

United Way of St. Charles

Frequently Asked Questions



Who is the United Way?

There are over 1,300 independent United Way organizations throughout the country. United Way of St. Charles serves only St. Charles Parish and is governed by a Board of Directors who are volunteers from this community. In addition, the United Way of St. Charles is independently audited yearly, and adheres to the highest level of ethical standards.

What does the United Way of St. Charles do?

The United Way of St. Charles does three main things:

1. We provide financial support and other resources to partner agencies providing direct services in our community.
2. We help coordinate the agencies so that we do not end up having many agencies trying to serve the same need while other needs are being ignored.
3. The United Way of St. Charles itself runs programs to address needs that are not being worked on with an emphasis on helping people help themselves. We emphasize "proactive" programs that keep folks from having a "need".

Who governs United Way?

Volunteers from the community, both residents and employees of local businesses, govern United Way of St. Charles by serving on its volunteer Board of Directors and policy-making committees.

What is a "partner agency"?

A partner agency is an agency that United Way of St. Charles works with to serve the community. A few examples of our partner agencies are the Boy Scouts, St. Charles Community Health Center and the ARC.

To see the complete list of our partner agencies, visit www.uwaysc.org.

How do agencies receive funding?

After requesting affiliation with United Way, agencies must go through a formal review process. Each agency must submit to an annual independent financial audit and provide services to the community at a reasonable cost. These agencies also submit ongoing reports to United Way of St. Charles to ensure high standards of stability, accountability and quality service.

Why should I donate to the United Way of St. Charles instead of just donating to a particular agency?

We would never tell you not to donate to an agency you feel strongly about; but by donating to the United Way of St. Charles, you can be sure of the following:

- The United Way of St. Charles provides a great deal of oversight and asks for reports from our partner agencies to ensure your funds are being protected and used as promised.
- The United Way of St. Charles also develops and operates programs that target specific needs in St. Charles Parish. We emphasize "proactive" programs designed to help people help themselves. This "teach a man to fish" vision has led us to begin programs like Success By 6, which provides

early learning opportunities for children; Imagination Library, which sends any child a book each month until they turn five; Project Transition and Financial Stability Partnership, which provides job/life skills training to adults. These programs would not exist without donations to the United Way of St. Charles.

- The United Way of St. Charles works to avoid "duplication of services"- in other words, we try to work with agencies to avoid having several agencies doing the same thing. For example, it's inefficient to have 3 agencies providing one service and none providing another important service. The United Way of St. Charles works to coordinate these things.
- You can still donate to the United Way of St. Charles and designate your funds go to a particular agency.

Is my donation tax deductible?

Yes. Our organization is a 501(c)3 and your donation may be tax deductible. Please consult a tax professional with specific tax questions.

What percent of my donation goes to United Way of St. Charles' "administrative costs"?

Less than 10% of your donation goes to administrative salaries.

What percent of my donation stays in St. Charles Parish?

All of it, unless you ask us to send it to an agency outside of St. Charles Parish.

I heard a story about a United Way that did not fund Boy Scouts or wasted money on this or that- is that true?

Our United Way is the United Way of St. Charles Parish. All United Ways conform to certain standards, but we are all independent 501(c)3 organizations. If you read a story about a United Way, make sure it is about the United Way of St. Charles.

Every decision about the operations of the United Way of St. Charles is made by local leaders in our community, and we practice transparency in every step of our operations.

Oh, and we do fund local Boy Scouts troops, Girl Scouts, 4-H, and many more agencies providing great services to our parish.

I saw an e-mail (or Facebook posting) that the CEO of the United Way makes like a bazillion dollars. That's crazy! Why should I donate to your United Way?

One thing many people who read that e-mail miss, even IF the salary figures are true, is that the e-mail is in reference to the CEO of a DIFFERENT United Way: "United Way Worldwide". Since all United Ways are INDEPENDENT non-profits, your donations to United Way of St. Charles stay right here in St. Charles Parish.

So how do designations to a specific United Way Partner Agency work? I mean: if I designate my donation to Catholic Charities, how does that get counted in reference to their Allocation from United Way?

Here's the easy way to think of Designations. Our Community Investment Committee & Board of Directors approve an amount of money to be allocated to a Partner Agency. Then we look at the amount that donors designated to that Partner Agency. The agency then gets the LARGER of these 2 amounts. In short-- when you designate to an agency, you guarantee that agency gets at least the amount of your designation, but they nearly always get more.