DEAR FRIENDS,

When we allow ourselves to imagine—to imagine the future we want for our kids, to imagine what getting a better job might mean for the family next door, to imagine what the neighborhood could become with a little help—we summon our best selves forward.

This year, United Way challenged you to imagine, and you delivered with profound vision, big dreams, and a most inspiring sense of hope.

You imagined our kids as the scientists, engineers and teachers of the future, and you worked hand-in-hand with us and each other to give them the foundation to succeed.

You imagined our families self-sufficient, strong, and secure in their homes and careers, and you joined together with United Way to give them the tools to get there.

You imagined someone being there day and night to answer the calls of those facing challenges large and small, and you empowered United Way to be that beacon of hope.

You imagined our veterans coming home to good jobs and plentiful resources, our seniors having the support they need to remain healthy and independent, and anyone who is ready to work toward a better life getting the opportunity to do so.

Sometimes our work requires a leap of faith and a little imagination. This year, you—our donors, volunteers and partners—came through with both. Your imagination, compassion and generosity set so many on the journey to a better future. Because of you, our United Way stands strong and ready to serve anyone seeking a better life. We couldn’t be more proud of all we have accomplished together.

With deep gratitude,

Anna M. Babin
President and CEO

Marc Watts
Chair of the Board
At the heart of our work is ensuring the safety net by providing life-saving services to meet our neighbors’ most basic needs, like food and shelter.

For some, we provide the support needed to get through a tough time. For others, we provide a pathway to self-sufficiency and success. For all of our neighbors, we are a symbol of hope, an agent for change, a leader, a convener, and the organization working to improve the quality of life for everyone in our area.

United Way of Greater Houston invests in quality services throughout our community, leads special initiatives, like United Way THRIVE and United Way Bright Beginnings, operates the 2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE, awards grants for community projects, provides capacity-building services for nonprofits in our area, and brings stakeholders together to address community-wide issues.

Community Investment Process

Our investment decisions are intentional, backed by research and data, made by trained volunteers, and approved by our volunteer Board of Trustees. We invest more in our community than any other United Way in the country, and are proud of the results we deliver.

United Way’s biennial Community Investment Process ensures that donor contributions are invested in programs and services that make a proven impact in our community. Through research, data, program outcomes, partnerships and community conversations, United Way of Greater Houston takes both a big picture and an up close look at what is going on in our community. We study the issues facing our neighbors and the needs in our area, consider current efforts to address the needs and assess our potential for impact. Then, United Way develops a strategy to address those needs with real and lasting change. The Community Investment Process ensures that United Way of Greater Houston’s investments go where they are most needed, achieve measurable results and further the goals of our strategic plan, Vision 20:20.

Last year alone, United Way of Greater Houston improved the lives of more than 2 million of our neighbors.
United Way Centers in the Bay Area, Fort Bend, Montgomery, and Waller Counties

United Way Centers in the Bay Area, Fort Bend, Montgomery and Waller Counties offer critical services in neighboring communities. The Centers house a wide variety of health and human service providers that help with basic needs, counseling, services for children and youth, employment services and other social service needs.

The 2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE connects residents in these communities with tailored local resources and serves as the entry point for local United Way THRIVE services, such as employment coaching, financial coaching, public benefits screening and vocational/educational training.

In times of disaster, United Way is here

In the spring of 2016, our community was devastated by unprecedented flooding. Since then, United Way of Greater Houston has been busy working to help our neighbors and our community recover. United Way brings together social service organizations, corporations, foundations, donors, government entities and other nonprofits to ensure we coordinate and maximize efforts. As a result, United Way leads long-term recovery groups in Fort Bend, Harris, Montgomery and Waller Counties to mobilize collective and cohesive response following disasters.

Year round, United Way supports first responders so they are ready to quickly respond in times of disaster. We invest $1.8 million annually to ensure that disaster services are available in our communities. In 2016, United Way provided an additional $800,000 for immediate case management, basic needs assistance and to establish an unmet needs fund to address the emerging needs of the April/May floods.

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In 2016, our 2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE answered more than 22,400 disaster calls in our 13-county service area.

2016 Community Investment Process by the numbers:

220 volunteers on 15 teams

63 site visits

14,000 hours spent reviewing, analyzing and making recommendations

12 bus tours

160 United Way programs and services reviewed

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Each center serves as a hub in times of disaster to provide disaster case management and other critical services to the community.
A free, confidential helpline operated by United Way of Greater Houston, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the 2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE continued to break records in 2016, answering nearly 973,000 calls for help. Top calls were for assistance with basic needs, like food, followed by medical and prescription assistance, help paying the rent or mortgage, utilities and shelter.
The 2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE is the largest helpline of its kind in the country and one of our community’s most valuable resources. With dedicated United Way THRIVE, seniors, and veterans specialists on staff, 2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE connects families, seniors and their caregivers, and veterans with resources to meet their unique needs. The 2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE is also the information resource before, during and after natural disasters, connecting people in need with up-to-the-minute information and critical services.

In addition to answering nearly 973,000 calls for help, the 2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE made more than 148,000 online referrals and provided help via text message for 75,500 people.

In 2016, the 2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE answered nearly 12,000 calls from veterans and their families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Calls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>245,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>575,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>922,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>940,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>973,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of calls to our 2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE has nearly quadrupled since 2005 and continues to increase each year.

“I’m a veteran, but when I returned home, I had trouble finding the resources that were available to me. I called 2-1-1 and the person I spoke to helped me access my medical benefits and find other resources, like counseling and help finding a job.”

Last year, the 2-1-1 Texas/United Way HELPLINE connected more than 127,600 seniors with the help they needed.
IMPROVING ACADEMIC SUCCESS

At United Way, we are committed to helping our kids succeed in school—and in life.

Through innovative work to improve academic success, we make sure our kids enter school ready to learn, are reading proficiently by fourth grade, transition in and out of middle school, graduate from high school and are prepared for college, work and life.

United Way Bright Beginnings

United Way Bright Beginnings, a partnership between United Way of Greater Houston and ExxonMobil, is an innovative early education program designed to help children from lower-income families achieve social, emotional, physical and cognitive milestones and enter school ready to succeed.

During the last school year, United Way Bright Beginnings alumni outperformed their peers on 40 of 48 STAAR math and reading exams.

40% of United Way Bright Beginnings centers have achieved national accreditation, compared to less than 5% of all child care centers in Houston.

United Way Reading Together

Through third grade, students are learning to read, from fourth grade on, they are reading to learn. United Way Reading Together pairs elementary school students who are a grade or more behind in reading with corporate and community volunteers to ensure that students are reading proficiently by the time they enter fourth grade, a key indicator of future success. During the 2016-17 school year, 130 student and volunteer pairs spent time reading one-on-one.

81% of United Way Reading Together students improved their reading skills, compared to only 51% of other students.

At the end of the year, 78% of United Way Reading Together students achieved an at or above grade level rating, compared to only 58% of other students.
United Way M.A.T.H.

United Way M.A.T.H. is a partnership between United Way of Greater Houston and ConocoPhillips, aimed at improving Algebra I passage rates through increased hands-on experience with math, by making career connections and through peer-to-peer tutoring. United Way M.A.T.H. trains eighth-graders on the academic bubble to become student leaders and tutors to sixth-graders who are also struggling in math. Last year, United Way M.A.T.H. helped nearly 170 students from six schools get ready for algebra.

70% of United Way M.A.T.H. middle school students improved their algebra skills this year.

80% United Way M.A.T.H. elementary school students increased their knowledge of basic math concepts, like addition and multiplication, from the pre- to post-test.

United Way M.A.T.H. Camp

Another component of United Way M.A.T.H. provides much-needed math enrichment while helping to stem the learning loss many students experience while out of school. During the summer, 250 fourth and fifth graders spent an hour a day, four days a week participating in fun, hands-on math activities that reinforced classroom instruction, strengthened pre-algebra skills and energized students to take and pass algebra. And, 139 middle school students participated in the stock market game, learning about personal financial literacy (budgeting, how to read a pay stub, taxes) and building math skills in a fun and engaging way.

Students in United Way M.A.T.H. Camp showed gains in math skills and in their attitude toward math. Middle school student skills gains were 24% in 2016, up from 12% in 2015. Importantly, summer slide was eliminated for most of the youth in the program.

United Way peer-to-peer tutoring

Academically-borderline students are trained to tutor students who are a year behind in reading, with both students building critical reading skills, plus confidence and a deeper connection to school. During the 2016-17 school year, nearly 400 students participated at 14 schools.

91% of teachers say that peer-to-peer tutoring has improved their students’ attitudes about reading.

82% of teachers reported improved reading fluency among peer-to-peer tutoring students.

80% of teachers reported improved reading comprehension among peer-to-peer tutoring students.

“Motivation is something my students need a lot of in order to improve. Through programs like this my students are gaining confidence which is helping them be more successful in the classroom.”

Teacher from United Way peer-to-peer tutoring school

Summer Learning

During the summer, we found creative ways to curb the learning loss many students experience during the out-of-school months and to ensure their success in the classroom when the new school year starts. Through book clubs, kindergarten prep camps and STEM activities, we kept more than 2,600 students and 540 parents engaged in learning over the summer.

125 summer book clubs kept more than 1,000 students engaged in reading.

Three academic bridge programs helped 230 incoming college freshmen who come from economically-disadvantaged families, prepare to start, and succeed in, college.

Students in the Summer of Learning project spent the summer doing hands-on math and science activities, which increased their STEM knowledge by 13%, while the control group declined by 8%. And, the students read a related book before starting each activity and wrote journal entries after, helping to keep their reading skills sharp while out of school.

Children attending Kindergarten Prep Camp improved key knowledge and skills by 17% after the five-week program, preparing them to start elementary school.

We gave 20,000 books to students this year!
FAMILY FINANCIAL STABILITY

With the right tools, families can achieve what we all want: good jobs with good wages, safe and affordable housing, success for our children and financial stability.

United Way THRIVE helped Amanda become an electrician and helped her family achieve stability.
United Way THRIVE, launched and led by United Way of Greater Houston, is a collaborative of more than 20 nonprofit partners and partners across multiple sectors that work together to provide comprehensive services to support hardworking, lower-income families in their efforts to achieve financial stability.

United Way THRIVE takes a holistic approach to financial stability, addressing the complex issues and serious obstacles preventing families from achieving financial independence. United Way THRIVE’s collaborative network means families do not just get help with one issue; clients benefit from comprehensive and individualized plans that address the many challenges they face.

**United Way THRIVE helps families achieve financial stability by focusing on three key goals: increasing income, building savings and acquiring assets.**

### Workforce Development Workgroup

This workgroup, led by United Way of Greater Houston, Greater Houston Partnership – UpSkill Houston, and Gulf Coast Workforce Board, developed “Partnership Houston: A Workforce Development Professional’s Guide,” a set of products and processes considered to be best practices by local workforce organizations. More than 20 partners from the business, nonprofit and public sectors participated in monthly sessions to create this guide and now meet on a quarterly basis to refine products, troubleshoot and discuss gaps and duplications. The long-term goal is to meet employer needs and help lower-income adults attain employment in high-wage, high-growth careers.

### UpSkill Houston

United Way THRIVE and partners continue to work with the Greater Houston Partnership’s UpSkill Houston initiative to help the Houston region close its skills gap and to position the region for long-term economic competitiveness. United Way THRIVE continues to have conversations with employers in the construction and health care sectors about employer-led prototypes, like the Women in Construction initiative with S&B Engineers & Constructors, to train and place more lower-income individuals and families in middle-skills jobs.

### Highlights of United Way THRIVE’s eighth year:

- 65,000 families put on the path to financial stability
- 37,200 tax returns completed with more than $52 million in net refunds returned
- 14,700 families benefitted from financial education and coaching
- 11,000 families received workforce development services
- 5,000 families increased their savings
- 3,000 individuals placed in new or better jobs
- 10:1 return on investment

### Workforce Connector Pilot

United Way THRIVE partners continued working with Workforce Solutions (WFS) career offices at six sites this year to ensure that clients from both sides receive the best of both services. United Way THRIVE staff collaborates with staff from the Gulf Coast Workforce Board/Houston-Galveston Area Council to guide this work, including developing plans to establish common outputs and integrate continuous quality improvement.

### Financial Coaching Network

As part of a multi-year grant from Wells Fargo, United Way THRIVE continues to invest in financial coaching training for a variety of organizations. Once trained, coaches deliver “just in time” coaching to clients and help them figure out when they need deeper services. There are currently more than 60 active financial coaches in the financial coaching network. During the last measurement period, the network served 484 clients, with a significant number of clients acquiring access to financial products, increasing income and savings and benefitting from other United Way THRIVE services.
Making an Impact in Montgomery County

In March of 2016, United Way of Greater Houston and Montgomery County United Way merged to create one strong regional United Way. Together, we are helping more people and building a stronger community for all.

Here are some highlights of United Way’s impact in Montgomery County this year.

Financial Independence

United Way’s work to increase financial independence in Montgomery County helps people get good jobs, manage their expenses and grow their assets.

During last year’s tax season, Montgomery County provided free tax preparation for 3,026 families, returning more than $3.6 million to the local economy.

Academic Success

United Way’s work to improve academic success in Montgomery County focuses on school readiness, early grade reading proficiency, middle school success, helping students graduate from high school and preparing them to succeed in college, work and life.

F.R.E.D.

F.R.E.D., or Families Reading Every Day, builds literacy skills and gives parents tools and support to make reading with their children part of their everyday routine. This year, in partnership with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, United Way helped 910 parents and children from three preschools and one elementary school make reading at home a priority.

Summer Learning

We know that keeping students engaged during the summer helps them retain, and even gain, learning. In 2016, we hosted 24 book clubs in Montgomery County to keep young people reading and participating in educational enrichment while out of school.

United Way Tiny Libraries

This year, we introduced United Way LINC in Montgomery County and held two events centered around education and LINC’s signature volunteer project, Tiny Libraries. With help from CB&I and ExxonMobil, Montgomery County volunteers built 12 Tiny Libraries and organized books to benefit hundreds of kids. The Tiny Libraries are now serving as lending libraries around Montgomery County to give kids access to books!

STEM Saturday

This year, United Way Young Leaders volunteered at STEM Saturday, a day of activities designed to get middle school students excited about STEM subjects and careers. Young Leaders helped the students build and race sail cars, which teaches them about engineering, budgeting and math—all while having fun! STEM Saturday is a partnership between United Way, Lone Star College and Microsoft that focuses on college and career readiness for middle school-aged children.
Health and Wellness

United Way has been empowering Montgomery County residents to make healthy choices through nutrition education, physical activity and health literacy. Last year alone, more than 1,600 people benefitted from United Way’s health and wellness programs in Montgomery County.

United Way’s Healthy Living Alliance partners with five Conroe ISD schools and three Willis ISD schools to help kids and parents learn how to make healthy choices with the help of 5210 messaging and Healthy Me.

Volunteers and Donors

Under the leadership of Campaign Chair Michael Jordan, vice president of Praxair, Inc., contributions to the campaign in Montgomery County reached $2.7 million, plus more than $2.3 million in designations from United Way of Greater Houston, for $5 million in total support for Montgomery County.

The Women’s Leadership Council is a group of generous Montgomery County women who focus on supporting young moms in their efforts to pursue post-secondary education. Their signature project, the Young Mothers’ Child Care Scholarship Program, provides child care scholarships for young moms who are committed to continuing their education beyond high school.

The annual Women Who Rock Luncheon celebrates the generosity of the Women’s Leadership Council members and raises money for the Young Mothers’ Child Care Scholarship Program. The 2016 luncheon raised more than $65,000, which will provide scholarships allowing 14 young moms to access quality child care for their kids while they pursue higher education.

In 2016, individuals at four workplaces participated in Workplace Wellness activities such as weekly group fitness, monthly educational series on health, biometric screenings and fun challenges. Each site incorporated environmental changes to promote healthier options and have adopted more physical activity during their work day.

Healthy Me

Healthy Me awards grants to schools to help them teach kids about making healthy choices and the importance of being active. Each Healthy Me school receives personalized plans to help meet their own unique physical activity and nutrition goals. To achieve these goals, each campus implements different events and activities such as bike rodeos, poster contests, storywalks and community events.

5210 is United Way’s easy-to-remember message about the importance of physical activity and eating healthy. United Way is working in schools and workplaces to help people adopt healthy lifestyles by eating five or more fruits and vegetables, spending two hours or less on recreational screen time, getting at least one hour of physical activity, and drinking zero sugary beverages every day.

The Young Mothers’ Child Care Scholarship program celebrated its first graduates in 2016-17. Congratulations to the three young women who graduated from college this past year with help from the scholarship!
This year, nearly 10,000 volunteers representing more than 65 companies from across our region gave their time and talent to better our community through 900 United Way Day of Caring projects.

Volunteers saw first-hand how their support of United Way makes a difference as they delivered meals to home-bound seniors, hosted reading activities and field days for children, built wheelchair ramps, painted and made repairs and readied gardens for planting.
DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS

United Way Reading Together

Now in its fifth year, United Way Reading Together includes 130 volunteer and elementary student pairs reading one-on-one together at five schools. With the help they are getting from their volunteer reading buddies, United Way Reading Together students have improved their reading skills!

Houston Texans Team Up with United Way to Rally Kids around Reading

More than 350 elementary school students joined United Way, the Houston Texans and Texans tackle Duane Brown at the fourth annual Readers Do Something About It Reading Rally on December 6. Students spent time reading, wrote their own stories, played literacy and geography games, and took home bags full of books!

Back to School Bash

In July, our Leadership Donors came together to donate school supplies and fill more than 540 backpacks with them for our United Way Bright Beginnings alumni and their siblings. After all the backpacks were collected, United Way Women’s Initiative members checked each and every one to make sure our United Way Bright Beginnings students would receive the exact supplies they needed to start the school year.

Women’s Initiative Holiday Projects

Just in time for the winter holidays, Women’s Initiative members gathered to wrap more than 1,000 books they collected for United Way Bright Beginnings students. The group delivered gifts of three books each to 340 children at 15 United Way Bright Beginnings centers, spreading holiday cheer and helping the students start their own home libraries. In May, Women’s Initiative members collected basic needs items to fill gift baskets for the mothers of United Way Bright Beginnings students. The ladies put together more than 200 gift baskets which United Way Bright Beginnings students, whose mothers are in domestic violence or homeless shelters, gave to their moms for Mother’s Day.

Hometown Huddle

This year, United Way Young Leaders teamed up with the Houston Texans rookie class and Houston Texans cheerleaders to host 50 children from United Way programs for a fun-filled day of health, fitness, and learning at the Houston Zoo. At the 15th annual Hometown Huddle, Young Leaders and Texans rookies led kids through various exercise activities, like a hula hoop contest, ladder drills and jump rope station—all to learn about the importance of physical fitness.
As part of the Community Campaign, more than 11,500 leadership donors contributed $35.7 million to fuel United Way’s work. The Women’s Initiative contributed nearly $6 million, while United Way Young Leaders contributed $4.7 million. Impact Circle members contributed $5 million; Leadership Circle members contributed $2.8 million; and Chairman’s Club members contributed more than $10.4 million this year.

Million Dollar Corporate Donor Circle

This year, 15 companies contributed one million dollars or more to the annual campaign. ExxonMobil topped the list with a record-setting $13.7 million, followed by ConocoPhillips with $3.27 million and Anadarko Petroleum Corporation with $2.2 million. Rounding out the million dollar circle: Shell ($2 million); FMC Technologies ($2 million); CenterPoint Energy ($1.94 million); Phillips 66 ($1.8 million); Spectra Energy ($1.8 million); LyondellBasell Industries ($1.7 million); Cameron, a Schlumberger company ($1.56 million); CB&I ($1.5 million); Memorial Hermann Health System ($1.3 million); H-E-B ($1.1 million); and Service Corporation International with $1 million.

Under the leadership of Campaign Chair John Gremp, contributions to United Way topped $76 million this year, including $2.7 million from Montgomery County!

The Alexis de Tocqueville Society

Led by Steve Roll and Jim Flood, the Alexis de Tocqueville Society contributed more than $17.5 million this year, with 850 members. ExxonMobil had the most Alexis de Tocqueville Society members with 167 donating more than $2.6 million.

It is with sincere gratitude that we salute the corporations, individuals, foundations and other donors who made this year a memorable one.
Thirty-Four Families Contributed $100,000 or More

A focus on our most generous donors has inspired extraordinary growth among Visionaries ($200,000-plus) and Benefactors ($100,000-plus) resulting in 34 families contributing $4.8 million. In addition to their incredible commitment, this phenomenal group of families has stepped up to foster new and increased giving. We proudly recognize these exceptional donors:

**Visionaries**
- Polly and Murry Bowden
- Charles Butt
- Pat and Steve Chazen
- Wendy and Jeff Hines
- Janice and Robert C. McNair
- Fayez Sarofim
- Bonnie and David Weekley

**Benefactors**
- Joan and Stanford Alexander
- Shirley and Skip Allen
- Chris Brown
- Mo and Ric Campo
- Janet and John Carrig
- Ann and Clarence Casalot
- Nancy and Charles Davidson
- Anne and Charles W. Duncan, Jr.
- The Elkins Foundation
- Lynn and John Elsenhans
- Patti and Richard Everett
- Jana and Richard Fant
- Cherie and Jim Flores
- Debra and Dan Friedkin
- Cindy and John Gremp
- Nancy and Rich Kinder
- Penny and Paul B. Loyd, Jr.
- Katherine G. McGovern
- Anna and Scott McLean
- Peggy and Merrill A. (Pete) Miller
- Debbie and Jack B. Moore
- Bobbie and John Nau
- Amy and Tom Ryan
- Jeri and Marc Shapiro
- Stephanie and Brad Tucker
- Phoebe and Bobby Tudor
- Cyvia and Melvyn Wolff

1,000 Women Strong

This year, more than 1,000 women supported our work through the Women’s Initiative. 220 Women’s Initiative members are Alexis de Tocqueville Society members, and another 155 are members of our Leadership Circle. This year, Women’s Initiative members had unique opportunities to network, learn and serve, like filling backpacks with school supplies for students and hearing from health and wellness experts and other dynamic speakers.

Young Leaders

More than 2,500 United Way Young Leaders contributed more than $4.7 million to support United Way’s work during 2016-17. This year, in addition to networking and opportunities to hear and learn from business and community leaders, Young Leaders volunteered at STEM Saturday, helping middle school students explore and get excited about STEM subjects.

Caring Champions

In addition to championing their own company campaigns, Caring Champions sponsor campaign activities, visibility and marketing efforts throughout the year. Special thanks go to our 2016-17 Caring Champions: Spectra Energy; ConocoPhillips; ExxonMobil; Anadarko Petroleum Corporation; Bank of America; Cameron, a Schlumberger company; CenterPoint Energy; The Friedkin Group; Haynes and Boone; Shell; CHI St. Luke’s; LyondellBasell; and NOV.
UNITED WAY LINC

United Way LINC harnesses the power of those age 30 and under to help kids succeed in school, to help families gain stability, to help our neighbors get through tough times and to help our community become more prosperous.

United Way LINC is focused on volunteering, offering young people an opportunity to engage in meaningful service coupled with social activities and personal and professional development. This year, more than 1,000 members representing 75 companies joined United Way LINC and contributed more than 1,700 volunteer hours.

Tiny Libraries
This year, members of United Way LINC, built, painted and filled 91 Tiny Libraries with children’s books to support United Way’s goal to improve academic success. United Way LINC members have built more than 190 Tiny Libraries since 2014. The Tiny Libraries are housed at various United Way agencies and United Way Reading Together partner schools, and serve as “take one, leave one” lending libraries for children who may not otherwise have access to books.

Numbers and Neutrons
United Way LINC members hosted their annual night of math and science at two locations this year. More than 130 third, fourth and fifth graders from United Way after-school programs came together to learn about the wonders of electricity. Most importantly, they saw how fun math and science can be and heard how United Way LINC volunteers use math and science in their jobs every day!

Holiday Cheer for United Way Bright Beginnings Students
This year, United Way LINC members collected holiday gifts and basic needs items for more than 180 students in United Way Bright Beginnings, our early childhood education initiative.

Ideas that Connect
The third IDEAS THAT CONNECT, United Way’s signature event for United Way LINC and Young Leaders, was a hit, with hundreds of members coming out to hear from Scott McClelland, president of H-E-B’s Houston division, Carl Josehart, senior vice president and chief executive officer of Post-Acute Care Services at TIRR Memorial Hermann, and J.J. Moses, retired NFL wide receiver, Houston Texans Ambassador, and motivational speaker.

In March, United Way LINC members joined forces to make a big impact at Tijerina Elementary School, a United Way partner school. Volunteers built a new soccer field and gaga pit, and transformed the school’s outdoor space for students to enjoy.

This year, United Way LINC held two events in Montgomery County centered around education and LINC’s signature volunteer project, Tiny Libraries. With help from CB&I and ExxonMobil, Montgomery County volunteers built 12 Tiny Libraries and organized books to benefit hundreds of kids.
VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR: DAVID MCCLANAHAN

David McClanahan, retired president and CEO of CenterPoint Energy, was named 2016 Volunteer of the Year by United Way of Greater Houston.

The prestigious Robert W. Kneebone Volunteer of the Year Award is the highest honor given by United Way of Greater Houston to a volunteer for extraordinary leadership and community service.

David was first elected to United Way’s Board of Trustees in 2006, and in the 10 years that followed, served United Way in nearly every capacity imaginable.

David served as chair of United Way’s Board of Trustees, Board Governance and Nominating Committee, Audit Committee, Executive Compensation Committee and the United Way Worldwide Task Force. A CPA, he also lent his expertise to the Finance Committee and played a key role in the complicated termination of United Way’s cash balance plan.

Thoughtful and strategic, David has always recognized the importance of both the big picture and of boots on the ground. He also recognized the importance of being part of a national network while staying true to the local community. After attending a United Way Worldwide Major Markets meeting encouraging the United Ways in 30 Major Markets to work in partnership around education, McClanahan advised United Way of Greater Houston to do just that. United Way took his advice to heart and that spirit has helped guide the organization’s strategy and work over the years.

United Way has often sought David’s counsel when the organization has faced tough issues. When United Way’s Community Impact strategy changed or when something tough needed to be communicated, David was there to help United Way do it with support and diplomacy. Even as the CEO of a Fortune 500 company, David always showed up. He always made the time to attend United Way meetings and events, and to be responsive and accessible. He knows the importance of relationships and has protected and developed deep and meaningful ones. He is known for being as great a person as he is a businessman.

His judgment and counsel are second to none. He is honest, smart, courageous, and kind. We are so very fortunate to have benefitted from his leadership.

On the Campaign Leadership team, David worked tirelessly to reach out to our area’s top companies, sharing his own passion for United Way, and encouraging other business leaders to step up and do more. And in 2015-16, as our community faced tough economic challenges, David brought his special brand of leadership to his role as chair of the Community Campaign, successfully rallying our community around United Way in an unprecedented year.

Diamond Donors and long-time Alexis de Tocqueville Society members, David and his wife Becky’s commitment to United Way, to supporting the safety net, and to preparing people for better futures, is unwavering.

“David is a genuine friend, a compassionate volunteer, and a wonderful person,” said United Way President and CEO Anna M. Babin. “His judgment and counsel are second to none. He is honest, smart, courageous, and kind. We are so very fortunate to have benefitted from his leadership.”
United Way of Greater Houston engages caring people to improve lives and build a stronger community.