



*The Heart of the United Way of Greater Hazleton, Inc.*

*Mary Jane Sweeney Ricco*

September 3, 1942 ~ December 28, 2023

United Way of Greater Hazleton, Inc.

## *Report to the Community*



2023-24



# Announcing Mary Jane Ricco Compassionate Care and Kindness Agency of the Year Award

The Board of Directors of the United Way of Greater Hazleton, Inc. is pleased to introduce the Mary Jane Ricco Compassionate Care and Kindness Award In honor and memory of Mary Jane Ricco, the heart and soul of our United Way.

As everyone who knew Mary Jane, she loved the member agencies and always referred to them as, “my agencies.” Just as a mother always looks out for her children, Mary Jane kept the agencies close to her heart.

Mary Jane was always the first to jump on board as the ultimate team player. She would always seek a solution to whatever problem might arise; the first to say yes to any crazy ideas we proposed; the first to lean a hand—the eternal prayer warrior and friend.

So many of “her” agencies fall into the same category. In her honor we seek to recognize one agency each and every year that goes above and beyond in their own right.



## MISSION STATEMENT:

The United Way of Greater Hazleton is a non-profit whose mission is to bring together individuals and businesses in our area. We are dedicated to providing funding, guidance and encouragement to our partner agencies who help people throughout the Greater Hazleton Region. Our goal is to reduce and fight poverty by creating a movement that engages all of us to bring passion and creativity towards this effort.



**United Way  
of Greater Hazleton, Inc.**

## Our New Home



WE MOVED TO A NEW OFFICE!!!

The United Way of Greater Hazleton has relocated to

200 West Chapel Street in Hazleton!

We are sharing office space with our friends at

Catholic Social Services

200 West Chapel Street Second Floor

Hazleton, PA 18201

We See YOU — Now You SEE Us!

The United Way of Greater Hazleton, Inc. Family

Gary, Whitney and Grayson Perna

And the Perna Pups!

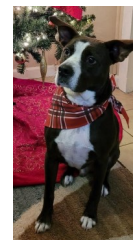


Amorette & Mike Bar

Amorette Children & Milo

Vince & Sheryl DiSabella

Alyson, Kenny & Ashton



Agency Partners / Agency Team  
Avenues-Hazleton 570-501-1005 [www.avenuesofpa.org](http://www.avenuesofpa.org)  
Big Brothers/Big Sisters 800-955-4376 [www.dioceseofscranton.org](http://www.dioceseofscranton.org)  
Boy Scouts of America, Minsi Trails Council 1-800-360-6551  
[www.minsitrails.com](http://www.minsitrails.com)  
Catholic Social Services 570-455-1521 [www.dioceseofscranton.org](http://www.dioceseofscranton.org)  
Child Development Council 570-455-6647  
[www.childdevelopmentcouncil.com](http://www.childdevelopmentcouncil.com)  
Commission on Economic Opportunity (CEO) 570-455-4994  
[www.ceopeoplehelpingpeople.org](http://www.ceopeoplehelpingpeople.org)  
Community Services for Sight 570-455-0421  
[www.communityservicesforsight.org](http://www.communityservicesforsight.org)  
Domestic Violence Service Center 1-800-424-5600  
[www.domesticviolenceservice.org](http://www.domesticviolenceservice.org)  
Freeland YMCA 570-636-3640  
211/Help Line 1-888-829-1341 [www.pa211.ne.org](http://www.pa211.ne.org)  
Helping Hands Society 570-455-4958 [www.helpinghandssociety.com](http://www.helpinghandssociety.com)  
Meals on Wheels of Greater Hazleton 570-501-1700  
[www.mealsonwheelshazleton.com](http://www.mealsonwheelshazleton.com)  
Pathway to Recovery Counseling & Educational Services - 570-455-9902 [www.pathway-to-recovery.org](http://www.pathway-to-recovery.org)  
United Charities 570-455-1529  
Victims Resource Center 1-866-206-9050 [www.vrcnepa.org](http://www.vrcnepa.org)

Dear Friends ~

To say this year has been a challenge should come as no surprise to you. As Robert Frost so perfectly said, "The best way out is always through." So, we continue moving – looking for new ways to raise much-needed funds, while creating programs to address the ever-growing needs in our community; continuing to fight for those who can't.

Adding to the challenge is looking forward to the future and setting a sustainable path of our United Way to ensure its viability for our grandchildren's grandchildren. We are diligently examining every possibility to best continue the legacy built by the strong visionary pioneers who set the foundation in place. We know we are still doing the good work our history has proven; people still seek us for answers and help; our programs are hugely successful (as proven just by the example that our Back-to-School Supplies giveaway handed out over 700 filled backpacks in less than one hour). The needs are here and continue to grow and change.

We cannot make this the best United Way it can be without your help and the help of everyone in the Greater Hazleton area. The original concept of giving is still crucial to guaranteeing the safety net needed; your dollars alone can't help as much as your dollars combined with your neighbor's dollars and those of others in our community. We are so much stronger together.

You are needed now more than ever. The spirit of cooperation and a clear vision of helping those whose names and faces you may never know remains the hope of a better community.

"In necessary things, unity; in doubtful things, liberty; in all things, charity."

(In necessariis, unitas; in dubiis, libertas; in omnibus, caritas.)

— Rupertus Meldenius

With a hopeful spirit,



Gary J. Perna  
President & CEO  
United Way of Greater Hazleton, Inc.





# United Way Youth Allocation Panel

Diane Arias-Tejeda MMI  
Juliette Bartel WHS  
Sawyer Bowser HAHS  
Andrea Buenano HAHS  
Sydney Chapin HAHS  
London Chehovich MMI  
Mykayla Chisley HAHS  
Ryan Clymer-Sones MMI  
John Drobnock III MMI  
Teya Eames MCHS  
Skylin Estrella HAAS  
Kayleen Francisco-Diaz HACC  
Kaylee Gaydosick WHS  
Kendall Gerhart WHS  
Milana Grier WHS  
Grace Guza HAHS  
Caylee Herseim MMI  
Reese Kaschak HAHS  
Haylee Klesh HAHS  
Kiera Kupsho HAAS  
Diego Marmolejos HAHS  
Mellanie Marshman WHS  
Kaitlyn Petrilla HAAS  
Isabella Podlesny HAHS  
Marcus Rosenstiel Jr MCHS  
Erika Sanchez-Garcia HACC  
Kiara Vasquez HAAS  
Kaitlyn Warner HAAS  
Jacob Wolfe HAHS  
Mason Wolfe HAAS






*Dolly Parton's Imagination Library* mails free, age appropriate books to children across the world.

We partner with local communities to provide one hand-selected, age-appropriate, high-quality book each month to registered children from birth to age five.

*Sign Up Today! Contact:*



<b>Avenues - Hazleton 570-501-1005</b> Vocational and employment services to people with developmental and/ or acquired disabilities, helping each individual to reach their full vocational potential. <a href="http://www.avenuesofpa.org">www.avenuesofpa.org</a>	<b>Freeland YMCA 570-636-3640</b> Provides character development, citizenship training, physical fitness, weight training, cardio room, and health and education programs. Open 7 days <a href="http://www.freelandymca.com">www.freelandymca.com</a>
<b>Big Brothers Big Sisters 1-800-955-4376</b> Helps children reach their Big fullest potential through professionally supported one to one mentoring relationships. For more information contact BB/BS. <a href="http://www.bbbsncpa.com">www.bbbsncpa.com</a>	<b>211/Help Line Dial 211 or 1-888-829-1341</b> Free 24/7 telephone information, referral & advocacy program. Crisis intervention service for public & private agencies. Text your zip code to 898211 and a caseworker will answer your questions. <a href="http://www.pa211inc.org">www.pa211inc.org</a>
<b>Boy Scouts of America, Minsi Trails Council 610-264-8551</b> Provides fun and challenging activities in a safe, positive environment, developing character and leadership skills in youth from ages 6 – 21. <a href="http://www.minsitrails.org">www.minsitrails.org</a>	<b>Helping Hands Society 570-455-4958</b> Provides therapeutic & training services for special needs and typical children. Individual speech & language therapy, physical therapy; pre-school daily classes; toddler classes; academic helper program—school-age children, parent counseling. <a href="http://www.helpinghandsociety.com">www.helpinghandsociety.com</a>
<b>Catholic Social Services 570-455-1521</b> St. Joseph's Pantry, Divine Providence Homeless Shelter, Self Sufficiency/Relief Services, Bridge to Independence – transitional youth housing. Women in Need (W.I.N.) program. <a href="http://www.dioceseofscranton.org">www.dioceseofscranton.org</a>	<b>Meals on Wheels of Greater Hazleton 570-501-1700</b> Volunteers deliver balanced meals (including doctor ordered special diets) and provide daily visitation to individuals who are unable to prepare their own food. <a href="http://www.mealsonwheelshazleton.com">www.mealsonwheelshazleton.com</a>
<b>Child Development Council 570-455-6647</b> Child care services -infants, toddlers and preschoolers (6 mos. - 5 years). Keystone Star 3 quality center. Support services available-special needs students. Pre-K Counts program free- those eligible. <a href="http://www.childdevelopmentcouncil.com">www.childdevelopmentcouncil.com</a>	<b>Pathway to Recovery 570-455-9902</b> Substance Abuse Treatment and Education. Mental Health Treatment. Medication Management. Individual & group counseling, partial hospitalization, schools- education & intervention, tobacco cessation; community education; employee assistance program. <a href="http://www.pathway-to-recovery.org">www.pathway-to-recovery.org</a>
<b>Commission on Economic Opportunity (CEO) 570-455-4994</b> Food & nutrition, energy conservation, comprehensive housing & counseling, specialized elderly & disabled services-health & independence. Hardship programs-material aid, traveler's aid, prescription assistance based on funding availability. <a href="http://www.ceopeoplehelpingpeople.org">www.ceopeoplehelpingpeople.org</a>	<b>United Charities of Hazleton 570-455-1529</b> Provides material assistance (food, clothing, furniture) and supervised parent/child visitations. <a href="http://www.uchkids@ptd.net">www.uchkids@ptd.net</a>
<b>Community Services for Sight 570-455-0421</b> Serving blind individuals living in the Greater Hazleton area, including severe vision impairments, "functional blindness" or "legal blindness". Serves the sighted community through public information. Serving Southern Luzerne, Carbon, and Schuylkill counties. <a href="http://www.communityservicesforsight.org">www.communityservicesforsight.org</a>	<b>Victims Resource Center 570-823-0765</b> Counseling, court accompaniment, systems advocacy to sexual assault/other serious crimes victims & families. Education/prevention programs to schools & professionals. 24-hour crisis hotline. <a href="http://www.vrcncpa.org">www.vrcncpa.org</a>
<b>Domestic Violence Service Center 1-800-424-5600</b> Provides abuse victims with quality supportive services & safe and real-istic solutions for victims of family violence. Immediate physical safety. <a href="http://www.domesticviolenceservice.org">www.domesticviolenceservice.org</a>	 <b>NEED HELP? 211 can connect you!</b> Feeding your family, paying utilities, keeping the heat on, avoiding eviction, caring for parents, joining the workforce, information and referrals and more!
<b>UNITED WAY OF GREATER HAZLETON, INC.</b> 200 West Chapel Street Second floor Hazleton, PA 18201 tel. 570-455-9515 <a href="http://www.unitedwayhazleton.org">www.unitedwayhazleton.org</a>	 

# United Way of Greater Hazleton Board of Directors

Allison Barletta Antolick  
*Hazle Auto Parts*

Donna Barna  
*Billig Helmes Insurance*

Anthony Colombo  
*Penn DOT*

Robert Knight, Jr.  
*Penn State University – Hazleton Campus*

Pat Korb  
*Community Volunteer*

Terrence J. Malloy  
*Luzerne Bank – Chair*

Catherine McGovern, Esq.  
*Senape & Associates*

Mark Minnig  
*Fidelity Bank*

Deacon Robert Roman  
*Queen of Heaven Parish*

Sarah Wech  
*Nexii*

*"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." – Gandhi*

Financial



A PROGRAM  
OF THE  
UNITED WAY  
OF  
GREATER  
HAZLETON

THIS PROGRAM PROVIDES BOOKS TO LOCAL POLICE OFFICERS  
WHO WILL BE ABLE TO GIVE THEM TO CHILDREN THEY  
ENCOUNTER THROUGHOUT THEIR SHIFTS.

UNITED WAY OF GREATER HAZLETON (UWGH) WILL PROVIDE  
EACH PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENT WITH BOOKS TO CARRY IN  
POLICE CRUISERS. UWGH WILL ALSO ACCEPT DONATIONS OF  
AGE APPROPRIATE (NEWBORN TO AGE 6) CHILDREN'S BOOKS.



# THE NURSE'S PANTRY

LIVE UNITED

New Program Alert

A SIMPLE CONCEPT WITH  
TANGIBLE RESULTS  
LACK OF ACCESS TO  
BASIC NECESSITIES -

IS ONE OF THE TOP REASONS  
FOR CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

IN-SCHOOL RESOURCE  
OF CLOTHING,  
TOILETRIES AND  
OTHER WELLNESS  
PRODUCTS SO KIDS  
CAN SUCCEED IN  
SCHOOL AND IN LIFE

**FOR A FAMILY LIVING IN POVERTY**-ia lack of simple items such as hygiene products and school-approved attire, can keep children out of school for days, even weeks. For these children, lost school time means lost learning time, which can leave them less likely to achieve academic success.

**HOW IT WORKS** - Elementary students are introduced to The Nurse's Pantry through school nurses, principals and guidance counselors. In addition to attire, The Nurse's Pantry also provides hygiene items, appropriate footwear, outerwear, undergarments and lice treatment kits.



United Way  
of Greater Hazleton, Inc.

**YOU CAN HELP** - your donation helps us reach and support our highest-risk students with strategies to tackle chronic absenteeism and encourage early grade success.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** - contact Gary Perna @ (570) 455-9515 x 201 or [gary.perna@local.unitedway.org](mailto:gary.perna@local.unitedway.org)

## Annual Campaign Funding

The generous individuals, corporations and members of the Greater Hazleton Area community gave the resources that were allocated to over 18 programs.

In our challenging economy, and as a smaller non-profit, we understand the critical importance of making the donor investment go far. We work hard at partnering and utilizing both time and talent to help keep costs at a minimum.

The United Way of Greater Hazleton is working to strengthen the community focusing on the following program areas: Education, Financial Stability and Health

These are the building blocks for a strong community and a good life. The goal remains to create long-lasting changes by addressing the causes of problems and preventing them from happening.

This year the United Way of Greater Hazleton Inc., secured a \$200,000.00 ARPA grant from Luzerne County to assist our agencies. Each agency received a one time grant for 2023-2024

*"Remember that the happiest people are not those getting more, but those giving more."*

H. Jackson Brown Jr.



### Campaign Volunteer

**Kim Gormley**

**Dawn Floyd**

**Melissa Frederick**

**Danielle Matarella**

**Sudie Dinofrio**

**Maria Bonin**

**Michele Kushmeder**

**Dr. Brian Uplinger**

**Scott Burkhardt**

**Rose McKinley**

**Kathryn Waschko**

**Barb Forte**

**ton**

**Kim McNulty**

**Alexandra Hernandez**

**David Pedri**

**Lori Hoffman**

**Leeann Willis**

**Lisa Marie Halecky**

### Company

*Boscovs Department Store*

*Bradley Caldwell Inc*

*CANDO*

*Catholic Social Services*

*Child Development Council*

*Fidelity Bank*

*Hazleton Area Public Library*

*Hazleton Area School District*

*Hazleton City Authority Dp*

*Henkel Dial Corporation*

*Laurels Senior Living, Inc.*

*Lehigh Valley Hospital - Hazle-*

*MMIPreparatory School*

*Pennsylvania State University*

*The Luzerne Foundation*

*UGI Corporation*

### Awards

#### Special Awards with my suggestions?

Volunteer of the Year—Donna Dougherty ?

Rich M. Saullo Award for Service—Kline Township?

For always helping us!)

The Patrick J. Ward Day of Blessings—UGI

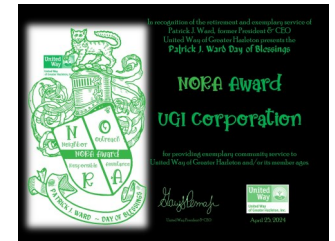
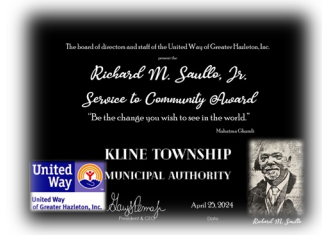
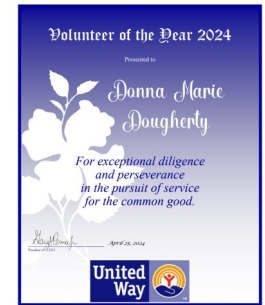
Mary Jane Ricco—Catholic Social Services

Outgoing Board

Deacon Roman

Cathy McGovern

Any one else?



## *Volunteers*

### Awards

#### Top Ten Employee Campaign

- 1 Cargill
- 2 PPL
- 3 LVH Hazleton
- 4 HASD
- 5 Henkel
- 6 UGI
- 7 Hershey
- 8 Can Do
- 9 PSU
- 10 Amcor



#### Top Corporate ~ PPL

#### 100% Participation ~ CAN DO

#### New Donation Drive

#### Niagra

#### Longest continuous donor company

#### PPL

#### New Companies



**New Program Alert**



## *Collaboration*

Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP)  
Annual Community Christmas Dinner  
Annual Community Easter Dinner  
Project S.H.I.N.E.  
Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)  
Rapid Response  
Dolly Parton Imagination Library (DPIL)  
United Way Worldwide  
Agency Relations  
All One Foundation  
Single Care Prescription  
Project ALICE