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United Way awards \$585,000 to Warren County nonprofits

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Warren County organizations receiving funding from the United Way of of Commerce in Bowling Green, Ky., to receive their funds totaling \$585,; wide allocations on Wednesday, July 13, 2022. (Grace Ramey/photo@bgd Grace Ramey

United Way of Southern Kentucky awarded \$585,000 to Warren County nonprofits Wednesday.

The 22 grants awarded were divided into education, income, health and safety net categories.

Debbie Hills, president and CEO of United Way of Southern Kentucky, said it took a year of work to get to this event. More than 80 volunteers spent hours poring over each grant application and visiting sites to see where money would best serve the community, she said.



“It’s not an easy job,” Hills said. “It’s no surprise I think to anyone that there’s never enough money to go around. We have a lot of needs in the community (and) we have a very focused platform that we’re trying to invest in.”

Education-based grants totaled \$312,679 this year.

Several Warren County Public Schools programs were recipients, including its Little Learners Mobile Classroom. The little green learners buses drive around high-need

areas to help parents prepare their children for kindergarten, said Tracey Young, director of grants and community outreach.

While the statewide kindergarten readiness rate is less than 50%, children served by the Little Learners Mobile Classroom at least twice a month have a 91% readiness rate, she said.

“We help parents be their child’s best teacher,” Young said. “That bus would not be able to run without United Way and the donors that contribute toward the campaign.”

The full list of education grant recipients includes:

- Family Enrichment Center, Little Bobcat Learners Program: \$27,194.
- Family Enrichment, Wee Care Child Care Center: \$55,194.
- The Foundry Christian Community Center, Preschool Academy: \$60,000.
- Warren County Public Schools, Little Learners Mobile Classroom: \$39,000.
- WKU, Suzanne Vitale CED, Building Bridges to Kindergarten: \$9,000.
- Boys & Girls Club of Bowling Green, The CLUB Teen Center-CAREER LAUNCH: \$25,018.
- Warren County Public Schools, College/Career Transition Readiness-Connect Students to Success: \$35,000.
- WROTE Foundation, Bridging the GAP After-School/Summer Enrichment Program: \$62,273.

Refuge Bowling Green’s English Academy was one of three grant recipients in the income and workforce development categories, which totaled \$25,000 in allocations.

Executive Director Daniel Tarnagda said the \$10,000 it received is crucial to make the “impossible” task of assimilating to America possible for refugees.

“You’ve got to find a job, you’ve got to be able to navigate the system and learn how to drive, take care of your family, bring food home to feed your family,” he said. “This money that we were given is not just money, it is a family that we know we can rely on if we need help.”

The full list of income grant recipients:



- Refuge Bowling Green, English Academy: \$10,000.
- SKYCTC Foundation, CDL Program: \$11,550.
- Lifeworks E-Learning Lab, Electronic Access to Employment Training Services for Young Adults with Autism at WKU: \$3,450.

United Way allocated \$140,137 to nonprofits in the health category to support affordable health care and a safe home and community.

Kentucky Legal Aid won bids for two programs – \$25,000 for the Barren River Long Term Care Ombudsman program and \$25,000 toward Benefits Counseling.

Kristy Vick-Stratton of Kentucky Legal Aid said the funding is critical to support the rights of long-term care residents.

“As many of you know, once people enter long-term care, oftentimes they’re a forgotten population. (The Barren River Long Term Care Ombudsman) program strives to make sure that doesn’t happen,” she said.

The full list of health grant recipients includes:

- Barren River Child Advocacy Center, Trauma Focused Mental Health Therapy: \$30,000.
- Kentucky Legal Aid, Barren River Long Term Ombudsman: \$25,000.
- Kentucky Legal Aid, Benefits Counseling: \$20,000.
- New Beginnings Therapeutic Riding Inc., Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies Program: \$5,000.
- BRASS, ESCAPE: \$30,137.
- Kentucky Legal Aid, ESCAPE: \$30,000.

Finally, a total of \$107,491 was awarded to several nonprofits contributing to a stronger safety net.

The list includes Barren River Area Safe Space, which received \$5,636 to go toward its Shelter Transportation Assistance Program. Executive Director Tori Henninger said these funds are integral to helping people get to shelters, job interviews and court dates safely.

It gives them access to basic needs and “have a little autonomy of getting themselves from place to place and not just having to rely on the kindness of others,” Henninger said.

The full list of safety net grant recipients includes:

- GLEAN of South Central Kentucky: \$7,500.
- Habitat for Humanity, Affordable Workforce Housing: \$30,000.
- Kentucky Legal Aid, Emergency Legal Assistant: \$42,500.
- Megan’s Mobile Grocery: \$10,655.
- BRASS, Shelter Transportation Assistance Program: \$5,636.
- Refuge Bowling Green, Driver’s Education Program: \$11,200.

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