



United Way of Northeast Mississippi

Community Impact 'Elevator Speech'

What are we about?

Our **vision** is to be a catalyst for philanthropic growth and impact for Northeast MS. Our **mission** is to create opportunities to improve people's lives in the communities we serve.

What is a community impact funding model?

- Our purpose isn't changing—our strategy is. We are focusing on results.
- It's about aligning investments to programs—*not agencies*—that concretely address our 3 focus areas of **Academic Success, Health & Wellness, and Financial Stability**.

Why is this change necessary now?

- We have to stay relevant in order to thrive. This requires staying out in front of the most relevant needs.
- Donors and prospective donors (both large and small) are demanding a greater return on investments.
- Workplace campaigns have stagnated. We had 792 fewer employee donors in 2017 than 2016, and 908 fewer donors in 2017 than in 2015. This trend is expected to continue based on what other United Ways across the U.S. have experienced.
- In 2 years, millennials (born 1980-1997) will make up roughly 50% of the U.S. workforce. They are far less likely to give through the workplace than previous generations. More millennials prefer to give online or through mobile methods.
- Millennials prefer to donate directly to specific causes that align with their interests and to see exactly how their gift made an impact on the community and individuals' lives.

What does the model look like?

- Shifting from being an organization that raises dollars to being an organization that works to impact critical community needs
- Changing from *agency funding* to *program funding*
- Serving as a "convener" – collaborating around common needs among agencies, identifying in-kind resources, tapping area experts, leveraging additional grants
- It is asking: **How much did we do? How well did we do it? How many are better off?**
- Plan would take 3-5 years to be fully implemented

THE TAKEAWAY

The landscape of philanthropy is changing, and United Way must change with it. Today's donors prefer to give to specific causes important to them, and they want to know how their investment is making an impact. United Way's role is no longer just as professional fundraisers, but to identify the issues important in our community and to find solutions to these problems by providing funding for programs and by convening community stakeholders to collaborate on community-wide solutions. Through outcome measurement reporting, recipients of United Way funding can show exactly how they have "moved the needle" on the issues they address, and United Way can then communicate these outcomes on a community-wide level, showing our donors exactly how their investment has improved lives in our community.