

**HOW TO  
LIVE UNITED:  
JOIN HANDS.  
OPEN YOUR HEART.  
LEND YOUR MUSCLE.  
FIND YOUR VOICE.  
GIVE 10% GIVE 100%  
GIVE 110%  
GIVE AN HOUR.  
GIVE A SATURDAY.  
THINK OF WE BEFORE ME.  
REACH OUT A HAND TO ONE AND  
INFLUENCE  
THE CONDITION OF ALL.  
GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.  
LIVE UNITED.**



## Community Investment Report

August 2009

### VOLUNTEER

"United Way has given me so many opportunities to help people right here in my community. There are volunteer opportunities around every corner!"

- Brandi Carey,  
First Bristol  
Federal Credit Union



#### Why is volunteering so important?

**When we reach out a hand to one, we can influence the condition of all.**

Here at the United Way of West Central Connecticut, we have a small staff, so we can keep costs down. However, that means we need the support of volunteers to help us make a difference in the communities we serve - Bristol, Burlington, Plainville and Plymouth.

The estimated dollar value of volunteer time was \$20.25 per hour in 2008 (Independent Sector). That means, if you volunteer for one hour per week, you are "donating" over \$1,000 to your community each year!

And volunteering doesn't just help your community! The benefits you receive are numerous - make important networking contacts; learn or develop skills; teach your skills to others; enhance your résumé; gain work experience; build self-esteem and self-confidence; meet new people; feel needed and valued; and most importantly, make a difference in someone's life.

#### How can you get involved?

Give an hour. Give a Saturday. Give your best. United Way is working to advance the common good by focusing on education, income and health: the building blocks for a good life. But we can't do it alone. We need the heads, hands and hearts of committed people like you to help us tackle the problems facing our community.

If you are interested in finding local opportunities, log on to our website [www.uwestcentralct.org](http://www.uwestcentralct.org) and click on the Volunteer tab.

GIVE.

ADVOCATE.

VOLUNTEER.

***Every day, ordinary people are accomplishing extraordinary things by volunteering. You don't have to have super-human talents to get involved in your community. We all have special talents. Things we can do to help. Put your special skills to work for your community. Below are 26 ideas to help you LIVE UNITED:***

### ***EDUCATION - Helping children and youth achieve their potential***

1. Invite a friend, neighbor, family member to attend a school board meeting with you.
2. Organize a book drive with your family, co-workers, school, club or faith community.
3. Read to children in your family, at your library, or with a local non-profit engaged in child care or literacy.
4. Purchase school supplies for our Adopt-A-Child Back to School Program to help children in need.
5. Enroll your child in a summer reading program at the local library.
6. Be an advocate for Born Learning by telling parents that everyday moments can be teaching moments.
7. Allow a high school student to shadow you at work and show them how you apply things you learned in school.
8. Take the children in your life to a local exhibit, theater or museum (like the Imagine Nation Museum).
9. Be a mealtime partner for a pre-school class to help kids develop social skills.
10. Mentor an at-risk youth at your neighborhood school.

### ***INCOME - Helping families become financially stable and independent***

11. Bring a child in your life to a bank to have a tour and open up a savings account.
12. Tutor at an adult literacy or technology program.
13. Donate new or gently used professional clothing to an organization assisting individuals in seeking employment.
14. Serve as a greeter at a free tax preparation community coalition site to help low-income families acquire up to thousands of dollars in earned income tax credits.
15. Volunteer to prepare tax returns for low-income families.
16. Contact your local representative about an issue affecting working people in your community.
17. Ask your bank if they offer free checking and savings accounts to low-income families and encourage them to start if they don't.
18. Engage with a middle school to teach a class on how to save money and watch with them as it grows.
19. Help senior citizens learn how to detect and prevent fraud.

### ***HEALTH - Improving people's health***

20. Contact your local health clinic to offer assistance in anything from distributing flyers to serving on an event committee to writing a letter to the editor on their behalf.
21. Check into what healthy snacks are or are not available in your local schools and call on others to promote tasty healthy meals and fun exercise at school.
22. Start a walking group for friends, families, neighbors and/or community members that meets regularly at a set time and location. Soon the group will exist even if you can't make it!
23. Get a flu shot.
24. Buy pedometers for your friends and have a fun competition for who can walk the most steps.
25. Purchase personal care items such as deodorant, toothbrushes and soap and drop them off at the local shelter, such as St. Vincent DePaul Mission of Bristol.
26. Help transport families to necessary medical appointments so children can have proper screening and immunizations.

**BRISTOL** ◆ **BURLINGTON** ◆ **PLAINVILLE** ◆ **PLYMOUTH**

### Calling all Young Professionals

*Want to meet other local young professionals in your area? Want to do a bit of networking while having fun? Want to find volunteer opportunities that help make your community a better place? Then we want you!*

*The Young Professionals for United Way is currently recruiting new members who are between 21 and 35 years old and are interested in networking and volunteer opportunities. Call Colleen at (860) 582-9559 ext. 406 to get involved today!*

For more information:

200 Main Street, Bristol, CT 06010  
(P) 860-582-9559 • (F) 860-582-6561  
[www.uwestcentralct.org](http://www.uwestcentralct.org)