year, will deliver 105 affordable units by 2023, and an additional 495 over the next five years. All 600 of these will be for families in desperate need of affordable and high-quality homes.

The impact will be felt by everyone. “One of the overarching goals is to demonstrate that affordable, workforce communities that allow the continuum of housing from rentals to homeownership will economically benefit the community as a whole,” Cheri added. “Through Hope Springs, Greeley-Weld Habitat and Richmark Companies, the project’s private sector partner, will invest over \$100 million in land development and new construction, significantly impacting the local economy.”



Newly Renovated Housing Navigation Center Grand Opening on December 14

With the beginning of the cold weather shelter service on November 15, the newly renovated Housing Navigation Center (HNC) is now fully functioning. The HNC is located at 870 28th Street in Greeley. Because of additional City of Greeley funding, for the 2022-2023 cold weather season the HNC will be open to our unhoused neighbors 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, with evening meals and beds available from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. Daytime services will continue to be offered Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

A low-barrier space that is available to anyone 18 years and older, **our more vulnerable neighbors can access warm meals, clothing donations and housing resources all in one location.** Volunteer opportunities include serving nightly meals and monthly Good Neighbor Cleanups. Find out more and sign-up at volunteer.unitedway-weld.org. There will be a HNC grand opening on Wednesday, December 14, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m., with tours beginning at 4:00 p.m. and a short program at 5:30 p.m. Share your intent to attend at www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/HNCGrand.





United Way of Weld County
PO Box 1944 - Greeley, CO 80632

Quarterly news and an opportunity to support your Weld County neighbors enclosed. Together we are building a better Weld County.

GIVE

Your gift funds the programs and initiatives that make life better for 1 in 6 people in Weld County who need help.
www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/donatenow

VOLUNTEER

You can help people in your own community. Tell us what you love, and we'll pair you with the perfect volunteer opportunity.
www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/volunteer

LEAVE A LEGACY

Your legacy gift ensures that the issues and community you care about most will enjoy continued support after you are gone.
Contact us at 970-353-4300

Want to know more about United Way's big picture vision for Weld County?

Read it at www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/thefuture.

CORNERSTONE PARTNERS

ENSURING YOUR DONATION IS GOING DIRECTLY TO THOSE WHO NEED IT

With cash and in-kind donations, Cornerstone Partners generously provide foundational support for United Way's work. This means that your donation is used only for assisting our more vulnerable Weld County neighbors.

\$50,000 +



\$25,000 – \$49,999



\$15,000 – \$24,999

Chick-fil-A Greeley - Flood and Peterson

\$10,000 – \$14,999

1310 KFKA - Chevron - Front Range Roofing Systems
Ghent Chevrolet Cadillac - Honda of Greeley - Kaiser Permanente
McDonald Toyota - Phelps-Tointon - Townsquare Media
Vestas Blades America - Yoder Family of Companies

\$5,000 – \$9,999

365 REAL Property Management - First Interstate Bank - FNBO
Hensel Phelps - Pepsi Beverages Company - PFC USA
Property Technica - Tigre FM 102.1 and 1450 AM

Connect with us!

