

## United Way of Siouxland Employee Campaign Special Events Ideas

**ON A CLEAR DAY:** Company executives and committee members wash every car window shield in the parking lot and attach a balloon with a flier explaining that they want everyone to have a “clear” picture of what United Way does for the community.

**PUT YOUR BEST FOOD FORWARD:** Employees are asked to wear a crazy pair of shoes and enjoy a wild and crazy lunch. Menu to feature FOOT-long hot dogs, SHOESTRING potatoes, CORN chips, ARCHway cookies, and SOFT SHOE drinks. What better music to accompany the event than “sole” music - “Blue Suede Shoes”, “These Boots are Made for Walking”, etc. Thank you cards to employees can be tied with a shoelace and read “Thanks for helping us tie up our United Way drive by putting yourself in the “shoes” of those less fortunate than ourselves.”

**TUNE INTO THE COMMUNITY:** Music is a great way to get everyone moving to the United Way beat. Hold a karaoke kick-off party. Have participants and volunteers dress up as their favorite musicians. Sell employees’ old CDs. Hold a musical talent show. Organize a sock hop.

**BE A LIFESAVER:** Have some fun, beach style! Sand, sunglasses, beach balls, and The Beach Boys music make your office feel like you are on the beach. Employees who donate are awarded life preserver vests or blow up swimming rings to wear at the next meeting and lifesaver candies in their offices.

**BON VOYAGE:** With a traveling theme, you can host a “bon voyage” party as a victory celebration. Everyone who gives through United Way gets a “passport” to get into the party. Top contributors will be put into a drawing to win a prize.

**IN HOT PURSUIT OF COOL MILLIONS:** Campaigners dress up as spies wearing trench coats and carrying magnifying glasses. Pass out United Way informative messages in code and offer a prize for the employees who can decode the messages.

**EXOTIC LOCALES:** Whether you transform your campaign into a Hawaiian luau, African safari, or the Australian outback, employees are sure to have a wild time. Encourage staff and volunteers to dress the part of the chosen location. Host a lunch with theme-related food. Organize a scavenger hunt or hula hoop contest.

**UNITED WAY JINGLE CONTEST:** Employees write jingles for United Way. There is a \$5 entry fee and voting fee for the best jingles.

**CHILDREN's DRAWING CONTEST:** Give employees “official photographs” of one or two top executives to take home for their children to draw. OR Have children draw what “helping others” means to them. The contest is limited to children under 12 who are related to any employee. Employees vote for the best drawing by paying \$1 per vote. Give prizes to all participants. Display winning portraits as part of the organization’s permanent art collection. A variation of this event is employees submit photography, drawings, paintings, poetry, or collages depicting people helping people.

**TEAM CHIA PET CONTEST:** Employees divide into teams. Each team is given a Chia Pet, which they care for. The Chia’s hair may be cut, primped, and styles. Prizes awarded for: fullest growth, longest single sprout, and most original.

**GOLF ANYONE:** Host a mini golf design competition. Have multiple teams design a themed mini golf hole then encourage employees to pay for a round of golf. Participants can vote on awards for most creative, most challenging and/or most detailed.

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**HALLOWEEN PUMPKIN CARVING CONTEST:** Plan a Halloween theme and hold a pumpkin-carving contest. Find a local business willing to donate pumpkins for your organization to sell to your employees. Employees buy pumpkins for their families to use in the contest. Charge \$5 to enter and \$1 per vote. Award prizes for various categories; best traditional, most creative, best effort by the group, best effort by an individual. Throw a party to end your campaign.

**TRICK OR TREAT:** Appeal to your employees' sweet tooth. Take advantage of Halloween and bring a "treat" for those who participate in the campaign. Display an apothecary jar filled with candy corn or jelly beans in the lunchroom for employees to guess the number of pieces in the jar. The winner receives the jar of candy corn.

**ORNAMENT RAFFLE:** Buy or have donated an artificial tree or display. Employees bring in ornaments, either purchased or handmade. Raffle them off or hold a silent auction for each ornament.

**DOOR/CUBICAL DECORATING CONTEST:** Employees can have fun decorating their departments for Halloween while they fundraise. Votes for the best decorations could be cast for \$1 per vote. The decorators of the winning space could receive a special prize.

**TAILGATE PARTY:** Hold a pay-per-plate cookout during lunch. Cook brats, burgers, and hot dogs with condiments. Have chips, pretzels, soda, and other tailgating items.

**CHILI COOK-OFF:** Participants pay to enter their chili into the contest. Choose judges and determine prizes for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place. After judging, employees can pay to sample each chili. Remember to supply cheese, sour cream, crackers, TUMS, etc.

**SPARE CHANGE JARS:** Place empty jars near vending machines or gathering places. Ask employees to deposit spare change throughout the year for United Way. This can be a competition between departments.

**SPELLING BEE** Hold a spelling bee and charge an entry fee. Have galley observers place bets on their favorite participants.

**HAUNTED CUBICLE:** Offer the opportunity to "lease" an empty office or cubicle space that employee teams can decorate. On the final day of the campaign, have employees vote on the best cubicle space by donating to the one they like the most.

**OFFICE OLYMPICS:** Have a plaque, medal, or stuffed animal as an incentive for the department that wins the highest per capita giving an award or raises the most money at a particular fundraiser. They keep said item until next year's campaign.

**EXECUTIVE DUNK TANK:** Pay per ball for a chance to dunk your boss or pay a higher fee to walk up and press the "dunk" button. Participants pay extra to add a bag of ice to the dunk tank water.

**BABY PHOTOS:** Have employees send their baby photos to be included in a virtual document or presentation; charge a small amount for each entry and challenge team members to match the photos. Send a prize to the person who matches the most!

**CANDY COUNT:** Send a picture of a packed candy jar and charge a small donation to guess the count. The winner will come back to their office with a big jar of candy!

**CHARCUTERIE/CHEESEBOARD WORKSHOP:** Sell tickets for a culinary adventure walking each participant through creating their cheese/charcuterie board and pairing food with wine. Give tips on portioning, picking the perfect cheeses, recommendations for pairing complementary textures and flavors. Take pictures and vote on whose board looks the most delicious. Do not forget seasonal ingredients!

**COMPLIMENT GRAMS:** Design notes of thanks or congratulations for co-workers to buy and send to each other.

**COMPANY "CRIBS":** Charge a donation for a virtual or in-person tour of coworkers' homes, gardens, cool office set-ups, blinged-out BBQ areas, or interesting collections.

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**CUTEST PET CONTEST:** Post pet pictures on your intranet or send via email and have people vote with dollars on the cutest furry friends.

**COLORING BOOK:** Create themed coloring pages by company or community which can be distributed with a request for a donation.

**COOKING LESSON:** Find team members who have always wanted to host a cooking show; have them record or host a live cooking demonstration and charge “admission” (donations) to join the meeting or view the video link.

**DEPARTMENT CHALLENGE:** Challenge internal departments with prizes for the most United Way campaign donors, the highest increase in average gift, or first department to complete donations.

**DRESS UP DAY:** Flip the Dress Down Day and charge a donation to wear your best suit, favorite dress, trendiest tie . . . anything to get out of quarantine-comfy clothes!

**"GIVE IT UP CHALLENGES":** Encourage folks to eat a simple lunch i.e. grilled cheese or PB&J sandwich (for example) and donate the money they would have spent if going out to eat.

**WALKING TACO SALE:** Sell individual bags of corn chips with divided plastic or foam containers filled with taco meat, cheese, sour cream, tomatoes, lettuce, packets of hot sauce, etc. Price accordingly.

**ETO (EXTRA TIME OFF) GOODIE BAGS:** Assemble and sell bags of goodies. In each bag include a slip of paper with a message. Some messages include a —Congratulations you won 4 hours of extra time off. Some messages say —Sorry, you didn't win extra time off, please play again.

**ONLINE AUCTION:** Encourage employees to donate handmade items, goods and services, home-cooked meals, special books, etc. and host an online auction.

**VIRTUAL TALENT SHOW:** Company offers for employees to sign up for a Zoom talent contest. The entrants would have to pay a certain amount to participate. Employees that do not want to participate but would like to watch pay a higher amount. The company finds a panel of three judges. This could be outside individuals, senior employees, or anyone else with the company.