



**UNITED WAY**  
St. Croix and  
Red Cedar Valleys

# UNITED IS THE WAY™

## 2025 Annual Impact Report

United Way St. Croix and Red Cedar Valleys (UW Valleys) fights for the health, education, and financial stability for all people in Burnett, Dunn, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, and St. Croix Counties.

# Board & Staff



UW Valleys 2025 Board

## UW VALLEYS BOARD

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Bremer Insurance

**Kaydi Sobottka** | Vice President  
First National Bank of River Falls

**Amy Greske** | Board Secretary  
St. Croix Valley Elder Law

**Tim Bartels** | Treasurer  
Xcel Energy

### BOARD MEMBERS

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**Cathy Asher**  
Security Financial Bank

**Luisa Gerasimo**  
University of Wisconsin – Madison  
Extension Dunn County

**Heidi Jones**  
Burnett County Family  
Resource Center

**Tammi Kincaid**  
University of Wisconsin -  
River Falls

**Melissa Meschke**  
St. Croix County Economic  
Development Corporation

**Brittani Nordquist**  
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**Steve Osero**  
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**Shellee Pechmiller**  
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**Debra Rudquist**  
Amery Hospital & Clinic

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University of Wisconsin - Stout

**Shelly Smith**  
Our Neighbors' Place

### DIRECTOR EMERITUS Recognizing 9+ years of leadership and service.

**Josh Lindseth**  
WESTconsin Credit Union

**Todd Sherman**  
US Bank

## UW VALLEYS TEAM

**Steve McCarthy**  
Executive Director  
Retired on February 10, 2026

**Megan Hausch**  
Director of Development  
megan.hausch@uwvalleys.org

**Samuel Weiske**  
Marketing Coordinator  
samuel.weiske@uwvalleys.org

**Drew Rosales**  
Administrative Manager  
drew.rosales@uwvalleys.org

**Trica Trowbridge**  
211 Program Director  
trica.trowbridge@uwvalleys.org

**Lori Novak**  
211 Community Resource Specialist  
lori.novak@uwvalleys.org

**Betsy Byker**  
Diaper Bank Manager  
betsy.byker@uwvalleys.org

**Krystal Groninger**  
Diaper Bank Coordinator  
krystal.groninger@uwvalleys.org

# OUR SIX COUNTY REGION

Serving communities across

Burnett, Dunn,  
Pepin, Pierce,  
Polk, and  
St. Croix Counties



United Way St. Croix and Red Cedar Valleys (UW Valleys) fights for the health, education, and financial stability of every person in Western Wisconsin. By bringing together local businesses, donors, volunteers, and nonprofit partners, we mobilize resources where they are needed most and ensure investments stay within our communities.

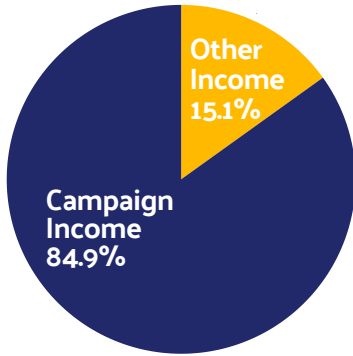
Serving Burnett, Dunn, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, and St. Croix counties, UW Valleys advances measurable impact through direct programs, community investments, and collaborative partnerships. From connecting families to critical resources through 211, to providing emergency assistance and essential supplies, to funding local nonprofits through Community Impact Grants, our work strengthens the foundation of our region.

Together, we are building a Western Wisconsin where every person has the opportunity to lead a healthy life, receive quality education, and achieve financial stability.

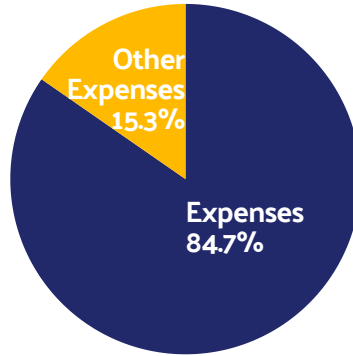
## UW VALLEYS 2025 FINANCIALS - OCT 1, 2024 - DEC 31, 2026

In 2025, UW Valleys transitioned to a January 1 fiscal cycle, resulting in a one-time extended 15-month fiscal period spanning October 1, 2024 through December 31, 2025.

### 2025 Income



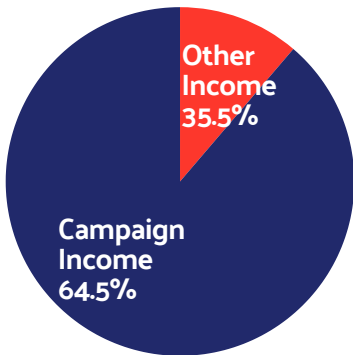
### 2025 Expenses



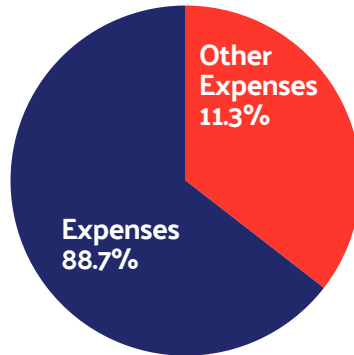
### 2025 Financials

Campaign & Related Income	\$1,071,735
Other Income	\$190,596
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,262,331</b>
Expenses	\$988,188
Other Expenses	\$179,154
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,167,342</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$94,989</b>

### 2024 Income



### 2024 Expenses



### 2024 Financials

Campaign & Related Income	\$656,792
Other Income	\$361,601
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,018,293</b>
Expenses	\$656,792
Other Expenses	\$361,601
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,018,293</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$131,751</b>

## WORKPLACE CAMPAIGNS

Give where you live. Invest where you work.

Donations made through a UW Valleys workplace campaign are reinvested locally through Community Impact Grants, supporting nonprofit organizations dedicated to improving the health, education, and financial stability of individuals across Western Wisconsin.

Workplace campaigns bring employees and businesses together to support local programs and services that strengthen communities across our region. These campaigns make it easy for individuals to give back through their workplace, with contributions directly supporting essential resources for individuals and families throughout Western Wisconsin.



**nexen**

**XcelEnergy**

# Supporting Community-Led Solutions



## UW VALLEYS COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANTS

UW Valleys invests local dollars back into local solutions through the Community Impact Grant Program. In 2025, **\$180,000** was awarded to **30 nonprofit partners** serving Burnett, Dunn, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, and St. Croix counties. These grants support programs that advance health, education, and financial stability across Western Wisconsin.

Through Community Impact Grants, local organizations expanded access to nutritious food, healthcare services, youth mentorship, housing support, family resources, and other essential services that help individuals and families build stability. By partnering with trusted nonprofits already serving their communities, UW Valleys helps ensure resources are directed where they are needed most.

These investments strengthen local organizations and support both immediate needs and long-term stability across the region.

View the 2025 Community Impact Grant Recipients: [uwvalleys.org/community-impact-grants](http://uwvalleys.org/community-impact-grants)



## OTTO BREMER TRUST COMMUNITY RESPONSIVE FUND

In partnership with the Otto Bremer Trust and United Way of Wisconsin, UW Valleys helped direct **\$292,000** in Community Responsive Fund grants to organizations serving Western Wisconsin in 2025. This funding supported nonprofits addressing urgent community needs, including healthcare access, disability services, mental health support, and services for children and families.

Through this collaboration, philanthropic investment helped strengthen essential services and expand support for individuals and families across Burnett, Dunn, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, and St. Croix counties. Funding supported organizations providing critical healthcare services, mental health resources, disability support, and assistance for individuals and families experiencing crisis or instability.

By partnering with regional and statewide funders, UW Valleys helped ensure resources were directed toward organizations making a meaningful impact throughout the six-county region.

Grant recipients included Positive Alternatives, Arbor Place, St. Croix Therapy, Hudson Hospital, Amery Regional Medical Center, Western Wisconsin Health, Osceola Medical Center, and Turningpoint for Victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence.



OTTO BREMER TRUST

# Mobilizing the Caring Power of Communities



School District of River Falls "Stuff the Bus" Diaper Drive, October 2025

## 211 Information and Referral Services

When individuals and families do not know where to turn, 211 is often the first call. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, this free and confidential service connects residents to local resources including housing assistance, food programs, utility support, mental health and addiction services, transportation, and more.

In 2025, UW Valleys 211 responded to **2,644 inquiries** and **provided 8397 referrals** across the six county region. Since the establishment of the program in August 2019, UW Valleys staff have directly responded to **21,125 inquiries in our service area**.

View the **2025 211 Impact Report** on [www.uwvalleys.org/211](http://www.uwvalleys.org/211) to learn more.



UW Valleys received grant support from the Hudson Hospital Foundation in support of 211 services and the JCHF.

## John Coughlin Hope Fund (JCHF)

The John Coughlin Hope Fund provides emergency financial assistance to individuals and families facing unexpected crises when no other resources are available. The fund helps cover urgent expenses such as housing, utilities, medical expenses, and transportation, offering short term support during difficult moments.

In 2025, the Hope Fund distributed **\$14,881** to support **42 households**. A total of 175 applications were received, reflecting the growing need for emergency financial assistance.

View the **2025 JCHF Impact Report** on [www.uwvalleys.org](http://www.uwvalleys.org) to learn more.



Compass IL hosted the first diaper drive in Dunn County in October 2025.

## Diaper Bank

Access to diapers is essential for keeping infants and toddlers healthy, yet many families struggle to afford this basic necessity. UW Valleys partners with local organizations to provide free diapers and wipes to children in need across our region. In April 2025, the program expanded through a partnership with Stepping Stones of Dunn County and Dunn County Early Head Start to increase access for families.

In 2025, the diaper bank served **549 children** and **489 families across Polk, Pierce, and Dunn counties**, distributing **146,800 diapers** over **1,835 visits**. This consistent monthly support helps families maintain a reliable supply of diapers, reducing financial strain while promoting the health and well-being of young children.

## Mental Health First Aid Training

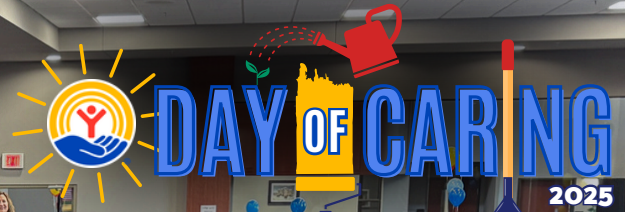
Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) teaches participants how to recognize and respond to signs of mental health or substance use challenges. In 2025, UW Valleys offered adult and youth courses, covering topics such as anxiety, depression, substance use, and youth mental health concerns.

These courses equip community members to provide initial support and connect individuals to appropriate care, helping strengthen local networks of support and promote mental well-being.



UW Valleys received grant support from the St. Croix Valley Foundation to support Mental Health First Aid Training.

# When Community Comes Together



Day of Caring 2025 - Breakfast at Bill's Distributing in Menomonie, WI



Dunn County Volunteer Team at The Bridge To Hope

On October 9, 2025, UW Valleys hosted **Day of Caring** in Dunn and Pepin counties, bringing together volunteers and nonprofit organizations for a day of hands on service. **More than 120 volunteers completed 16 service projects**, supporting local nonprofits, schools, and community spaces.

Volunteers contributed their time and skills to projects including painting, cleaning, organizing, and improving shared spaces where important services take place. These efforts help organizations maintain welcoming and functional environments while allowing staff to focus on delivering programs and support to the individuals and families they serve.

Special thanks to the Day of Caring Committee: Cathy Asher (Security Financial Bank), Luisa Gerasimo (UW Extension Dunn County), Jenalee Nutter (Dunn County), and Shellee Pechmiller (Bill's Distributing).

## THANK YOU DAY OF CARING SPONSORS!



## GIVE BIG VALLEYS

Every Year on the Last Tuesday of April | [givebigvalleys.org](http://givebigvalleys.org)



### Give Big Valleys

Give Big Valleys is a 24-hour online giving event hosted by UW Valleys that brings together nonprofits, donors, businesses, and community members to support organizations working across our region. The event takes place every year on the last Tuesday in April.

In 2025, the community came together in a powerful way. During the one-day event, **885 donors gave \$344,960** to support **81 local nonprofits** serving communities across Western Wisconsin. Each gift, large or small, helped strengthen programs that provide education, health resources, and financial stability for children, seniors, and families.

Beyond the dollars raised, Give Big Valleys helps nonprofits grow their visibility, connect with new supporters, and build lasting relationships with donors. The event reflects the generosity and commitment of a community that continues to show up for the organizations working every day to improve lives across the region.

# Community Partnerships At Work



## Poverty Simulation Event

The Poverty Simulator is an interactive educational event designed to deepen awareness and understanding of the challenges faced by low-income households. Participants roleplayed a simulated month in poverty, making real-time decisions related to housing, transportation, childcare, and other essential needs.

Held on September 29, 2025 at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, the simulation provided participants with a powerful opportunity to explore the realities of ALICE households, consider potential solutions, and gain a deeper understanding of the financial pressures experienced by many local families.

The Poverty Simulation was co-sponsored by the UWRF Student Government Association, UWRF Honors Program, the UWRF Sustainability Office, Our Neighbor's Place, UW Valleys, the Pierce County Hunger Prevention Council, and other community partners. Together, these organizations work to highlight the daily challenges faced by individuals and families living just above the poverty threshold—those who are often unseen, yet deeply impacted by financial instability.



## Xcel Energy Hosts Sheriff's Team Challenge

The 1st Annual Sheriffs' Team Challenge brought together local residents, businesses, and law enforcement for a day of clay shooting, camaraderie, and friendly competition. Participants competed in teams of four, with opportunities for both beginners and experienced shooters alike.

Held October 9, 2025 at Game Unlimited in Hudson, Wisconsin, the event was hosted by Xcel Energy in support of UW Valleys and United Way of Washington County East. More than 60 attendees and eight corporate sponsors participated, raising over \$20,000 to support two incredible United Ways on both sides of the St. Croix River.

## Winter Wear Open House

The Winter Wear Open House, in partnership by UW Valleys and MarketPlace Foods in Menomonie, provided free coats, hats, gloves, and boots to community members in need. Volunteers helped guests find the right sizes and select items, ensuring everyone left prepared for the cold months.

In 2025, two distribution events were held on October 21 and 25, serving 181 individuals and distributing 205 coats and 789 winter items. The event reflects the generosity of donors and the dedication of local organizations supporting families across Menomonie.



# We Support ALICE

## Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed

Who is ALICE? May be a relative or friend. You may be ALICE.

As cashiers, waiters, childcare providers, and other members of our essential workforce, ALICE earns just above the Federal Poverty Level, but less than what it costs to make ends meet.

## Essential, Working, Struggling



### TOP STRESSORS



HOUSING & RENT  
ASSISTANCE



MENTAL HEALTH  
RESOURCES



UTILITY  
ASSISTANCE



TRANSPORTATION



FOOD  
ASSISTANCE

Between ALICE households and those living in poverty, an estimated 35% of households in Wisconsin were below the ALICE Threshold in 2023. Households below the threshold are forced to make impossible choices – like deciding whether to pay for utilities or a car repair, whether to buy food or fill a prescription.

**Approximately 1 in 3 are ALICE and below in the six county region.**

UW Valleys works to address immediate needs while also supporting long term solutions that strengthen financial stability for households across Western Wisconsin.

Learn more: [UnitedForALICE.org/Wisconsin](https://www.unitedforalice.org/Wisconsin)  
Explore local data: UW Valleys - Meet ALICE <https://www.uwvalleys.org/meet-alice>

## ALICE DATA IN THE 6 COUNTY REGION

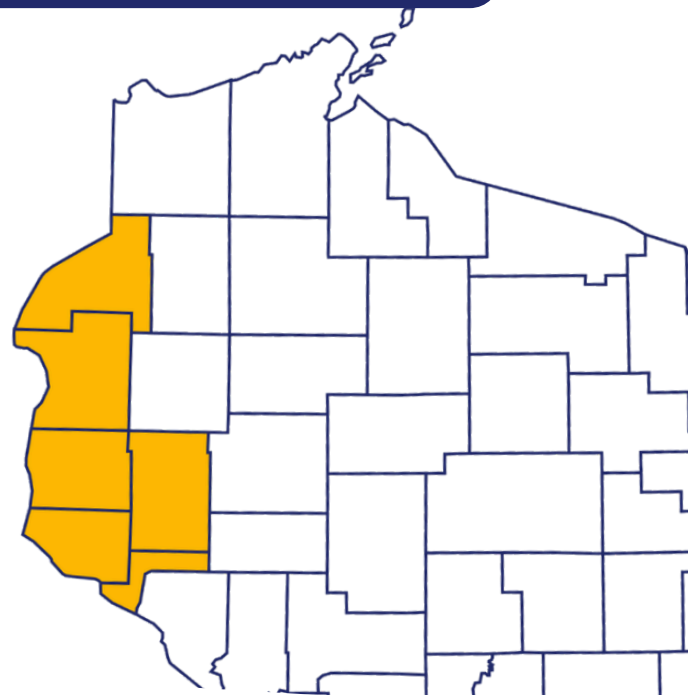
UW Valleys Six County Population: 253,903  
Total Households: 100,706

Median Household Income: \$79,245  
State Average: \$74,631

Labor Force Participation Rate: 63%  
State Average: 65%

ALICE Households: 24%  
State Average: 24%

Households in Poverty: 9.7%  
State Average: 11%



Source: United for ALICE, 2023 Point in Time Data