



UNITED WAY
of the Black Hills

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Nonprofit 360: A ROADMAP TO SUSTAINABILITY

In 2024, United Way of the Black Hills, in partnership with the John T. Vucurevich Foundation and Innovative NonProfit, launched Nonprofit 360: A Roadmap to Sustainability. Under the instruction of Innovative NonProfit, this grant-funded initiative aims to strengthen nonprofits across Butte, Custer, Fall River, Lawrence, Meade and Pennington counties. Nonprofit 360 supported over 172 agencies in 2024, fostering sustainable growth and empowering nonprofits to meet community needs effectively. This program offers four free paths to build capacity and leadership:

Leadership Training: Online and in-person Development Dimensions International® (DDI) courses to develop effective nonprofit leaders.

Nonprofit Connections: Quarterly workshops for skills training, networking, and practical application.

Bridges to Boards™: Connects nonprofits with emerging leaders for board service through comprehensive training.

Nonprofit Co-op: Tailored coaching and consulting for United Way-funded agencies.



Nonprofit 360

A leadership initiative by UWBH, JTVF, & INP

Black Hills Reads: HELPS TO ENSURE CHILDREN ARE PROFICIENT READERS BY THE END OF THE THIRD GRADE.

Black Hills Reads (BHR) brings together partners across many sectors to strengthen the systems that serve early learners and promote literacy opportunities for children under the age of nine in the Black Hills. In 2024, more than 10,500 books were distributed to children through BHR programs and collaborations.

To learn more about the Black Hills Reads initiative, scan the QR code.



EveryDay Strong: YOU CAN START BUILDING EVERYDAY RESILIENCE BY FOSTERING SAFETY, CONNECTION, AND CONFIDENCE IN THE CHILDREN AROUND YOU.

We're on a mission to build resilient kids and strong communities. United Way has collaborated with a group of experts on anxiety, depression, and psychological well-being to develop these activities for you. In 2024, the EveryDay Strong program impacted the lives of 195 individuals.

To learn more about the EveryDay Strong initiative, scan the QR code.



Imagination Library: SINCE 1995, DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY HAS BECOME THE PREMIER EARLY CHILDHOOD BOOK-GIFTING PROGRAM.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a program funded by United Way of the Black Hills to allow children ages 0-5 to receive an age-appropriate book mailed to their home once a month. In 2024, approximately 4,860 children were enrolled and received a book every month.

To learn more about Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, scan the QR code.



YOU CAN MAKE
A DIFFERENCE.

THANK YOU,
SIGNATURE
SPONSORS:



COEUR WHARF®



COMMUNITIES SERVED:



68 Projects
968 Volunteers
24 Sponsors
An Impact
of \$226,928



Our biggest volunteer event is Month of Caring every September. We have nearly 1,000 volunteers throughout the Black Hills volunteer their time to help the community.

Month of Caring is an incredible opportunity to tackle large and small projects that otherwise may not get accomplished. This is an opportunity for volunteers to plan creative service projects and make a huge difference in their community.

Letter

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JOHN CASS

In 2024, United Way of the Black Hills deepened its commitment to connecting people to possibility across six counties and their communities. With the support of generous donors, passionate volunteers, and dedicated partners, we addressed the needs of over **124,675 individuals and families**, tackling challenges in housing, food insecurity, mental health, and childcare. This year, we continued to drive impact through our key programs, including:

- **Dolly Parton's Imagination Library:** Delivered thousands of books to children's homes across the Black Hills, fostering a love for reading.
- **Black Hills Reads:** A community-wide movement to improve early literacy outcomes for young learners.
- **Early Learner Rapid City:** A collaborative effort to increase access to high-quality early learning, building a stronger foundation for children from birth to age five.
- **EveryDay Strong Mental Health Workshops:** Expanded to support mental well-being across our communities.
- **Nonprofit 360: A Roadmap to Sustainability:** A new initiative to develop nonprofit leadership and ensure long-term impact.

Together, we championed bold ideas, proving that when we live here and give here, it truly stays here.

As we celebrated 80 years of service and more than \$71 million raised since our founding, 2024 became a year of impact and imagination. Our partnership with Innovative NonProfit supported over 170 agencies with tools to grow stronger and more sustainable. At the same time, we laid the foundation for the future by exploring new ways to engage our community, strengthen nonprofit leadership, and expand support for working families. United Way of the Black Hills is leaning into innovation with purpose — committed to a future where everyone can thrive. United is the Way forward.

OUR PARTNER AGENCIES:



Your Legacy, Your Way:

Planned Giving with United Way of the Black Hills

When you support United Way of the Black Hills, you're investing in a stronger, more resilient community — for today and for generations to come. Planned giving offers a powerful way to extend your impact and ensure your values continue to uplift others into the future. There are many ways to give that can fit your stage of life, financial goals, and charitable intentions:

- Beneficiary Designations
- Bequests
- Charitable Gift Annuities or Trusts
- IRA Required Minimum Distributions
- Life Insurance

FREEWILL

Through our partnership with FreeWill, you can create your legal will online — for free — and include a lasting gift to United Way of the Black Hills if you choose. It's simple, secure, and only takes about 20 minutes.

A Gift That Lives On

Planned giving is more than a donation — it's a legacy of hope for the Black Hills region. No matter your age or income level, you can make a lasting impact.

To learn more or begin planning your legacy, contact Mari Sheldon at 605-545-9048 or mari@unitedwayblackhills.org.

To email Mari about your legacy plan, scan the QR code.



Impact Story:

Custer County Library 1,000 BOOKS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN

The 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program continues to make a powerful impact by nurturing a love of reading in young children and supporting families on their literacy journey. Recent improvements — such as expanding the selection of incentive books — have given children more choices when celebrating milestones, keeping them engaged and motivated.

Colleen P., a local parent, shared how the program has sparked a deeper love for reading in her son, Reuben:

“We are so glad that we enrolled Reuben in the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program. He was already interested in reading, but this was just what we needed to ignite his love of it. He's excited for nap time and bedtime now, knowing we always read beforehand. I've watched new concepts click for him, and I'm confident his interest will carry into his school years and beyond. This program is such an ingenious way to improve literacy in our kiddos!”

Stories like Colleen's highlight how the program provides structure, motivation, and a sense of achievement — simply by encouraging families to track books and celebrate progress.

One especially heartwarming moment came from a young reader named Aaron. Each time he reached a milestone, he couldn't wait to choose his prize book — not just for himself, but to share with his cousin during visits. For Aaron, reading became a way to connect and show love.

Aaron's story reflects the true heart of 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten — it's not just about hitting reading goals. It's about joyful moments, meaningful connections, and the lifelong gift of literacy.

To read more Impact Stories, scan the QR code.

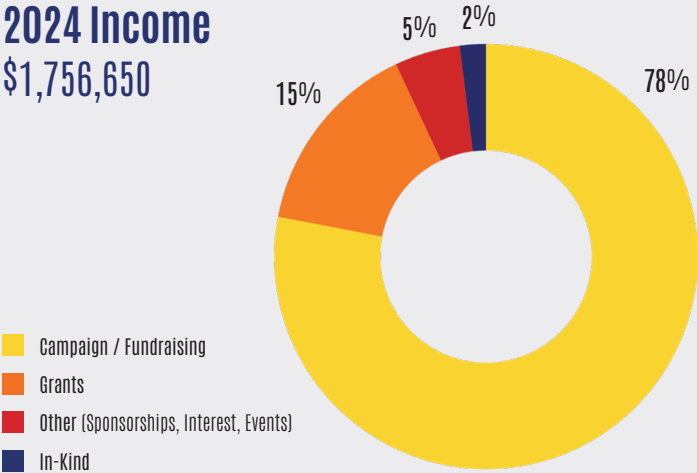


FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2024

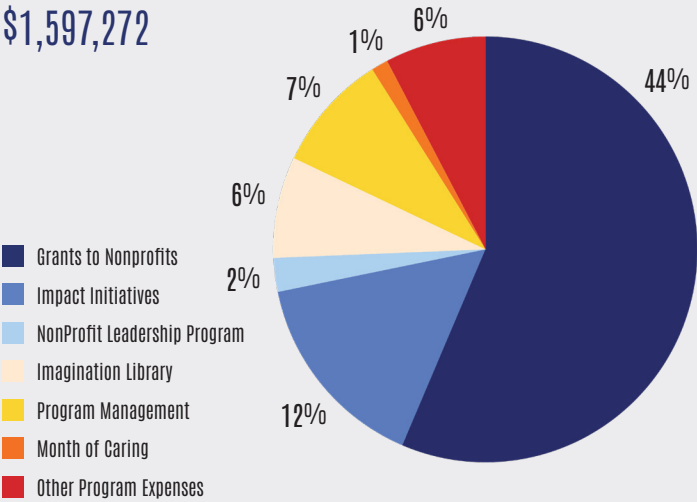
Our Commitment to Transparency:

At United Way of the Black Hills, we know our donors trust us to utilize their donations efficiently and effectively. We pride ourselves in our efforts to remain transparent.

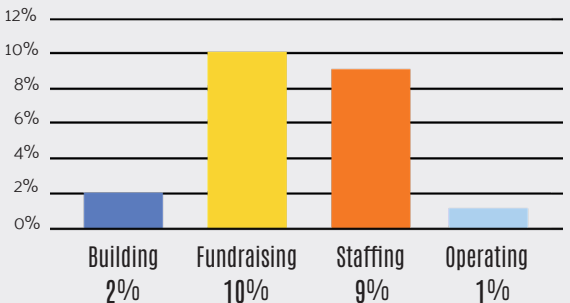
2024 Income \$1,756,650



2024 Program Expense \$1,597,272



2024 Operating Expenses \$460,386





THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS FOR YOUR SUPPORT.
To view our list of donors at Leadership levels, scan this QR code.

2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jason Sanderson, PRESIDENT
Black Hills Energy

Dr. Joe Dlugos, VICE PRESIDENT
South Dakota Mines

Dr. Craig Bailey, PAST PRESIDENT
Novum Nano

Sammi Langendorf, TREASURER
Black Hills Electric Coop.

Salena Osieczonek, SECRETARY
Scheels

Wes Ashton
Black Hills Energy

Andy Becker
Rapid City Police Department

Tara Bland
Black Hills Energy

Lori Burnham
Monument Health

Amber Cornella
City of Rapid City

Jason Culberson
Rapid City Fire Department

Alenda Derby
Monument Health

Kelly Frye
Black Hills Special Services

Fawna Geigle
First Interstate Bank

Keri Jackson
Dacotah Bank

Kalli Ketel
Coeur Wharf

Joel Landeen
City of Rapid City

Shelley LeFebre
First Interstate Bank

Brenda Meier
Liberty Superstores

Austin Olivier
Black Hills Insurance Agency

Christine Papineau
Monument Health

Michelle Thomson
Black Hills Badlands & Tourism Assn.

THANK YOU TO OUR NEWLY RETIRED BOARD MEMBERS

Bethany Bloom

Lori Casavan

Lauren Ebert

Joyce Ehlers

Kevin Popp

Clifford Rhoades

Valerie Seales

Jason Seamans

Lorie Vega

United Way of the Black Hills' mission is to unite people and resources to improve lives in the Black Hills by delivering measurable long-term solutions to community issues in education, financial stability and health.

COMMUNITY CABINETS

In addition to our Board of Directors, UWBH utilizes four Community Cabinets to connect with each region in the Black Hills. Two representatives from each Cabinet sit on the Board.

Rapid City

Brenda Meier, CHAIR
Liberty Superstores

Keri Jackson, VICE CHAIR
Dacotah Bank

LaDonna Coates
Black Hills Federal Credit Union

Kaye Francis
BankWest

AJ Jacobs
ASI

Desiree Mendel
Aflac

Monique Schneider
Liberty Superstores

Danni Weaver
First Interstate Bank

Samantha Young
Black Hills Energy

Kayla Zittel
BankWest

Northern Hills

Kalli Ketel, CHAIR
Coeur Wharf

Shelley LeFebre, VICE CHAIR
First Interstate Bank

Suzanne Campbell
Monument Health

Linsey Eckhart
BankWest

Sandra Kringen
Black Hills State University

Sonja Merrow
Northern Hills FCU

Southern Hills

Lori Burnham, CHAIR
Monument Health

Tara Bland, VICE CHAIR
Black Hills Energy

Bridget Bender
Black Hills Energy

Sammi Langendorf
Black Hills Electric Coop.

Dawn Murray
Custer Area Chamber of Commerce

Alexander Nelson
Fall River Health Services

Patty Ressler
Black Hills Parks & Forest Assn

Heather Thompson
Custer County Library

Sturgis

Alenda Derby, CHAIR
Monument Health

Fawna Geigle, VICE CHAIR
First Interstate Bank

Robin Baldwin
Black Hills Rally & Gold

Kylie Corkins
The HomeSlice Group

Amanda Mahaffy
Black Hills Special Services

STAFF

John Cass
Executive Director

Kathy Cruse
Director of Finance

Mari Sheldon
Director of Development

Carmen Keehner
Database Manager

Hanna Glissendorf
Director of Early Education

Lisa Stanley
Early Education Project Manager

Brittney Jayo
Engagement and Operations
Coordinator

Edwina Kertzman
Database Assistant

Terri Berg
Administrative Assistant



To Donate,
Scan this
QR CODE

