

Top 10 Benefits of Giving to UWLES

#1 LOCAL

UWLES is an independent 501(c)3 nonprofit serving our Lower Eastern Shore neighbors in Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester Counties since 1944.

#2 INVESTMENT

Each year, our volunteer Community Impact Committee devotes time and energy to learn about local nonprofits and ensure donations are invested in partners who effectively address vital community needs.

#3 ACCOUNTABILITY

UWLES maintains the highest level of transparency to ensure we and our partners comply with all federal, state and local nonprofit standards.

#4 LEADERSHIP

UWLES supports nonprofits all year with funding & best practice resources. We operate with a small staff and large network of dedicated volunteers, who serve on the Board of Directors and Advisory Council.

#5 IMPACT

Our United Way impacts 1 in 3 Lower Shore neighbors annually through our direct and partner programs. Everyone can make an extra impact through our Get Connected Volunteer Center and Affinity Groups.

#6 STRATEGIC

UWLES harnesses the power of our community, mobilizing neighbors into action to advance health & well-being, youth opportunity, and financial security so all can thrive.

#7 EASY GIVING

It's easy for anyone to give back to our community. Payroll deductions & online giving are just two of the convenient & affordable ways to make a difference. Gifts of all sizes add up to create greater impact together.

#8 DONOR CHOICE

Donors who give \$50 or more may choose to designate to an approved partner agency, UWLES direct program, or another United Way.

#9 RECOGNITION

Thanks to our generous sponsors, donors enjoy special recognition when giving \$250+ annually, including Leadership Circle (\$250+) and Anchor Society (\$500+).

#10 FUN!

Getting involved feels good, too! Our Emerging Leaders, Student United Way & Women United grow your network & hands-on impact. Special events are a fun way to give back while having a great time.





What is United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore, and how is it different from United Way Worldwide? UWLES is an independent, local, 501(c)3 non-profit organization established in 1944 in Wicomico County, MD. Our independence allows us to focus on the needs of the counties we serve (Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester). UWLES harnesses the power of our community to advance health and well-being, youth opportunity, financial security, and community resiliency for all neighbors.

We are a member of the United Way Worldwide network, which provides benefits such as cost-saving services and tools, collaborative opportunities, professional development and training, and brand recognition. United Way Worldwide and network members mobilize communities to action so all can thrive, working towards a future where every person in every community can reach their full potential.

Who is the United Way's team comprised of?

UWLES is always governed and guided by a volunteer Board of Directors who represent communities across the Lower Shore. UWLES' Advisory Council extends our outreach and impact with additional community representatives who want to help engage, energize, and elevate our work.

Day-to-day activities such as optimizing and processing donations, managing direct programs and collaborations, volunteer activities, supporting nonprofit partners, and planning special events are handled by a small, professional staff located in the Salisbury office. Meet the UWLES Board, Advisory, and Staff at uwles.org/team.

Where does my contribution go?

- Your gift creates local impact through UWLES' direct services and programs, advocacy, volunteer connections, and investment in local nonprofits.
- Community Impact funds are invested in approved partner agencies and UWLES' direct programs and community initiatives. Annual contributions may be designated to an approved partner agency or direct program (\$50 min. per designation).
- A benefit of United Way Worldwide membership is a reciprocal giving program, allowing donors to direct their gift to other United Ways and those not living locally to donate to us. We also collaborate to help multi-state businesses build successful employee engagement within their local communities.

How does United Way decide how much to distribute to each agency?

UWLES' Community Impact Committee are local volunteers who invest their time and energy to visit with applicants who request operational or program support. Committee members learn about their work and programs and review applications, budgets, outcomes, and efficiencies in meeting local needs. Funding recommendations are approved by the Board of Directors based on annual fundraising and are distributed monthly to approved partners.

What is United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore's administrative rate?

UWLES' administrative rate is 23%, below the long-time national standard of 25-35%. Fortunately, there is a growing awareness for nonprofits to invest more equitably in operational needs to ensure we have the professional workforce, technology, and financial resources to effectively and consistently deliver on our mission and meet expanding community challenges. For more information or a copy of our annual 990, contact us, visit our website, or view our Candid/GuideStar profile, where UWLES maintains a Platinum Seal of Transparency.

What about the pressure to give?

UWLES does not condone pressuring anyone to give. The decision to give is a personal one, and no one should ever be pressured or coerced into giving. See our volunteer giving policy on our website or in our Campaign Guide.

How can I be involved beyond my Workplace Campaign?

There are many ways to stay engaged with UWLES. Our Emerging Leaders, Women United, and Student United Way groups, along with Board and Advisory committees, are great ways to be connected. UWLES' special events throughout the year are great opportunities to learn more about United Way's work while having fun. Volunteer opportunities for 200+ nonprofits can be found through our Get Connected Volunteer Center at shoregetconnected.org. Additionally, donors of any age can explore easy-planned giving and retirement options to create a personal legacy. And don't forget to engage with us regularly on social media!

What if I have additional questions?

Let's connect! We're happy to help with any questions you may have. Please call 410-742-5143, visit uwles.org, or message us on socials.