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INTRODUCTION

UNITED WAY STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

**Mission:** To improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities

**Vision:** We will build a stronger America by mobilizing our communities to improve people's lives

**Core Values:**

- Commitment to community success
- Accountability / transparency
- Operational excellence
- Customer-centered
- Inclusiveness
- Innovation / continuous improvement

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## foreword:

Over the past two years, the United Way system adopted and embraced a new and powerful mission focused on improving lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities. By adopting the new mission, we put a stake in the ground around a new business framework and fundamentally resumed the historic role that United Way has played within our communities. Now, with our focus clearly on improving lives, we need to be equally clear as to how we will do that—our theory of change. For United Way, it has always been the case that in order to impact the most lives, we must ensure that everyone in a community acts together to change the conditions and systems that affect people. We must work on the most compelling issues that we, as community, have in common.

With our commitment clear and our direction new, we must strive for excellence in our day-to-day work. And the best way to move toward excellence is to have a clear understanding of the standard to which we aspire. What does excellence look like?

To help answer that question, United Way of America first published a *Standards of Excellence* in 1973. In fact, the early *Standards* were very useful to me as I was starting out and throughout my career. I used them like an operating manual. When I had to create and lead a campaign, shape a loaned executive program, or conduct a training program for volunteers, I took out the *Standards* and found direction. The standard was set, and I modeled my work to reach that standard. Also, very importantly, I took what I found in the *Standards* and made it my own.

The last update of the *Standards* was 1988. Since then our business has changed dramatically. Recognizing the changed landscape, United Way of America and the National Professional Council agreed to work together with many of your colleagues from local United Ways on the new *Standards of Excellence* that are outlined within the pages of this book. I believe they can guide you as the

### Purpose of New Standards of Excellence

**The new *Standards of Excellence* were developed by and for United Way leaders to help their organizations—and our system—to be more successful in achieving the community mission. The purpose of the *Standards* is four-fold:**

- **To define how to be a “great” United Way, pursuing and achieving community impact**
- **To establish aspirational benchmarks for individual United Way and system performance**
- **To provide clear definitions and a common language to describe United Way’s business today**
- **To provide a vehicle to help enhance stakeholder understanding of the “new” United Way.**

earlier standards guided me. These are the basic standards and practices that we believe will lead to excellence. These standards will provide a road map for all aspects of your work.

Think about how you engage your community around a shared vision. The *Standards* will help you. As you begin to develop impact strategies and turn them into investment products, the *Standards* will give you a framework for what they may look like. Brand management, personal relationships with investors and market segmentation provide great opportunities to involve the community in our impact work. And whether you are working to integrate or outsource your operational work, the *Standards* will help set the bar for excellence.

Over time, with your input, the *Standards* will evolve in order to maintain their relevance. Soon we will create assessment tools so that you can track your own progress and accomplishments. The *Standards* will eventually form the backbone of United Way of America's programs and services. We will create tools and curriculum around them for you to use.

And while we work together to strive toward excellence in our day-to-day work, we must be mindful that our ultimate goal is community excellence, measurable impact and improved lives. Thank you for considering how the *Standards of Excellence* can strengthen your United Way and your community. Best wishes for great success.



**Brian A. Gallagher, President and CEO  
United Way of America**

**March 2005**

### **Intended Benefits**

**We believe that the *Standards of Excellence* can guide your United Way, and our system, to become more effective in creating impact in communities and garnering the legitimacy, support and resources to further advance our mission.**

**We hope that your United Way will benefit from the *Standards* in the following ways:**

- **Staff and volunteer leaders increase their understanding of what is needed and are better able to direct their efforts to succeed in accomplishing the mission**
- **Leaders have a framework to use for organizational assessment, planning and performance improvement**
- **Staff, board members and volunteers understand and speak in a common language about United Way's business**
- **Partners and other stakeholders have a better understanding of United Way's work and desire to support it.**

## introduction:

Considering the significant opportunities and continuing challenges we face with respect to our own organizations, our communities and the nonprofit sector, we believe that there is great value to us—as individual United Ways and as a system—in adopting the standards presented here. The new *Standards of Excellence* provide concrete guidance and direction as to how a United Way should operate in order to be a more effective community impact leader—and be recognized as such. By striving toward common expectations of exemplary performance and creating a common, favorable experience for our donors/investors and partners, we can collectively maximize the value of our extraordinary brand. All of us—United Ways large and small, urban and rural—and our communities stand to benefit.

### How the New Standards Were Developed

The new *Standards* represent the evolution and integration of many other pieces of work from local United Ways and United Way of America in recent years. In particular, these *Standards* drew upon elements of the last version of the *United Way Standards of Excellence* (1988), *The Essential Attributes of a Community Impact United Way* (2003), and qualitative research conducted by McKinsey & Company which culminated in their report “Defining the Local United Way of the Future” (2004). The new *Standards* also borrowed from standards of practice developed by other leading nonprofit organizations.

The new *Standards* are the product of a great partnership between United Way of America and local United Ways, facilitated by the National Professional Council. In its role as a collective voice for local United Ways and liaison between United Way of America and the field, the National Professional Council called for the overhaul of United Way’s *Standards of Excellence* to align with our new community impact mission. During the National Professional Council’s June 2004 meeting, members

### Distinction Between Standards of Excellence and UWA Membership Requirements

**The *Standards of Excellence* are aspirational and voluntary. They differ from the United Way of America Membership Requirements, which are mandatory in order for your organization to use the United Way name and trademark. The Membership Requirements were ratified in 2003 and include an annual certification.**

volunteered to co-lead the effort with United Way of America so that the *Standards* could again serve as a relevant, useful guide to help leaders implement our new business model.

The development of the new *Standards* entailed a massive volunteer and “community engagement” effort from all corners of the United Way system. The level of collaboration between local United Ways and United Way of America was extraordinarily fruitful and perhaps unprecedented. More than 125 local United Way leaders and United Way of America staff worked intensively for six months to identify, research, develop, and draft the *Standards* based on their and others’ best thinking and experience to date.

In addition, hundreds of United Way staff were invited to preview the evolving *Standards* and provide their input through webinars, affinity group meetings, state association meetings, and a dedicated site on *United Way Online*. Also, approximately 30 subject matter experts from leading nonprofit organizations, corporate partners and academia reviewed and provided feedback on drafts of the *Standards*.

Finally, the *Standards* were endorsed by the National Professional Council during its December 2004 meeting.

#### How the New Standards are Organized

The new *Standards of Excellence* are organized into five components. The first two components address United Way’s core business strategies: *Community Engagement & Vision* and *Impact Strategies, Resources & Results*. Three additional components—*Relationship Building & Brand Management, Organizational Leadership & Governance*, and *Operations*—represent broad organizational capabilities required to successfully implement our core strategies.

The *Standards* define and describe an ideal—what we believe to be exemplary performance—in 34 topic areas.

#### What the New Standards Are Not

**The new *Standards* are not a one-size-fits-all regimen for all United Ways. Our perspective is that while standards—definitions of exemplary performance—are commonly applicable, not all practices may be relevant or befitting to all United Ways.**

**When in doubt, take standards as ideals to strive toward, and consider and adapt the associated practices based on what is feasible and appropriate for your United Way.**

Each of the standards provides associated practices, which comprise activities—what is suggested in order to achieve exemplary performance. In some cases, practices represent alternatives or options from which a United Way can choose. In other cases, they are integral and/or sequential—and are indicated as such.

### Looking Ahead

The new *Standards* represent our collective best thinking and experience to date, which is significant, but not exhaustive or authoritative. As we continue to learn and improve, our view of what constitutes excellence will evolve—as well as our understanding of what measures can be taken to achieve exemplary performance. Unlike earlier versions, these new *Standards* will need to be refreshed much more frequently—probably every two to three years. We invite you to try, experience, learn and course-correct with us.

Using these new *Standards* as a framework, United Way of America will focus on systematically identifying promising practices and developing products, services, tools and programs to enhance our capacity to achieve these standards of performance. We invite you to contribute your ideas and exchange promising practices through opportunities organized by United Way of America, state associations and fellow United Ways.

We hope you will join us in using the *Standards* to make your United Way—and your community—stronger and more successful.



**Rob Reifsnyder, President and CEO, United Way of Greater Cincinnati  
and Immediate Past Chair, National Professional Council**

**March 2005**

### Using the New Standards

**The *Standards* can help you focus and align your organization to be more successful in accomplishing the community impact mission.**

**Some of the ways we envision leaders using the *Standards* include:**

- **Guiding the establishment of organizational goals and priorities, and developing approaches to achieve them**
- **Identifying competencies desired for recruitment and professional development of staff and board members**
- **Providing orientation to United Way's work for new staff and board members**
- **Establishing expectations and managing performance of leaders and staff.**

## at a glance:

### Component 1: Community Engagement and Vision

Scope: Engage and inspire communities to create a shared vision for the future and set goals for collective action.

- Standard 1.1: Knowledge of the Community
- Standard 1.2: Community Engagement and Mobilization
- Standard 1.3: Shared Community Vision
- Standard 1.4: Public Policy Engagement

### Component 2: Impact Strategies, Resources and Results

Scope: Develop strategies that will achieve measurable and lasting change in community conditions, mobilize necessary resources and put them to work to produce positive results and improve lives.

- Standard 2.1: Impact Strategies
- Standard 2.2: Partner Engagement
- Standard 2.3: Resource Development and Mobilization
- Standard 2.4: Implementation and Action
- Standard 2.5: Measure, Evaluate and Communicate Results

### Component 3: Relationship Building and Brand Management

Scope: Develop, maintain and grow relationships with individuals and organizations in order to attract and sustain resources to support United Way's mission.

- Standard 3.1: Relationship-Oriented Culture
- Standard 3.2: Market Intelligence
- Standard 3.3: Segmentation and Prioritization
- Standard 3.4: Active Cultivation
- Standard 3.5: Unique, Positive Brand Experience
- Standard 3.6: Prominent Stature and Reputation

### Component 4: Organizational Leadership and Governance

Scope: Lead your local United Way to successfully fulfill its mission, and in doing so, garner trust, legitimacy and support from the local community and the United Way system.

- Standard 4.1: Mission
- Standard 4.2: Staff and Volunteer Leadership
- Standard 4.3: Governance
- Standard 4.4: Strategic and Business Planning
- Standard 4.5: Alignment
- Standard 4.6: Organizational Learning and Talent Development
- Standard 4.7: Inclusiveness
- Standard 4.8: System Citizenship

### Component 5: Operations

Scope: Provide efficient and cost-effective systems, policies and processes that enable the delivery of United Way's mission-related work and ensure the highest levels of transparency and accountability.

- Standard 5.1: Strategic Back Office
- Standard 5.2: Administrative Back Office
- Standard 5.3: Cost Analysis
- Standard 5.4: Risk Management
- Standard 5.5: Business Continuity
- Standard 5.6: Facilities
- Standard 5.7: Financial Policies
- Standard 5.8: Internal Controls
- Standard 5.9: Sarbanes-Oxley Legislation (SOX)
- Standard 5.10: Public Reporting and Transparency
- Standard 5.11: Investment Policies

## basic membership requirements:

**Most basically, a United Way striving for excellence must comply with United Way of America's (UWA's) Membership Requirements, which are a part of the national by laws:**

- (a) be recognized as exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as well as from corresponding provisions of other applicable state, local, or foreign laws or regulations and file IRS Form 990 annually in a timely manner. Annually, all Metro 1 and 2 members will submit their entire IRS Form 990 to UWA.
- (b) comply with all other legal local, state, and federal operating and reporting requirements (e.g., non-discrimination).
- (c) have an active, responsible, and voluntary governing body to ensure effective governance over the policies and financial resources of the organization.
- (d) adhere to a locally-developed and adopted diversity statement to ensure volunteers and staff broadly reflect the inclusiveness of the community they serve.
- (e) represent itself as a United Way in accordance with all UWA trademark standards and requirements, including those contained in the licensing agreement.
- (f) provide financial support to UWA in accordance with the agreed-upon membership investment formula.
- (g) adhere to a locally-developed and adopted code of ethics for volunteers and staff, which includes provisions for ethical management, publicity, fund-raising practices and full and fair disclosure. All Metro 1 and 2 members will submit a copy of their current code of ethics to UWA.
- (h) have an annual audit conducted by an independent certified public accountant whose examination complies with generally accepted auditing standards and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Organizations with annual revenue totaling less than \$100,000 may have their financial statements reviewed by an independent accountant. Annually, all Metro 1 and 2 members will submit audited financial statements to UWA.
- (i) conduct and submit to UWA every three years a volunteer-led self-assessment of their community impact work, financial management, and organizational governance and decision making.
- (j) complete and submit the annual Database 2 report to UWA by the deadline of May 15th of each year. United Ways are obligated to complete the survey to the best of their ability and enhance reporting capabilities on a go-forward basis.
- (k) complete and submit the biennial Income and Expense survey to UWA by the deadline of March 31st of every even year. Smaller United Ways (raising less than \$1 million) may choose to send in their audits and IRS Form 990s in lieu of completing the survey.
- (l) adhere to standard reporting guidelines contained in Database II Survey in reporting campaign revenue and resources generated.
- (m) adhere to the following cost deduction standards on designations:
  - fees charged will be based on actual expenses.
  - neither fundraising nor processing fees will be deducted from designated gifts originating by or from another United Way organization.

## Standards of Excellence glossary:

**2-1-1:** 2-1-1 is an easy-to-remember telephone number that connects people with volunteer opportunities and community services ranging from housing to health care to financial literacy. 2-1-1 centers are staffed by trained specialists who quickly assess the callers' needs and refer them for help. UWA, along with many local United Ways, is collaborating with government and other organizations to bring 2-1-1 service to communities across the nation. For additional information, go to [www.211.org](http://www.211.org).

**360-degree view of customers:** Comprehensive view of our customers, based on information about their needs, preferences and behaviors. Collecting and using comprehensive customer information across multiple functions is vital to manage relationships, ensure favorable experiences and deliver exceptional service to customers.

**Accounts payable:** Monies owed for goods or services received, but not yet paid for.

**Accounts receivable:** Monies due for goods or services sold, but not yet collected.

**Active Community Investor (ACI):** Someone who cares about the community and is actively engaged in improving it. Invests \$ 500 or more per year to local charity and is active in community work (e.g., volunteering, giving blood). ACI's are our primary target audience.

**Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act of 1990:** Prohibits private employers, state and local governments, employment agencies and labor unions from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities in job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions and privileges of employment. An employer is required to make an accommodation to the known disability of a qualified applicant or employee (including making existing facilities used by employees readily accessible to and usable by persons with

disabilities) if it would not impose an "undue hardship" on the operation of the employer's business.

**Administrative Back Office:** Business support functions required of any organization, regardless of the nature of the business (e.g., human resources administration, finance, technology and procurement).

**Advocacy:** Efforts to influence public policy through various forms of persuasive communication to federal, state or local government.

**Annual report:** A document issued each year to provide current and prospective donors/investors, partners and the general public with information about your United Way's income, expenditures, activities, and accomplishments.

**Agency:** An organization that provides health and human services to clients.

**Audit:** An examination and verification of your United Way's financial records and supporting documents by a certified public accountant.

**Brand:** A brand is a relationship—status earned by becoming significant in the lives of its users. It is a combination of tangible and intangible attributes, symbolized in a trademark, which, if managed properly, creates value and influence.

**Brand experience:** The exposure and interaction a customer has with a brand (e.g., through communications, advertising, websites, events, relationships with those who work for or on behalf of United Way, transactions). A successful brand experience creates an environment in which the customer is surrounded by the positive elements attached to the brand.

**Brand management:** Managing the tangible and intangible assets of a brand. For the United Way brand, the tangibles have to do with the customer experience (see brand experience and Brand Value Proposition) and the intangibles refer to the emotional connections derived as a result of experience, identity, communication and interactions with people who work for or on behalf of United Way.

**Brand identity:** The outward expression of the brand, including its name and visual appearance. The brand's identity is its fundamental means of consumer recognition and symbolizes the brand's differentiation from competitors.

**Brand Value Proposition:** The promises that a brand represents to its target audience, based on the needs that the latter want or expect the brand to meet. United Way's promises to ACIs (see Active Community Investor) are that it:

- Appreciates their commitment
- Reports results
- Focuses on priorities
- Multiplies their impact.

**Budget:** An itemized listing of the amount of all estimated support and revenue which your United Way anticipates receiving, along with a listing of all estimated costs and expenses that will be incurred over one fiscal year.

**Business continuity planning:** Planning to minimize the effects of an interruption to your United Way's operations in the event of a disaster or other disruption to one or more critical business functions.

**Business plan:** A written document that describes an organization's objectives over a specific period of time and identifies the resource development, marketing, financial and operational activities required.

**Bylaws:** Rules and regulations adopted for your United Way's internal governance.

**Campaign:** An intensive, time-limited fundraising endeavor to meet a specific financial goal.

**Capital expenditure:** An expense incurred for the acquisition, replacement, modernization, or expansion of fixed assets (e.g., facilities, equipment)—generally with a useful life of more than one year, in contrast to expenses associated with day-to-day operation and maintenance.

**Cash flow:** The path of cash coming into and going out of your United Way. Usually presented in the form of a report that indicates all sources of cash versus all uses of cash.

**Change strategy:** An integrated approach to transformational change that includes three components: 1) content, or what must change; 2) people, which refers to the human dynamics that influence change or are part of it; and 3) process, or how your United Way will produce the content changes while simultaneously transforming people and culture.

**Code of ethics:** A written system of standards for ethical conduct. A workplace guide to support day-to-day decision-making.

**Community:** A group of people united by common interests and a shared commitment to act. A community may be defined by geographic location, shared characteristics, demographics, or concern for a particular issue.

**Community assessment:** An effort undertaken to evaluate and understand the aspirations, issues and current state of affairs in a community. The assessment could include goals, assets and needs.

**Community assets:** All the resources available that add value to your community (e.g. financial, human, political, economic, environmental, social and cultural).

**Community economic development:** A long-term process of investment, construction or other activity, governed by residents to improve the community's economic health and vitality.

**Community engagement:** Encouraging community members to get involved with activities that enhance community life and contribute toward developing and achieving a shared vision for the future.

**Community impact:** Improving lives by mobilizing communities to create sustained changes in community conditions.

**Community impact plan:** A plan for achieving desired results on a specific issue. It includes desired outcomes, objectives, strategies, action steps, roles and resources needed.

**Community impact strategy:** See impact strategy.

**Community investment:** Provision of finances, people, time, or energy to support a program, activity or initiative in your community.

**Cost/benefit analysis:** An approach that evaluates specific projects or alternative ways of using resources by estimating and comparing the costs and benefits.

**Culture:** The character of your United Way, comprised of values, norms and operating principles, myths, and stories. Indicators of culture, which collectively reveal your organization's personality, include: leadership style, communication patterns, decision-making styles, use of information, performance standards and expectations, norms and behaviors, symbols, etc.

**Customer Relationship Management (CRM):** Customer strategy and processes, supported by technology, to build customer loyalty. CRM enables an organization to identify customers, differentiate them in terms of their needs, behaviors and value, interact with them, and customize some aspect of products or services to meet their needs.

**Customer segment:** See market segment.

**Database 2:** The annual UWA survey, required of all local United Ways, which tracks the full scope of resource development efforts in the campaign and beyond.

**Demographics:** The description of outward traits that characterize a group of people, such as age, sex, nationality, marital status, education, occupation, or income.

**Depreciation schedule:** A table that shows amount of depreciation expense, accumulated depreciation, and book value for each period of time for a fixed asset.

**Designations, designated gifts:** A gift that includes a specific restriction made by the donor/investor as to the use of the proceeds (usually directed toward a specific agency or cause). Such a gift removes discretion from the recipient as to the use of the funds. Also referred to as an "Agency Transaction" because the recipient acts as the "Agent" in facilitating a gift from a donor/investor to a third party.

**Direct service:** Services delivered directly to individuals and families.

**Diversity:** Differences among groups of people and individuals based on factors that may include, but are

not limited to: ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area.

**Donor:** A person making a contribution, financial or in-kind, to a charitable organization. See also investor.

**Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT):** Any transfer of funds (e.g., payments, collection) that is initiated by electronic means.

**Eligibility screening:** United Way's process to pre-qualify a community organization as a potential recipient of United Way investments. It assures legitimacy, accountability and that the organization is operating in accordance with sound nonprofit management practices.

**Endowment:** A fund established to provide income for the maintenance of a nonprofit organization. Endowments are generally established by donor/investor-restricted gifts and are limited in use to the purpose originally directed by the donor/investor.

**Engagement plan:** A written document that identifies specific goals and activities to build relationships with target audiences.

**Ethics officer:** An individual designated by the board as a resource to assist volunteers, employees and the public to determine the right course of action in difficult situations. This person is responsible for integrating your United Way's ethics into the decision-making processes at all levels.

**Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB):** The independent agency that establishes Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

**Fiduciary:** An individual, corporation or association holding assets for another party, often with the legal authority and duty to make decisions regarding financial matters on behalf of the other party.

**Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP):** A widely accepted set of rules, conventions, standards, and procedures for reporting financial information, as established by the Financial Accounting Standards Board.

**Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS):** A set of systematic guidelines used by auditors when conducting audits on companies' finances, ensuring the accuracy, consistency and verifiability of auditors' actions and reports.

**General ledger:** A book of final entry summarizing all of a company's financial transactions, through offsetting debit and credit accounts.

**GiftLink:** A database of local United Ways and the zip codes assigned to them.

**Governance:** The act of setting direction for the organization, ensuring necessary resources (i.e., human, financial, relationship) and providing oversight of programs, finances, legal compliance, and values.

**Impact strategy:** An approach to addressing the root causes of an issue.

**Inclusiveness:** Enabling the representation and participation of diverse groups.

**In-kind contribution:** A contribution of goods or services rather than cash or appreciated property.

**Internal controls:** Policies and procedures taken by an organization for the purpose of; (1) protecting its resources against waste, fraud and inefficiency; (2) ensuring accuracy and reliability in accounting and operating data; (3) securing compliance with the policies of the organization; and (4) evaluating the level of performance in all organizational units.

**Investment products:** The desired outcome; the change that occur with the contribution of money, time or other resources.

**Investor:** A person making a contribution, financial or in-kind, with the expectation that their investment will generate a return in the form of measurable results in the community. See also donor.

**IRS Form 990:** Annual return required by the Internal Revenue Service for all organizations exempt from income tax as specified under section 501(c) of Internal Revenue code.

**Learning strategy:** A plan for helping an organization achieve specific business objectives via a coordinated approach to training, learning and/or knowledge processes.

**Lifetime value:** Projection of revenues expected from a customer over their lifetime.

**Loaned executives:** Professionals loaned by employers for a temporary assignment to a United Way project, typically as account managers during the annual fundraising campaign.

**Major gift:** While the level may vary within the United Way system, a major gift is generally thought of as an annual gift of \$10,000 or more.

**Management letter:** A proprietary letter prepared in addition to an auditor's opinion letter that outlines areas, identified during the course of the audit, where potential may exist for improvement of financial policies and procedures.

**Market segment:** A group of customers who share the same needs and values, can be expected to respond in much the same way to your product or service, and command enough financial power to be of strategic importance to your organization.

**Membership Requirements:** Set forth in UWA's bylaws, these are the necessary items each United Way must demonstrate and certify compliance with in order to remain a member of UWA.

**Mindset:** The worldview, assumptions or beliefs that cause people to behave and act as they do.

**Mission:** Your United Way's overriding purpose or reason for being (i.e., what you do, for whom, and how you are different). The United Way system's mission statement is "To improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of community."

**Mobilize:** To spur a group into action or to bring resources to bear.

**National Corporate Leadership (NCL) program:** The program through which the United Way system engages national and global corporations in pursuing their philanthropic interests.

**Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA):** An agency of the US Department of Labor charged with assuring the safety and health of workers by setting and enforcing standards; providing training, outreach, and education; establishing partnerships; and encouraging continual improvement in workplace safety and health.

**Outcome:** A specified benefit or change that a deliberate action is intended to create for a defined set of people. Outcomes may be defined at multiple levels (e.g., program, system, community).

**Outcome measurement:** The regular, systematic tracking of the extent to which defined sets of people experience the intended benefits or changes.

**Partner:** Individuals and organizations with whom United Way works to achieve community impact. Generally used when referring to entities who are not investors or donors, but who are providing something else (i.e., programs, expertise, technology, connections or contacts, etc.). It includes, but is not limited to, those traditionally referred to as partner agencies.

**Petty cash:** A small amount of cash kept on hand by your United Way for incidental expenses.

**Planned giving:** A method of raising funds from substantial gifts in the form of bequests, life insurance and charitable annuities which are often, but not always, planned as donations upon the death of the donor/investor.

**Pledge capture:** The collection of donor/investor information, amount of donation and intent. Pledge capture typically takes place either via paper electronically.

**Pledge distribution:** The payment of donations to ultimate recipients (usually designated federations, agencies or other United Ways) net any fees withheld.

**Pledge processing:** The aggregation of donations and reporting results within and across campaigns. Activities include integration with payroll systems, acknowledging and receipting of gifts, depositing of cash and check donations, executing stock transactions and reporting results.

**Program:** A set of related activities and outputs directed at common or closely-related purposes.

**Prospect:** A prospective or potential customer.

**Prevention and development efforts:** Services designed to help individuals and families avoid longer-range problems and enhance the probability of leading productive, satisfying lives.

**Redundancy:** Duplication or repetition in order to provide alternative functional options in case of technology failure.

**Reserves:** Funds set aside for emergencies or other future needs.

**Resources:** All possible assets that can be put to work to produce positive results. They can be time, money, people, knowledge, talent, expertise, goods, services, relationships and technology.

**Resource development:** Procuring the necessary resources to execute community impact strategies. Frequently, this refers to financial resources (i.e., fundraising), but may also refer to the generation and procurement of other non-financial resources.

**Restricted gift:** A donor/investor stipulation, temporary or permanent, that specifies the use of a contribution.

**Return:** Income or value generated by an investment. There are many alternative measures of return, of which Return on Investment or ROI is one.

**Return on Investment (ROI):** The income or value that an investment generates in one year.

**Sarbanes-Oxley Legislation (SOX):** Legislation passed in 2002, primarily aimed at for-profit companies, which sets strict standards of governance and accountability in the interest of protecting investors, shareholders, employees, and the public interest. Portions pertain to nonprofit companies and are detailed in the Operations section of the Standards of Excellence.

**Segmentation:** Division of potential customers into market segments for the purpose of developing tailored communication, relationship and marketing efforts.

**Service area:** The geographic area within which a local United Way operates and provides value to a community, generally corresponding to the zip codes assigned by GiftLink.

**Stewardship:** The responsibility to wisely manage and supervise assets belonging to others.

**Strategic Back Office:** Functions that provide operational support of your United Way's core business activities - community engagement, impact strategies, resource development and investment.

**Strategic plan:** A written document that identifies a set of integrated decisions your United Way has made with respect to multi-year goals and strategies to achieve them. Decisions include: selected priority issues on which your United Way will focus; market and donor/investor segments you will target; resources and operational capabilities needed.

**Success By 6®:** This is the trademarked name for United Way's early childhood development initiative, the nation's largest network of early childhood coalitions. In communities across America, business, government and nonprofit leaders come together to discern the root problems that prevent children from entering school prepared to succeed and mobilize communities to solve them. The early childhood impact work of United Way is supported at the national level by UWA's Success by 6® with technical assistance, training and resource development. For more information, go to <http://national.unitedway.org/sb6/>

**System change, system reform:** A comprehensive set of activities and initiatives undertaken to dramatically reconstruct or improve the way something is done.

**System citizenship:** The collective rights, privileges and responsibilities of membership in the United Way system.

**Target audience:** The market segment or group your United Way has decided to serve, and at which you aim your marketing activities, determined by answering the question: upon whom is your future dependent?

**Touch-point analysis:** An approach that identifies the actual points of contact and interaction between your United Way and your target audiences.

**Trademark licensing agreement:** The legal terms and conditions under which United Ways may use the United Way collective membership marks, trademarks and service marks of UWA, including but not limited to the name "United Way." The license agreement defines solicitation/service area by assigned zip codes.

**Transparency:** Openness and candor about United Way governance and operations. Transparency is required to build trust with donors/investors, partners and the general public.

**Uncollectibles:** Fundraising pledges that will likely remain uncollectible and will be written off.

**Unqualified Opinion:** A term describing a type of opinion offered by an Independent Auditor where the auditor declares that he/she has examined the financial records of an entity in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS) and, as a result of the examination, believes that the financial records are prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and do fairly represent the financial condition of the entity.

**Values:** Values are traits or qualities that are considered worthwhile; they represent your United Way's governing beliefs that drive decisions and define how people behave toward each other.

**Vision:** A statement about what your United Way ultimately wants to have happen as a result of its efforts-and what it will become in the future. The United Way system's vision statement is: "We will build a stronger America by mobilizing our communities to improve people's lives."

**Visual identity:** What a brand looks like (e.g., its logo, typography, packaging).

**Volunteer center:** A service that promotes and recognizes the benefits of volunteering in a community. It often links people wishing to volunteer with community organizations needing assistance.

**Whistle blower:** An employee who publicly reports illegal activities going on inside his/her organization.

on a bedrock of

but any road to achieving one's maximum potential must be built

There are countless ways of **achieving greatness,**

STAFF & BOARD LEADERS  
OUR NATION  
OUR UNITED

a



# respect

for an individual,

# commitment

to excellence,

and a rejection  
of mediocrity

Buck Rodgers

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Finally, this new edition of the United Way  
Standards of Excellence benefited from the  
editorial and creative talents of the following  
individuals:

Margie Morris  
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United Way of Grayson County, Inc.  
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Peter Hahn  
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The National Professional Council consists of sixty chief professional officers from across the United Way system. Its purpose is to advise United Way of America's president on issues of importance, to serve as a collective voice for the United Way profession, to provide leadership in building the United Way system and to serve as a communication link between UWA and the field.

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December 2004

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