



## Southwest Louisiana

# INITIATIVES

United Way of Southwest Louisiana has the ability to initiate projects independently in each of our four focus areas. These Initiatives address important community needs we have identified as critical that are not being met. Where there is great need, our goal is to work quickly and help those most vulnerable.

### BASIC NEEDS

#### SWLA VOAD

##### VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTER

Provides a place where governmental, faith-based, and non-profit organizations can cooperate, communicate, coordinate, and collaborate in the event of a disaster.

#### 211 | 898-211

An easy-to-remember phone number that links people in need to relevant information in the complex maze of human services with an accurate database of public and community-based resources, even during a disaster.

#### SUMMER OF SERVICE

Specifically designed for ages 12 to 18, the program has five human services projects each summer. Projects focus on a group of community members who are most in need and illustrate the value of serving others.

#### THE PATH HOME

Program which facilitates the matching of resources with the individuals and families needing assistance with issues surrounding homelessness. The goal is to help those affected move toward stable housing and a successful future.

### HEALTH

#### SINGLECARE

##### PRESCRIPTION DISCOUNT PROGRAM

A partnership focused on improving the health of individuals, families and communities by helping to make prescription medications more affordable.

#### UNITED AGAINST CHILD HUNGER

Weekend Food Packs are created for the Summer Feeding Programs in Southwest Louisiana so children have access to easy-to-eat foods over the weekend.

#### CRISIS CHAT

An online chat for anyone who is going through a difficult time, having thoughts about suicide or just needs to talk. It is confidential and operated by professionally-licensed crisis intervention specialists.

#### 833.TXT.TEEN

This texting platform for teens serves anyone ages 13-22, in any type of crisis. It provides confidential access to 24/7 support from professionally-licensed counselors.

### ECONOMIC MOBILITY

#### VITA

##### VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE

IRS certified United Way volunteers offer free income tax prep for low-income individuals, persons with disabilities, the elderly and limited English speaking taxpayers.

#### CAL-PRI

##### CALCASIEU PRISONER RE-ENTRY

This vital program is a link between formerly incarcerated individuals and the resources available to help them succeed with a new life in the job market and community.

#### MATCHED SAVINGS

This program teaches saving and budget habits for those working toward a home purchase. Participants are encouraged to build a down payment with a dollar match upon graduation.

#### BANK ON SWLA

Partnerships with banks and credit unions work to ensure low-income households have access to safe and affordable financial products and services.

### EDUCATION: EARLY CHILDHOOD & YOUTH SUCCESS

#### DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY

In partnership with donors, children are provided 1 book a month from birth until age 5 at no cost to the family. Families start a home library to encourage literacy from a young age.

#### LITERACY KITS

With assistance from school systems, the kits are distributed to children across Southwest Louisiana. Each kit includes books and volunteer- designed props or games, to make the reading interactive.

#### WRITESTART PROJECT

This program provides basic school supplies, admin fees and necessary support to children and teachers in need. Providing supplies year-round ensures teachers and students can focus on learning.

#### BORN LEARNING TRAIL

Bilingual interactive signs installed on trails or playgrounds that offer engagement and learning opportunities for young children and their families or caregivers.