



United Way of  
Southwest Michigan



# SPECIAL EVENTS GUIDE

## SPECIAL EVENTS MOTIVATE AND PROMOTE TEAM SPIRIT

Running a United Way Campaign is a good way for United Way of Southwest Michigan and your organization to bring employees together to support our community and have fun! Include one or more special events in your United Way Campaign to help promote team spirit, raise awareness, and motivate your coworkers to donate; bringing change to our community.

We know that Employee Campaign Chairs (ECC's) and their committees are the real experts when it comes to special events. Your enthusiasm and creativity are what make an event great! If you are looking to try something new this year, please review the list of event ideas to help spark your creativity. A special thank you to all of the volunteers who contributed their ideas!

## WHEN TO ADD INCENTIVES

- To encourage first-time donors to make a gift
- To encourage a pledge increase or a leadership gift
- When employees attend meetings and campaign events
- To encourage colleagues to turn in pledge form on time
- To educate colleagues about United Way

## NO BUDGET INCENTIVE IDEAS

- Casual/Jean Day
- VIP parking spaces
- Pass for a long lunch/late arrival/leave early
- Office pot luck
- Car started/windows scraped every day for a week
- Donated items or gift certificates

## WHERE TO GET INCENTIVES

- UWSM & our store at [www.unitedwaystore.com](http://www.unitedwaystore.com)
- Ask your vendors & local businesses for a donation
- Ask managers & co-workers to provide an incentive
- Use company merchandise or apparel
- Redeem company credit card points for prizes/gift cards

## INCENTIVE IDEAS WITH A BUDGET

- Free food - host a luncheon or food cart
- Extra vacation time
- Movie theatre passes
- Gift certificates to local restaurants, spas, gas, etc.
- Tickets to sporting events/shows
- Weekend getaways

# CAMPAIGN KICK-OFF

## SOCK/UNDERWEAR DRIVE

Run a Sock/Underwear drive to support local shelters. Ask employees to bring in new socks and underwear for all – kids, men and women – which can then be given to our local shelters. These organizations always have a need for these basic items, and are greatly appreciated.

## OFFICE TREASURE HUNT

Give teams of employees clues to locate certain items (United Way program and/or impact partner information) in the office/shop. Each team that completes the challenge correctly will get a small token for completing it, and have their name in a drawing for company sway.

## AGENCY FAIR

Have information from some of the local agencies available, have passports for employees to get stamped when they visit each booth and get information.

## UWSM BINGO

Create bingo cards with impact partners in the squares. Call out via speaker or send out the agency names via email. Winners get a small company promo item. Run over two or three days prior to campaign kick-off.

## KICK-OFF BREAKFAST

Invite all staff to a breakfast where you discuss the campaign goal, special event ideas, and the work of United Way. This is a perfect opportunity to get staff input on what they would like to do for the campaign to make it fun and engaging.

# FOR SALE

## VIP PARKING SPACES

Sell VIP parking spaces for a week at a set price (\$10 - \$15 suggested) and keep a schedule and map of those spaces.

## SILENT AUCTION

Week-long auction of items donated by local businesses and employees. To participate, employees purchase a bid number to provide some anonymity and drive up bids.

## TALENT AUCTION

Employees donate special talents or skills to colleagues to bid on. For example, scuba lessons, knitting classes, food for the department, handcrafted jewelry, photography sessions, etc.

# FUN & GAMES

## BASKETBALL FREE THROW CONTEST

Who's got the best shot? People pay to play and people can pay to guess who will win. Whoever makes the most free throws in one minute with a rebounder wins. The winner gets 10% of the money pooled with the rest going towards the United way campaign. Those who guessed the winner correctly will be put in a drawing for a prize. Make it a bracket to increase the fun!

## PHOTO CONTEST

Have your team members show off their photography skills! Have individuals submit some of their best photos, and then employees can "vote" for their favorites with change/cash into buckets. The winning photo could win a gift card, the funds collected would go to the United Way campaign.

## BOSS/EXECUTIVE CAR WASH

For each \$5 or \$10 donated to the campaign, the employee's boss will wash their car.

## GARAGE SALE

Have employees clean out their closets and set up a companywide garage sale open to fellow employees or the public to benefit United Way.

## COIN WARS

Give each department a money jar and encourage them to deposit their spare change over the course of a week or the term of the campaign. The department who has the most money gets company swag or a prize of your choosing, and the funds collected go to the employee campaign.

## TRASH OR TREASURE RAFFLE

Ask employees to bring at least one wrapped white elephant item: an unwanted, still usable (although not necessarily useful) object from their home. All who donate can get a raffle ticket, and all others can purchase a raffle ticket or as many tickets as they wish (\$3 - \$5 per ticket). When their name or # is pulled, they can choose one of the mystery items. Don't forget to publicize the winners.

## EMPLOYEE TRIVIA

"Mystery" employees offer little known and unusual facts about themselves for others to guess. All featured participants place a clue in their office to help others guess their identity. Charge fee for all guesses, award a small company prize for the person who has the most correct.

## EGG ROULETTE

Have employees put money in a jar to choose who will face off in this messy event. The employees with the most money in their jar after a designated time will have to go head-to-head with a carton of eggs (9 hard boiled, 3 raw). They will take turns smashing an egg over their head. The person who smashes the most raw eggs loses the round. You can make it a bracket style to extend the event. The dollars raised go to the United Way campaign.

# FUN FOOD EVENTS

## WALKING TACOS

Individual bags of Fritos or Doritos chips sold and customized with taco meat, cheese, sour cream, and salsa

## SWEET TREAT CART

Donated treats are sold from a cart that travels throughout the office.

## TAILGATE PARTY

Host a tailgate party. Charge a fee to event and provide food and games.

## CEO COOKS

The boss cooks a meal for their team if the campaign reaches its goal.

## ETO (EXTRA TIME OFF) GOODIES BAGS

Assemble and sell bags of candy and in each bag include a slip of paper with a message. Some messages include:

- "Congratulations, you won 4 hours of ETO!"
- "Sorry you didn't win any ETO, please play again."

## ICE CREAM SOCIAL/ROOT BEER FLOATS

Sell ice cream bars, sandwiches, and root beer floats in the summer.

## CHILI COOK OFF

Have departments or individuals submit a pot of chili for competition. Employees pay to taste, and then vote for a winner. Prize could be a trophy made from a wooden spoon.

