



# Invitation to Engage and Invest

**How do you want to invest in youth success efforts in your Weld County community?**



“As someone who loves the Weld County community and has supported different organizations, there is no better steward of my investment than United Way. I trust them as they put community first.”

- Dick Monfort  
Owner/Chairman & CEO  
Colorado Rockies





## Connecting youth to caring adults

Youth are graduating high school and transitioning to a successful adulthood by age 25

### Highlights

- If a student fails a reading or math course in the middle grades, they are more likely to drop out of high school.
- The rational, decision-making part of the brain isn't fully developed until around age 25; as such, it is important to support students well into young adulthood, and especially more vulnerable youth.
- Over 1 in 4 Weld County youth do not have a connection to a caring adult.

**Mia arrived at a local youth serving community garden to complete a mandatory service requirement not knowing what to expect. Mentored throughout the summer by staff and volunteers, Mia enjoyed the experience so much that she continued volunteering throughout the winter, well beyond her required hours. Mia learned work skills and resume building, even practicing interview questions. Now, a year after stepping onto the garden property, Mia has a paying job with a local business that she found out about from garden staff.**

### The Why

For their life success, it is critical that youth have an adult to go to for support when they are facing a significant challenge. This caring connection increases mental health and makes it more likely that each youth graduates high school and has a good job by age 25.

**By 2024, the Thrive by 25 community-wide goal is to increase the percentage of Weld County youth who have a connection to a caring adult to a solid 75%.**





## Challenges

In the United States, earning a high school diploma is perhaps the most important determinant of a person’s future. The median annual income of a high school dropout in 2020 was \$32,188, compared with \$40,612 for a high school graduate. In Weld County, more than 1 in 4 youth do not have a trusted adult that they can get assistance from when facing a challenge that they cannot handle on their own, putting their mental and even physical health at risk.

This situation is difficult for each student and is costly for our community. High

school dropouts are more likely than those who graduate to be arrested or have a child while still a teenager, both of which incur additional financial and social costs. The current pool of qualified high school graduates is neither large enough nor skilled enough to supply our nation’s workforce.

**How do we, as a community, respond in urgency to change this situation? How do we measure if we are succeeding? How do we solve this challenge?**



Connecting youth to caring adults

## Investments

The Thrive by 25 shared effort includes over 20 organizations. Investments are made in a number of programs with county-wide impact that lead to **more young adults succeeding in life by age 25**. Activities include:

decreasing learning loss and increasing knowledge at after school and summer experiences

building relationships for integrating refugee and immigrant youth

mentoring for mental health and building life skills

providing STEM education

supporting students in their higher education pursuits

participating in recreation programs



Your investment in United Way supports these critical Thrive by 25 activities and will help our Weld County neighbors succeed.





Building the foundation for early childhood success



Connecting youth to caring adults



Preventing and ending homelessness



Helping older adults age well in our community



Linking people to the help that they need

Responding in urgency to community need – be it a natural disaster or a health crisis or an ongoing challenge – is typical for your United Way. Every day we do so in five initiative areas:

- **Reading Great by 8** – Building the foundation for early childhood success.
- **Thrive by 25** – Connecting youth to caring adults.
- **Weld's Way Home** – Preventing and ending homelessness.
- **Aging Well** – Helping older adults age well in our community.
- **Connecting Weld** – Linking people to the help that they need.

**Will you join us in investing in these most important efforts?** You may do so in one or more of several ways:

- Donate one-time or monthly by visiting [www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/donate](http://www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/donate) or by mailing a check to United Way of Weld County, PO Box 1944, Greeley, CO, 80632.
- Contribute every pay period through payroll deduction at your workplace.
- As a Leadership Giver investing \$500 per year or more—visit [www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/leaders](http://www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/leaders) for details, benefits and special incentives.
- Support the effort through an estate, planned, or larger one-time gift.
- Have a workplace campaign at your business or become a corporate partner, so that the donations of your friends and neighbors go further.

Plus there are numerous volunteer opportunities in which you and, if you are a business owner or manager, your employees can get involved. Find out more at [www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/volunteer](http://www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/volunteer).

Contact Travis Hitt at 970-304-6185 or [THitt@UnitedWay-Weld.org](mailto:THitt@UnitedWay-Weld.org) with questions and to find out more about how you can partner with your United Way of Weld County.

**With your engagement and investment, together we can create a better Weld County for everyone.** We hope that you will join us.

Sara Seely  
Chair, Board of Directors  
Business Development, FNBO



Melanie Woolman  
President & CEO  
United Way of Weld County

