

# Congratulations,

## ROBERT BOSQUEZ

### West Bloomington Revitalization Project's Bed Blitz



In November, Robert Bosquez, of West Bloomington Revitalization Project's Bed Blitz, was honored with the Phil Covey Memorial Volunteer of the Year Award. The Award included a monetary gift presented to the West Bloomington Revitalization Project where Robert has served.

The West Bloomington Revitalization Project Bed Blitz program provides local youth between the ages of 5-18 with a newly built twin-size bed frame, new mattress, sheets, pillows, and a blanket or quilt. Recipients also receive laundry detergent, books, and a teddy bear. Since launching the Bed Blitz in 2015, Robert has overseen seeking donations of lumber, mattresses, linens, and other items; building of the beds; managing all donations that make this program possible; and working with other local agencies and schools to be sure the opportunity for a new bed is extended to all families that need them.

All nominees for this year's volunteer award were recognized at the dinner, including Mike O'Donnell with Faith in Action, Terry Ogunleye

with the Bloomington-Normal Boys & Girls Club, and Tracy Patkunas with The Miracle League.

The Award was first established in 1995 in memory of Phillip Covey, the son of long-time United Way of McLean County supporter Harold Covey. Award recipients are chosen based on criteria such as impact on the lives of their clients, passion and expertise in their work for the agency, and implementation of the agency's mission.



## Meet Dale Avery

### Join us in welcoming our new Board Chair!

After a 36 year career at State Farm, Dale continues to be passionate about making our community better in his retirement. He is a long-time supporter of the United Way of McLean County, becoming more deeply involved during the pandemic – first with the Childcare and Youth Programming committee and then onto our Executive Board. He is excited to support the efforts and impact the United Way is making.



# PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY

Volume 1 2024

## HELP THAT'S PERSONAL, LOCAL, AND ACCESSIBLE

One of the best aspects of our shared mission is being directly invested and involved in our community. In 2023, your partnership ensured that even more residents found pathways to prosperity through United Way services and support. This update highlights a few of the specific ways your partnership is sparking change for others with help that's:

**PERSONAL:** Your support directly helps members of our community find self-sufficiency.

**LOCAL:** Your support shapes the future of our community in McLean County.

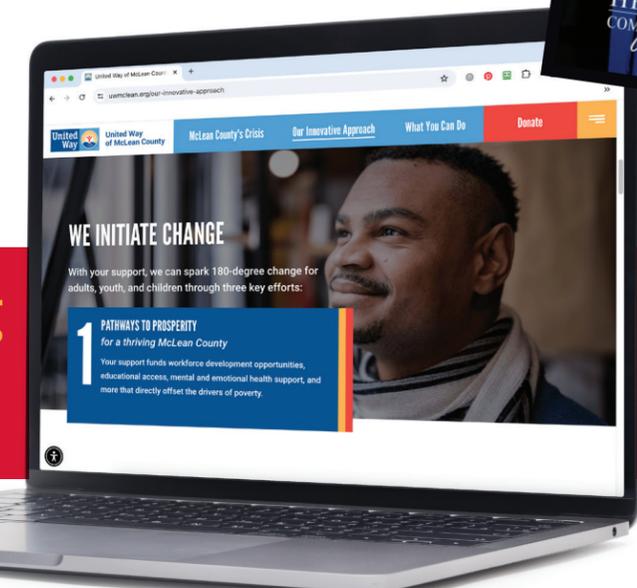
**ACCESSIBLE:** Your support helps close service gaps and remove barriers to access.

Improving accessibility was also the inspiration behind our recent website redesign. The new site gives everyone easier access to programming, updates, reports, and events. We already have ideas for more features and content, but we hope you'll stop by now to check it out!

David Taylor  
President & CEO  
United Way of McLean County



## The NEW UWMclean.org is now live!



# SPRING INTO ACTION!

## BE 180UNITED IN 2024

Across McLean County, individuals and families alike are under immense pressure. Some are struggling financially or emotionally. Others are facing employment or housing instability.

They find support for 180-degree change at United Way of McLean County, when community members spring into action! Your gifts create seeds of change that spark 180-degree turnarounds.

This spring, we're looking for 180 friends like you to give a special gift during our Seeds of Change campaign. Just \$15 a month — \$180 a year — helps people in our community find 180-degree turnarounds.

### Will you be 1 of the 180?

Give \$180 this spring to sow seeds of change and be 180United with us!

### GIVE ONLINE:

[UWmclean.org/donate](http://UWmclean.org/donate)

### GIVE BY CHECK:

Payable to United Way of McLean County; mail to P.O. Box 1348, Bloomington, IL 61702

### INTERESTED IN PLANNED GIVING?

Reach out to David Taylor at [dtaylor@uwaymc.org](mailto:dtaylor@uwaymc.org)



Boost childhood literacy for kids across the county at the 2024 Power of the Purse! Hosted by Women United, Power of the Purse raises funds to provide more books for children under 5 years old via our partnership with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.



**MAY 17**

**DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel**

Come for the food, fun, and so many purses to bid on — while supporting childhood literacy with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. Individual or table tickets available (chocolates and wine included with your table!) Use the QR code or visit [one.bidpal.net/pop24](http://one.bidpal.net/pop24)

In December, Governor JB Pritzker visited the Bloomington Public Library to share the state's commitment to fund 50% of ALL Dolly Parton's Imagination Library programs in Illinois.



Study after study reports that teens across the county are in a mental health crisis. We are seeing the reality of it in McLean County too. The 2022 Illinois Youth Survey found that more than one-third of all 8th to 12th grade students have experienced debilitating sadness or hopelessness during that school year.

Our ThriveMind initiative provides area teens with free professional therapeutic services at Carle BroMenn. This network of emotional support helps them thrive personally and academically.

A LeRoy student began counseling services to focus on emotional regulation, coping strategies, feeling identification, and self-esteem. The student's grades had dropped and peer relationships were strained due to an unwillingness to adapt to socially appropriate norms. Open communication between the student's teacher and the Carle therapist has greatly aided the student's care and progression.

Progress was evident after eight months of therapy. The student seemed happier and more engaged in sessions, and more connected to peers and in activities. Academically, the student's grades had also stabilized. With the support of ThriveMind, this student weathered a challenging season without falling through the cracks.

### 2022 ILLINOIS YOUTH SURVEY

During the past 12 months did you ever "feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities?"

**% Responding YES:**

<b>34%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>34%</b>
8th Graders	10th Graders	12th Graders

Source: <https://iys.cprd.illinois.edu/>

This is just one student who is on track thanks to your support through United Way of McLean County! Thank you for investing in area teens.