
2011 FOCUS AREA VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County

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Community Fund Staff

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UNITED WAY OVERVIEW

United Way brings the community together to advance the common good by focusing on education, income and health – the building blocks that must be in place for our community to be successful.

Our goal is to create long-lasting changes that prevent problems from happening in the first place, and together - united - we can all be part of that change and inspire hope for a better tomorrow.

Values

Community focus, compassion, integrity, responsiveness, results

Vision

A strong, caring community

Mission

To strengthen our community by helping people improve their lives and care for one another

Strategies

United Way has three strategies to meet our mission.

- 1) Engage people
- 2) Improve community
- 3) Enhance capacity

Volunteer and Staff Structure

United Way is a volunteer-led organization. The organizational and staffing structure of United Way are subject to change over time. Each volunteer committee is the responsibility of a specified staff person. As a Focus Area volunteer, you may find it helpful to understand the current staff structure of United Way (appendix A).

THE COMMUNITY FUND

OVERVIEW

The Community Fund consists of money raised annually by United Way which is undesignated, designated to fields of service, or designated to United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County. Designations to any other organizations (including other United Ways) are not included in the Community Fund.

The dollars available in the Community Fund are distributed by the Board of Directors of United Way to fund programs that effectively address critical health and human service needs in Buncombe County in the areas of **Education, Income, and Health**. The Community Fund Committee (appendix B) oversees the management of the Community Fund and makes recommendations for funding to the Board of Directors in May.

INVESTMENT PROCESS

The Community Fund is invested through an annual, volunteer-driven program review process. Investment recommendations are made by knowledgeable community members that serve on the Education, Income, and Health focus area groups. These volunteers review program proposals, pose follow-up questions to programs, discuss the programs, and make investment recommendations to the Community Fund Committee. The Community Fund Committee then takes those recommendations to the United Way Board of Directors.

United Way Staff Role

The United Way staff (particularly Lance Edwards, Community Investment Director and Ron Katz, Focus Area Manager) support all volunteers throughout the investment process. Staff is charged with communicating with all volunteers regarding meeting times, locations, responsibilities, etc. It is the goal of United Way staff that volunteers be supported in a manner that allows them to obtain all of the information needed to effectively review programs and make investment recommendations.

PROGRAM INVESTMENTS

United Way invests in programs with results that address the needed improvements identified by the Education, Income, and Health focus area groups. A program is a service or a group of related and supportive services that work together to accomplish specific results for clients. A program has one budget and is operated to help an organization fulfill its mission.

Each program is required to establish clear intended results for their clients, demonstrate the success of the program, and measure the improvements realized by the people served by the program. Program results (i.e. benefits to clients) are used to demonstrate the value of the funded programs and to determine the impact of such programs on United Way's identified needed improvements.

Funded Organizations' Requirements

Organizations that receive a grant from the Community Fund accept a general stewardship responsibility. In order to meet this responsibility, each organization must maintain adherence to the **Standards of Excellence** (appendix C) and the **Contractual Obligations** (appendix D) at all times.

Programs receiving United Way investments are considered vital in addressing the needed improvements identified by the Education, Income, and Health focus area groups. Organizations are expected to clearly demonstrate that their programs provide positive results for their clients that align with one or more specific needed improvement.

PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS

During the investment review period (February through April), the main function of Focus Area members is to review, score, rank, and determine the level of investment for each program under consideration. This is a straightforward process that involves a few key components and considerations. Following is a brief, "big picture" overview of events, in the order in which they occur.

- Declaring conflicts of interest – All reviewers must declare any conflicts of interest they have with a particular organization that should exclude them

from making funding decisions about that organization's programs. This declaration process will take place before the review process begins (appendix E).

- Reviewing program applications – Focus area members will have access to program applications via United Way's online software after the first February meeting.
- Posing questions to programs – Reviewers have the opportunity to pose questions in writing to programs that may arise after reading the applications. Questions for each program will be compiled by a United Way staff member and presented to an organization representative. The organizations will then be given ample time to provide written responses to all questions. These responses will be made available to all members of the group, regardless of which member(s) posed the question(s).
- Scoring programs - After reading a program application and all information provided by the organization in response to follow-up questions, the reviewer should score the program via the online score system. This process is explained in more detail below.
- Ranking programs and making funding recommendations – Focus Area members will meet in April – after all program applications have been reviewed – in order to determine which programs will be recommended for funding and at what level. This will take two or three meetings, depending on the number of programs to be reviewed. Members will be provided with an average of the scores that each program received from Focus Area group members. From that point, general discussion about each program will take place, adjustments in scoring may be made (by group consensus), and funding recommendations will be determined.
- Three-year funding considerations – A program that has 3 years of scores at or above 80% of the total points available on the score sheet may qualify for three-year funding. Three-year funding is awarded as a set amount per year for a 3-year period. Increases or decreases in the 2nd and 3rd year may be made only in direct relation to increases or decreases in the Community Fund from year to year. An organization that qualifies for three-year funding does not have to be awarded a 3-year contract. Full eligibility criteria for three-year funding can be found in appendix F.

SCORING PROGRAMS

In our effort to ensure accountability and to fund services that address priority needs, United Way funds specific programs (vs. entire organizations). A program is a service or a group of related and supportive services that work together to accomplish specific results for clients. A program has one budget and serves as the tool to offer services and meet the organization's mission.

When scoring programs, Focus Area volunteers should focus on:

- **information acquired from the applications**
- **written responses organizations provide to follow-up questions**

Focus Area volunteers will score each program on-line using a standard Score sheet (appendix G). The scores given to each program from volunteers will be averaged to determine an overall score for each of the 13 line items. These average scores will serve as the "starting point" for discussing each program at the April Focus Area meetings.

FINAL DECISIONS

There will always be more requests than there are dollars to fund these requests. All volunteers should become familiar with the "Criteria for Funding Programs" document (appendix H). This document will be very helpful as Focus Areas determine which programs to recommend for funding and at what level.

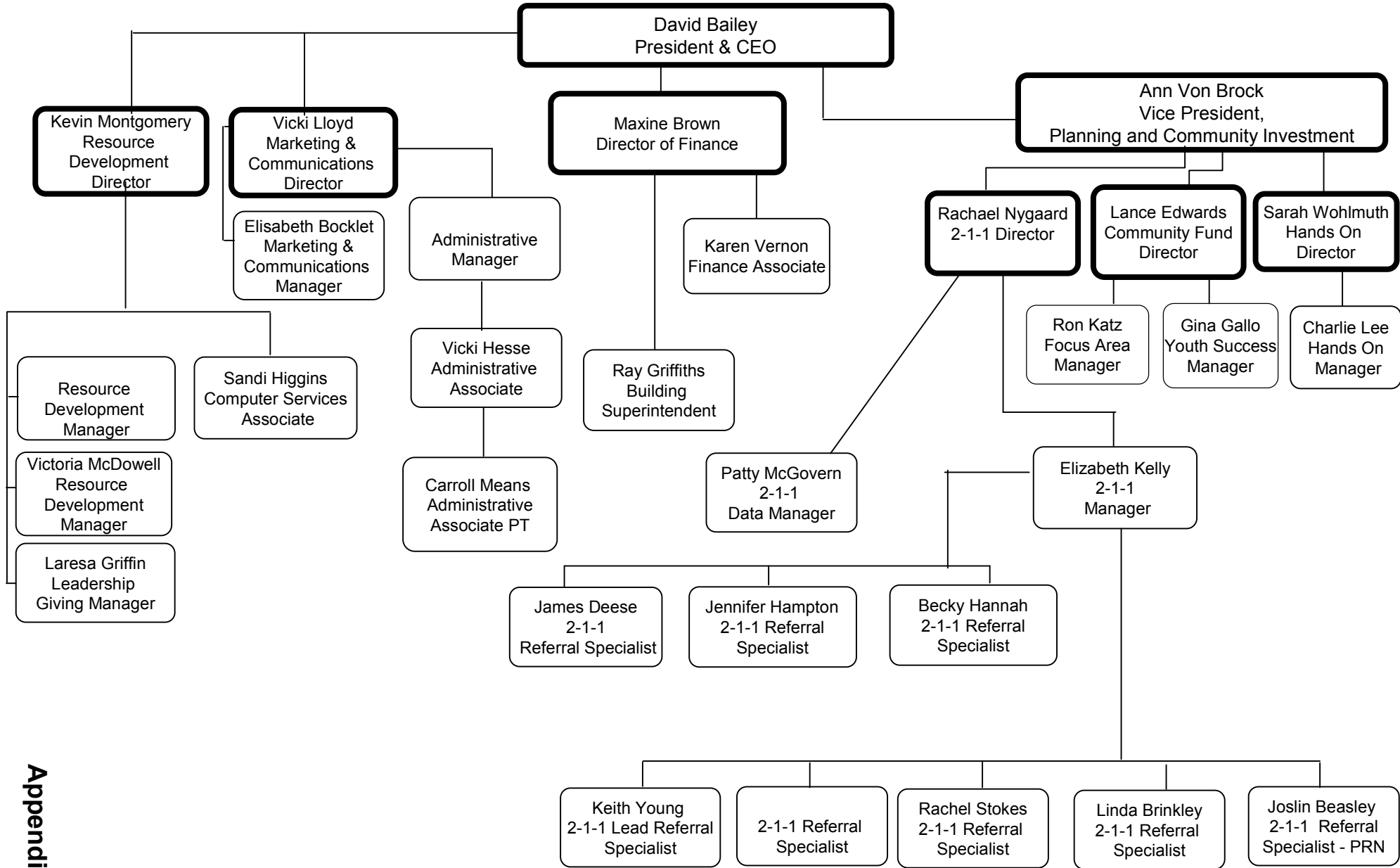
The final product for each of the Focus Areas will be a list of the programs they would like to fund and an amount of funding they recommend for each program.

These formal Focus Area recommendations will be reviewed by the chairs of the three Focus Area groups and the Community Fund Committee chair and vice chair. The purpose of this review is to consider any intra-focus area amendments that may be needed. This group will then make a recommendation to the Community Fund Committee as to which programs to fund and the amount of funding for each program.

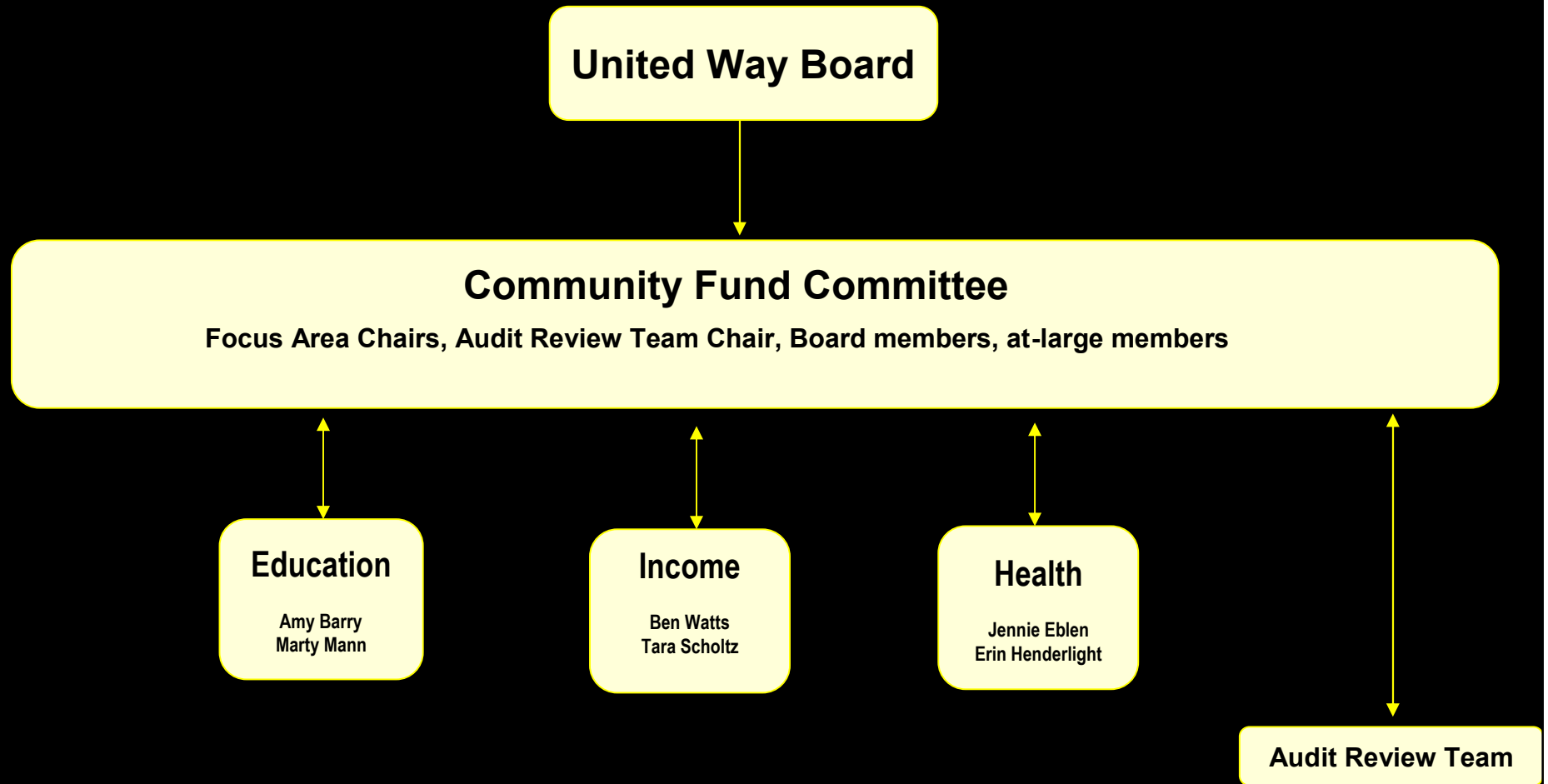
The Community Fund Committee will review the details of this recommendation at its May meeting. Changes can be made at this meeting, but are unlikely. After discussion, the Community Fund Committee votes to approve the proposed investments.

Then, the Community Fund Chair will present the agreed upon proposal for funding at the United Way Board of Directors meeting in May for final approval. Organizations are notified of the investment decisions immediately after approval by the Board of Directors.

2010 Staff Structure



2011 Community Investment Structure



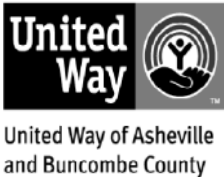


United Way of Asheville
and Buncombe County

United Way's Standards of Excellence 2011-12 Checklist

Agencies applying for United Way funding must meet these Standards of Excellence. Please review the following checklist and have the appropriate verification in place for United Way staff to review.

___	1. The agency is incorporated. (A)
___	2. The agency is exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service or is otherwise exempt from taxation and files annually with the North Carolina Department of Human Resources for charitable solicitations licensure. (B), (C), & (D)
___	3. The agency volunteer board is governed by bylaws that are reviewed annually and ratified or revised as needed. (E) & (F)
___	4. The board meets regularly (at least four times per year), operates with a quorum, and records minutes of all meetings. (G)
___	5. The agency (if it receives \$25,000 or more in United Way funds or has annual revenues at or above \$350,000) has an independent audit conducted by a Certified Public Accountant or an accountant who is qualified by the NC Board of Accountancy. For agencies not meeting this threshold, the agency is to complete an annual financial review. (H)
___	6. The board controls the fiscal affairs of the organization, including the development and adoption of an annual budget and written financial policies and procedures. The board also monitors income and expenditures, fully discloses all assets and liabilities, and insures that the use of funds is in accordance with the mission and solicitation materials. (I), (J), (K)
___	7. The agency has outlined its goals in a strategic plan. (L)
___	8. Each program has an annual operating plan with quantifiable outputs and outcomes objectives that specify the results to be achieved during the defined time period. (M)
___	9. A system is in place to measure progress in achieving results (i.e., meeting output and outcome objectives) and to report progress to the board. (N)
___	10. The agency has secured certification or accreditation through a local, state, or national affiliate when necessary. (O)
___	11. The agency has insurance coverage commensurate with the risks associated with its programs. (P)
___	12. The agency has a non-discrimination policy for its staff, governing body, committees, and services delivered that reflect the agency's service area. (Q)
___	13. The staff is sufficiently qualified by training and experience, and job descriptions exist for all staff members that indicate the person to whom the staff member is accountable. (R)
___	14. The agency has written personnel policies that are board-approved and available to the entire staff. (S)
___	15. Staff members, including executive director, are evaluated periodically--at least on an annual basis. (T)
___	16. To the Board's knowledge, facilities required for United Way funded programs meet all applicable federal, state, and local requirements, including access, health, fire, and safety codes. (U)



United Way’s Contractual Obligations for Funded Community Partners

Agencies applying for United Way funding must be able to adhere to all of the following. Please review the following checklist and have the appropriate signature.

	A. The agency will maintain its status as a non-profit charitable organization and conduct its operation in a manner which will not jeopardize the tax deductibility under state and federal law, and the exemption under federal, estate, and gift tax laws.
	B. The agency will meet all applicable “Standards of Excellence for United Way Partner Agencies” and provide related supporting documentation as requested in a timely manner.
	C. The agency will coordinate with and give full support to United Way and its annual campaign, demonstrated by making volunteer and professional leadership available for speaking engagements, conducting a United Way campaign within the Agency, and participating in campaign-related events to support the success of the annual campaign.
	D. The agency will submit program proposals on the forms provided and at the times designated and to participate without reservation in the Focus Area process.
	E. The agency accepts the funding made for the current year and will operate within the United Way’s policies, as outlined in United Way’s manual titled “Handbook for Funded Agencies.”
	F. The agency assures that funds are used to achieve desired results as outlined in the program proposal.
	G. The agency will provide United Way with audits (or outside financial reviews) and accompanying management letters, service figures, and other information in the form and at the time designated.
	H. The agency will provide United Way with a year-end report of program outcomes no later than August 1 after the end of each contract year.
	I. The agency will recognize in public United Way’s financial support of the Agency’s program(s) and include references in publicity materials produced by the agency, such as annual reports, program brochures, posters, newspaper releases, and websites.
	J. The agency will keep its program fees and service charges commensurate with the cost of the services rendered, the nature of the program, and the ability of the participant to pay.
	K. The agency will collaborate with other organizations, both private and public, in addressing systemic issues, meeting the needs of the community, preventing unnecessary duplication of services, and promoting high standards of accountability, efficiency and effectiveness.
	L. The agency will advise United Way of contemplated expansions, consolidations, mergers, and other changes in funded programs and provide an opportunity for joint consideration of such changes before they are made.
	M. The agency will conduct all local fundraising in accordance with United Way’s policies.
	N. The agency will list all funded programs with United Way’s 2-1-1 and make updates at least annually.
	O. The agency will provide the necessary information to United Way to direct deposit monthly checks.

Conflict of Interest Policy for Community Fund Volunteers

The purpose of the following policy is to prevent the personal interest of Community Fund volunteers to interfere with the performance of their duties to United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County or result in personal, financial, professional and/or political gain on the part of such persons at the expense of United Way or the programs it funds.

Definitions:

- Conflict of Interest (also Conflict) means a conflict, or the appearance of a conflict, between the private interests and official responsibilities of a person in a position of trust. Persons in a position of trust, in this case, refer to Community Fund volunteers.
- Governing Board (also Board) means the board of directors.
- Volunteer means Focus Area volunteer, Community Fund Committee member, or any member of a committee, subcommittee or team that reports to the Community Fund Committee.
- United Way means United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County.

Policy:

1. Individuals that serve in a volunteer capacity with an agency that is applying for funding must disclose his/her role with that agency.
2. Full disclosure, by notice in writing, shall be made by the interested parties in all conflicts of interest, including but not limited to the following:
 - a) A volunteer is employed by an agency that is seeking funding from the Focus Area s/he sits on.
 - b) A volunteer has immediate family members employed by an agency that is seeking funding from the Focus Area s/he sits on.
 - c) A volunteer sits on the Governing Board of an agency that is seeking funding from the Focus Area s/he sits on.
 - d) A volunteer has a financial interest with an agency that is seeking funding from the Focus Area s/he sits on.
3. In the case of 2a), the volunteer shall be removed from any Focus Area for the duration s/he is an employee of an applying agency.
4. In the case of 2b), 2c), and 2d), the volunteer must withdraw from the meeting room during final discussion and voting on the particular program(s) with which he/she has a conflict of interest.

Enforcement:

- A copy of this policy shall be given to all volunteers who serve as a Focus Area volunteer, Community Fund Committee member, or any member of a committee, subcommittee or team that reports to the Community Fund Committee.
- Community Fund, Focus Area, and team chairs have flexibility in the interpretation of the above policy, as long as the policy is enforced equally within each Focus Area, committee, or team.
- Failure to disclose a conflict might subject the volunteer to removal from a Focus Area.

Printed Name: _____

Volunteer Signature: _____

Committee/Focus Area/Team: _____ Date: _____

Guidelines for Three-Year Funding Eligibility

1. To qualify for three-year funding, a program must have a 2-year funding history with United Way and must have received an average score equal to or above **80%** of the total points available on the score sheets during each of the 3 most recent annual program reviews
2. Up to 1/3 of the total dollars in the Community Fund should be available for allocation of new three-year grants each year.
3. The operating guideline for each Focus Area to recommend three-year grants is also 1/3 of available funds, or one program (should a single program request be greater than 1/3 of the funds available to a particular Focus Area).
4. A Focus Area may request more than 1/3 of their available funds be allocated in the form of three-year grants, though the total Community Fund dollars awarded in three-year grants each year should not exceed 1/3.
5. Focus Area members will be responsible for voting on which eligible programs should be recommended for three-year funding.
6. A quorum (51%) of the Focus Area volunteers must be present to vote on three-year funding recommendations.
7. A minimum of 2/3 of Focus Area volunteers present must vote in favor of recommending three-year funding to a program in order for the decision to be passed to the Community Fund Committee.
8. A Focus Area can request an exemption to one or more of the above guidelines. A rationale for such a request must be provided and the request must be approved by the Community Fund Committee and the Board of Directors.
9. The Community Fund Committee can request an exemption to one or more of the above guidelines. A rationale for such a request must be provided and the request must be approved by the Board of Directors.
10. Programs that reach the end of a three-year funding cycle must reapply for funding and receive an average score equal to or above **80%** of the total points available on the score sheet in order to re-qualify for three-year funding.



Focus Area Score Sheet – Spring, 2011

Organization: _____

Program: _____

Reviewer: _____

	Score	Maximum score
Program & Budget		
1. There is a clear need for the program based on the challenges/issues being addressed (section 2, B)		5
2. The program's key steps will likely produce the intended results (section 2, C)		5
3. The approach is backed by evidence of success (section 2, D)		5
4. The program does not provide an unnecessary duplication of services (section 2, E)		5
5. The program is managed and provided by competent staff that will help participants achieve intended results (section 2, F)		5
6. The organization collaborates to maximize the program's effectiveness (section 2, G)		5
7. The program has achievements predicting future success (section 2, H)		5
8. The organization has sufficient and diverse financial resources to operate this program (sections 4 & 5)		5
Results		
9. The explanation of the client population is clear (section 3, b)		5
10. The program's results demonstrate a clear benefit to the clients served (section 3, c & d)		10
11. The program's predicted success rate for clients is reasonable (section 3, e)		5
12. The program's results are measurable (section 3, f & g)		10
13. The program's results clearly address one or more of the needed improvements (section 3, h & i)		10
Total Points		80
14. Based on my review of the application, this program should be considered for funding for the upcoming year.		Yes/No

Comments:

For questions 1 – 9 & 11, a score of:

5 means absolutely, 3-4 means mostly, 1-2 means somewhat, and 0 means not at all.

For questions 10, 12 – 13, a score of:

9-10 means absolutely, 5-8 means mostly, 1-4 means somewhat, and 0 means not at all.



United Way of Asheville
and Buncombe County

CRITERIA FOR FUNDING PROGRAMS

United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County funds programs that:

1. Meet the most important and pressing needs as outlined in the three Focus Area vision statements;
2. Demonstrate impact by having meaningful results that capture the changes for clients served; and
3. Have the financial and organizational capacity to administer the program.

When reviewing applications for United Way programs, Focus Area volunteers are challenged to fund the best programs at the level the programs need to produce the results proposed. The amount of dollars requested is always significantly higher than the amount available in the Community Fund.

To assist Focus Area volunteers meet their charge, United Way has created this “Criteria for Funding Programs”. The Criteria, in combination with the score sheet and written proposals, should provide Focus Area volunteers the information and direction needed to make the funding decisions for the programs they are reviewing.

Considerations for funding:

1. United Way seeks to fund excellence. Not all programs submitting applications can or should be funded. Programs that do not meet United Way priorities, as described by the Focus Area vision statements, barriers and needed improvements, should not be funded.
2. Programs should be rewarded for having results that Focus Area volunteers believe are worth funding, achievable, and show impact.
3. Programs should be given the amount of dollars needed to achieve the results, and a program should not be considered for partial funding if it is not clear how the agency will operate the program if United Way dollars are not provided at the level requested. Limited funding to help an organization develop a program or to show support is not the intention of United Way funding.
4. Focus Area volunteers need to weigh whether proposed results for new programs have the same value as currently achieved results for currently funded programs.
5. Programs should not be penalized for having diverse funding, higher levels of operating reserves than the 3 months recommended by United Way, development staff to fund raise, recently receiving a grant, or if the agency administering the program is part of a national organization.
6. United Way does not fund capital expenses for applicant programs.

Should Focus Area volunteers have questions about how to apply these considerations, they should contact the chair or vice-chair of their Focus Area or Community Fund staff.

Updated: 11/4/09