

POWER OF PROSPERITY

90 YEARS OF LIVING UNITED
FOR McLEAN COUNTY

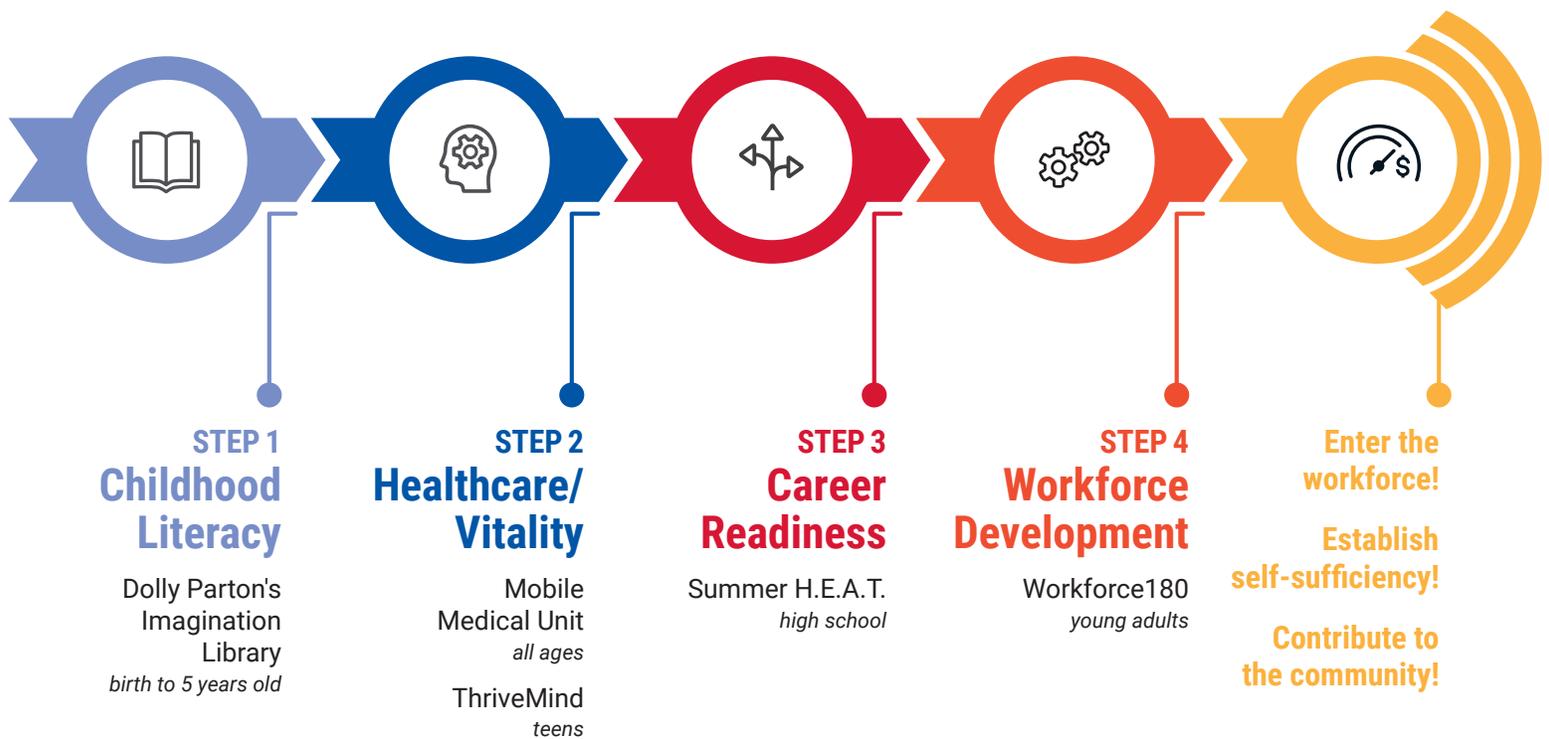
2024 Impacts Report



United Way
of McLean County

THE PATHWAY TO PROSPERITY

Our community grows stronger with every step we take on the pathway to prosperity. Investing in childhood literacy is step one, placing a firm foundation for our youngest community members to find future academic and career success. Proper healthcare keeps residents of all ages healthy and active members of our community, which is why we are boosting access to physical and mental health services. Career readiness assures high school students are primed to step into professional education and training. Investing in workforce development and career access opens the door to self-sufficiency for ambitious young adults to pursue their dreams.



These initiatives close the gaps that block McLean County residents from the pathway to prosperity. Thank you for partnering with United Way of McLean County! Your investment is changing lives and making our community stronger for generations to come.

Your 2024 Program Investments

Pathways to Prosperity	\$495,105
Community Partnerships	\$206,217
180United	\$65,406

90 YEARS OF IMPACT

As the calendar turns from 2024 to 2025, we're looking ahead to a special year... the 90th anniversary serving local communities with partners like you.

Reaching an amazing milestone like this is never a given for any cause. For UWMC, it requires a resiliency and adaptability in tackling McLean County's most difficult problems and developing innovative solutions through key community partnerships.

Our 90th anniversary provides an opportunity to celebrate what we've accomplished together and to share our vision of what's possible over the next 10 years. We envision a thriving McLean County where more and more people find their Pathway to Prosperity.

How do we do that?

It takes a proactive mindset, getting upstream on key factors blocking this path for community members.

First, we address childhood literacy and provide access to healthcare. When they reach their teenage years, we focus on their mental health and provide opportunities to explore the careers available in McLean County. As they finish high school, we invest in technical and interpersonal skills that will help them transition into our local workforce and achieve financial self-sufficiency.

In this 2024 Annual Report, you'll find inspiring stories of people finding their Pathway to Prosperity, and how your financial partnership with United Way of McLean County helps them do that.

Stay tuned in the year ahead for more about our 90th anniversary and our vision for the future!



David Taylor, President & CEO



Dale Avery, Board Chair





“She carries her books around and constantly asks us to read stories. She’s looking at them on her own too. Listening to her jabber as she turns the pages is the sweetest. These books are shaping her into a little reader!”

DOLLY PARTON’S IMAGINATION LIBRARY — LAUNCHED IN 2023

IMPROVING CHILDHOOD LITERACY



Childhood literacy is a powerful marker for a child’s future academic success — and the future prosperity of the whole community. *Kids who read are kids who succeed!*

That’s why we became the local affiliate of Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library. Children who are registered receive a free book each month, from birth to age five! This past year, more than 4,000 little ones received books like *K Is for Kindness* and *The Snowy Day*.

Local parents Lily and Evan registered their daughter when she was born in 2023. Bryn already has more than a dozen books that she pulls from the shelf every day.

Little ones like Bryn are discovering a love for reading and getting school ready, thanks to your UWMC partnership. You are investing in their future — and the future of our entire community!



YOUR 2024 IMPACT:

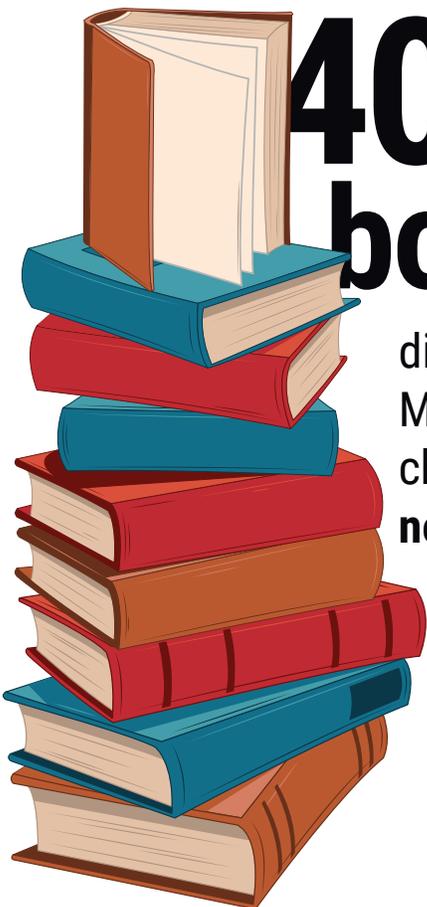
4000+

children across McLean County
have received books!

and over

40,000
books

distributed to
McLean County
children, at
no cost to them.



WOMEN UNITED *for childhood literacy*

Women United is a powerful network of community leaders contributing expertise, talents, compassion, and philanthropy. In 2024, WU energy and efforts raised awareness and expanded partners for our childhood literacy initiative in partnership with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.

Learn more about WU using the QR code below, or at uwmclean.org/get-involved/women-united



WORKFORCE180 — LAUNCHED IN 2020

EQUIPPING YOUNG ADULTS FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Young people in McLean County are full of dreams for a stable, self-sufficient future. But those dreams get derailed when barriers block their education and training. That's why Workforce180 is so powerful! Because of your UWMC partnership, those barriers are removed, propelling students toward stable, long-term employment.



MEET ARI

When Ari first heard about Workforce180, she wondered if there was a catch. A program that provided tuition support, mentoring, and resources? It sounded too good to be true.

As she learned more, Ari realized it was true—and an open door for her dream career in nursing. Workforce180 was there every step of her education journey, providing a community of supporters that believed and invested in her success.

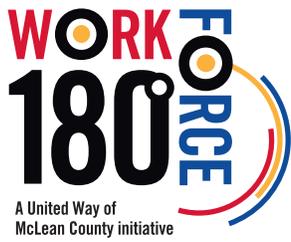
Ari graduated in December of 2023, grateful for every donor, every mentor, every person who helped her get there: “Thank you, Workforce180! Your support changed everything.”



“Workforce180 is helping out our community so much, and I appreciate it more than anyone will ever understand.”

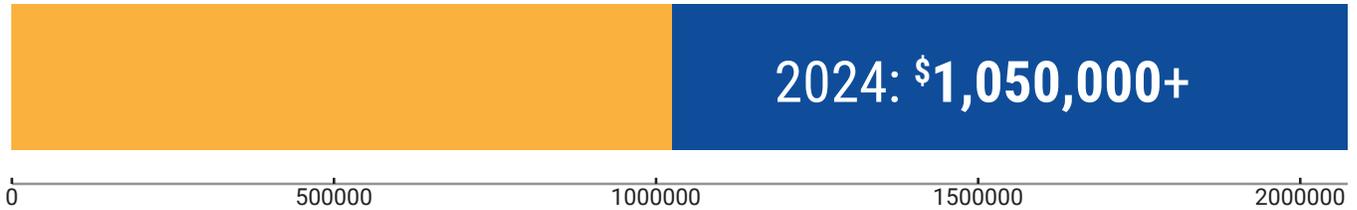
—Ari P., Workforce180 graduate

HEAR ARI'S STORY



HERE'S THE IMPACT OF YOUR PARTNERSHIP!

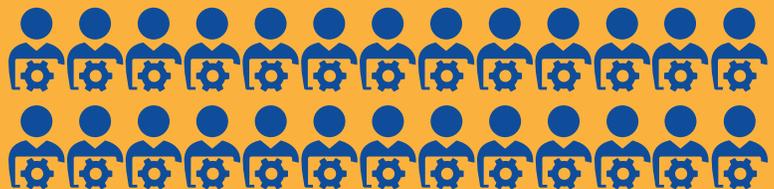
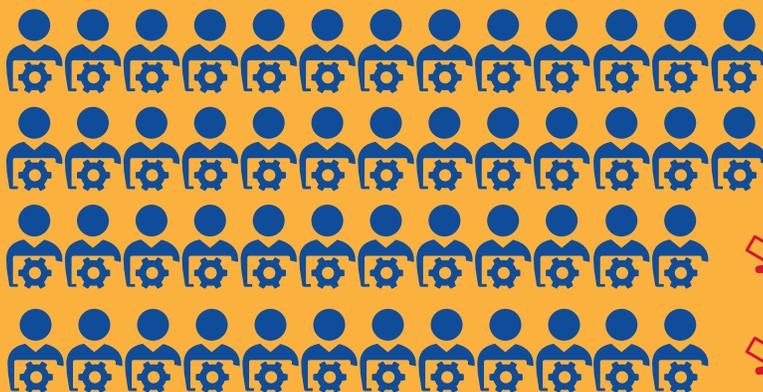
Local Economic Impact/Benefit



Workforce180 has created **over \$2,075,000** in local economic impact/benefit since its launch in 2020.

80+ participants

enrolled at Heartland Community College and/or in the Workforce180 pipeline



The starting yearly **average wages/benefits** of WF180 graduates working full-time:

\$62k

Part-time grads earn **50% above** minimum wage



30+ graduates

have moved into the local workforce.

Donor investments create a



through Workforce180

NEW: SUMMER H.E.A.T. INITIATIVE – LAUNCHED IN 2024

CONNECTING TEENS TO FUTURE CAREERS

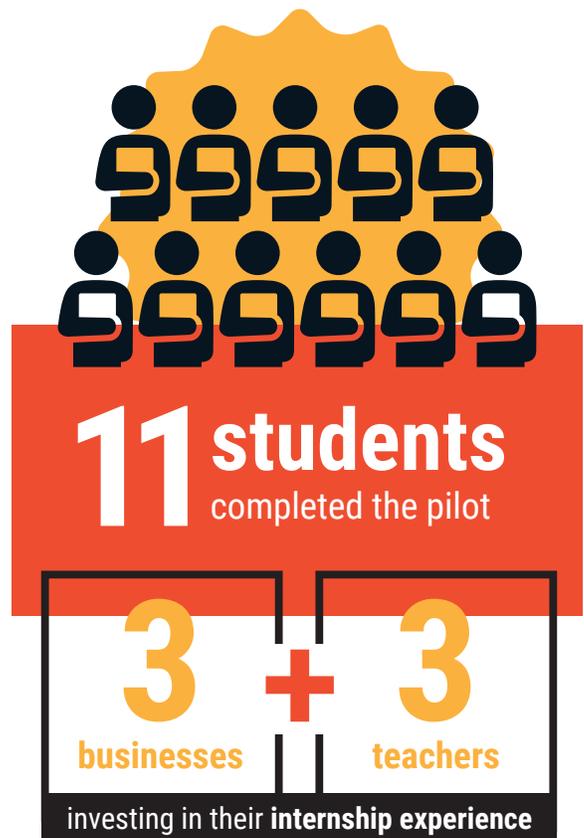
Young people often struggle post-high school because they don't feel prepared to make career decisions. But career exploration and guidance opportunities during high school can change their trajectory.

Thanks to your partnership, we launched a brand-new initiative in 2024 called **Summer H.E.A.T. to meet the need.**

We designed a nine-week internship experience placing area high school students with partnering businesses in the H.E.A.T. sector (Health/Hospitality, Engineering/Education, Agri-Business, and Technology). In addition to paid summer employment, interns also completed career development sessions.

The 2024 pilot hosted 11 interns placed with 3 business partners: Little Jewels Learning Center (Education), Rob Dob's Restaurant & Bar (Hospitality), and Westminster Village (Healthcare). Three teachers served as internship liaisons (Sarah Palermo, Kitty Belsly, and Tammy Barba). Rebecca Henderson (SMARTpath) and UWMC staff provided essential skills training, career exploration, and professional development.

Feedback from everyone involved was incredible! Your UWMC partnership makes innovative solutions like this possible. Thank you for investing so area teens can explore pathways to prosperity.



"By mentoring these young individuals, businesses help cultivate a skilled future workforce and ensure a pipeline of talented professionals. Participating in Summer H.E.A.T. supports the personal and professional development of local youth and also strengthens the bond between businesses and the community, leading to mutual long-term benefits."

– Julie Dobski, Owner of Rob Dob's Restaurant & Little Jewels Learning Center

SUMMER HEAT.



18+ hours of career guidance & skills development to boost professionalism & explore career pathways



“Before the **Summer H.E.A.T** program, I was worried about being able to find a job that would accept me while in high school. After I finished, I was confident in my working abilities. The program helped me get connections and experience in the working environment.”

— Jaelyn Brumfield, Le Roy High School



of hands-on experience in hospitality, education, and healthcare

OF **2000**
U.S. students surveyed
only **45%**
felt prepared to make
career decisions.

Source: American Student Assistance

THRIVEMIND INITIATIVE LAUNCHED IN 2022

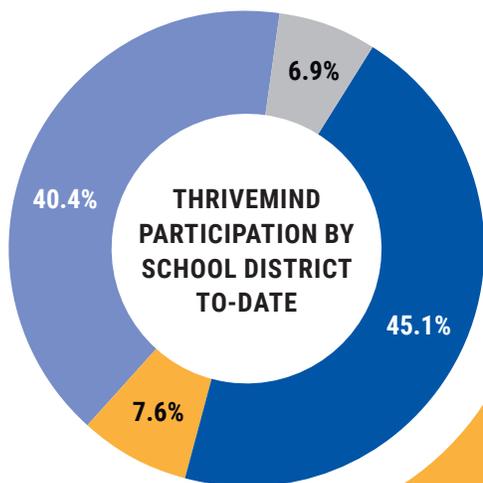
STRENGTHENING TEEN MENTAL HEALTH

Many teens have chronic stress that affects their grades and well-being. Such struggles can derail future stability and career goals. The fallout is especially severe for students without access to mental health support. We bridge that gap with ThriveMind.

ThriveMind connects teens to free professional therapeutic services at Carle BroMenn.

A Le Roy High School teacher referred a student after seeing a drop in grades and strained peer relationships. ThriveMind connected the student to therapy focusing on emotional regulation, coping strategies, and self-esteem. After eight months of mental health support, the student's grades and peer connections were back to normal.

Your UWMC partnership is creating an emotional safety net for teens! ***Thanks for helping them stay in school and on track for a bright future.***



- Lexington
- Olympia
- Ridgeview
- Le Roy

184

free therapy sessions in 2024
(700+ since 2022)

with therapists at Carle BroMenn Behavioral Health Counseling

60
student referrals

46
students in therapy

14
students completed therapy

BE 180UNITED FOR THE NEXT 90 YEARS

For the past 90 years, United Way of McLean County has been a driving force for change. Our organizational pivot in 2018 created a new approach we call **180United**. It's our driving philosophy and proven solution for solving local challenges and opening pathways to prosperity across McLean County.

180United is the way we address community issues through responsive, custom UWMC solutions. It's how area residents of all ages find the 180-degree change they need for a brighter future. And it's only possible with your support.

There is much work to be done to see the 180-degree change McLean County needs.

With your continued partnership, more children will be school-ready, more teens will find an emotional safety net, more high school students will discover career options, more young adults will complete college and workforce development, and more families will access healthcare.

Your gifts directly support community members and make McLean County a stronger community for everyone who calls it home.

Together, we can make a lasting difference and shape a vibrant future for all in McLean County.

Thank you for multiplying a united, solutions-based approach with us!

OUR STAFF

David Taylor
President & CEO

Gloria Spinks
Administration & Data Manager

Tom Frazier
Workforce180 Director

Lily Burns
Community Impact Director

Marian Doherty
Finance Manager

2024 BOARD of DIRECTORS

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Marty Behrens

Tom Carroll

Keith Cornille

Paul Deters

Sean Fagan

Cory Heim

Naveen Miller

Laura O'Connor



2024 Workforce180 Participants
Thank you for investing in McLean County's future!

Be a partner in prosperity!

Powerful change is possible when community leaders work together. Take your first step in shaping a vibrant, prosperous future for McLean County.



United Way
of McLean County

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